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HANSARD'S

PARLIAMENTARY

DEBATES:

FORMING A CONTINUATION OF

"THE PARLIAMENTARY HISTORY OF ENGLAND,
FROM THE EARLIEST PERIOD TO THE
YEAR 1803."

Third Series;

COMMENCING WITH THE ACCESSION OF WILLIAM IV.

VOL. III.

COMPRISING THE PERIOD FROM
THE FOURTH DAY OF MARCH,
TO
THE TWENTY-SECOND DAY OF APRIL, 1831.

Third Volume of the Session.

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1831.

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HANSARD'S

Parliamentary Debates

During the FIRST SESSION *of the* NINTH PARLIAMENT *of*
the United Kingdom of GREAT BRITAIN *and* IRELAND,
appointed to meet at Westminster, 26th October, 1830,
in the First Year of the Reign of His Majesty

WILLIAM THE FOURTH.

Third Volume of the Session

1830—31.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Friday, March 4, 1831.

MINUTES.] Bills. The Appropriation Bill, Consolidated Fund Bill, and Officers' Salaries Bill, passed through a Committee. The Dublin Asylum, and Manchester Gas Lights' Bills, were read a first time.

Petitions presented. By Lord RODEN, from the parish of St. Peter, Hereford, for the Privilege of Endowing Churches. By the Earl of KINNOUL, from the Keepers of Post-horses and Carriages of Perthshire, Clackmannanshire, Fifeshire, and Forfarshire, for the Abolition of the Duties on Horses and Carriages let for hire:—By the Duke of GORDON, to the same effect, from the Counties of Aberdeen and Inverness. By the Earl of HARDWICK, from Royston, against the Coal Duties; also from some parts of Cambridge, Norfolk, and Caermarthenshire, praying for the Abolition of Negro Slavery. By the Earl of RADNOR, from the Congregation of Conway Chapel, and other districts of Caermarthen, with the same prayer; also from Sandhurst and Newenden, for the Repeal of the Malt Duties. By Lord CARBERRY, from certain Shipowners, &c. of Sunderland, against laying an additional Duty on Timber imported from our own Colonies. By Earl GREY, from Oakhampton, in favour of Reform:—By the Earl of KINNOUL, for certain Districts of Forfarshire, to the same effect.

TITHES AND CATHOLICS (IRELAND).] Viscount *Clifden* presented a Petition from the Parishioners of Graig and Ullard, in the diocese of Leighlin, praying for Relief against the System of Tithe Collecting in that parish. He took that opportunity of making a few observations on the subject; and, in the first place, with reference to a statement made by his noble friend (Lord Farnham) the other night, he had received a letter from Dr. Doyle, the Roman Catholic Prelate, in which that right reverend Prelate stated, that the Mr. Doyle to whom his noble friend had referred, was not a nephew or cousin of the right reverend Prelate, but a relation so distant, that he was no relation at all. Dr. Doyle had certainly too much sense to encourage any tumultuous opposition to tithes; nor indeed did he believe that his noble friend had said, that Dr. Doyle had anything to do with the matter. Mr. Doyle denied having encouraged any tumultuous meetings against tithes, and he was a very respectable man. He had, indeed, received a letter from a Magistrate, in which he stated, that many persons had been ready to make affidavits that Mr. Doyle had not harangued the people, nor promoted resistance to the payment of tithes. He also knew, however, that it had been stated, that affidavits of a directly contrary tendency could be produced. But he agreed in the remark made by a noble Secretary of State (Lord Melbourne) the other day, that in a state of so much excitement and irritation, it was not difficult to procure affidavits from either of the parties against the other. In considering the subject of tithes in Ireland, it was necessary to keep in view, that there were two great hierarchies—from the Archbishop down to the Curate. On the one side was the revenue, and on the other the preponderance of property and population. The party with the small revenue envied the party with the large, and the party with the larger feared the party with the small, when backed by property and numbers. It might be said, "Oh, it is not to be supposed that the Catholic Clergy would envy the Protestant Clergy their possession of the tithes, nor was it possible that the Protestant Clergy should hate or fear the Catholic." Well, be it so; but, in the meantime, it was absolutely necessary that these violent courses should be put an end to, otherwise the Protestant Clergy must be reduced to starvation; for the tithes would not be paid. The truth was, that the two parties would never agree well together, until a liberal provision should be made for the Roman Catholic Clergy. This was what was intended to be done by Mr. Pitt and Lord Castlereagh, when they proposed, thirty years ago, to bring forward the motion which the noble Duke had carried two years ago. But the noble Duke did not undertake to make a provision for the Catholic Clergy by his measure, and he was not surprised at it, for he had enough on his hands, without meddling also with that; but, at the same time, it was a thing that must, at some time or other, be done. Perhaps some might think that the Church property of Ireland ought to be divided between the two hierarchies. But he was persuaded that this could not properly be done. The loudest clamour would be set up against it, and it might be attended with disadvantages, which would more than counterbalance the benefit. The Church revenue, therefore, he apprehended, must be left with the Protestant Clergy, while the Catholic hierarchy was paid by voluntary contribution from their flocks, and both were a heavy burthen on the country. Something, however, must be done to relieve the country from this heavy burthen of a double hierarchy. The Rev. Mr. Alcock, the Rector of Graig, was a man who had reached a considerable age—a very respectable man, and very well behaved. The parish was a large one, and he had perhaps less than his strict dues, when he accepted of 720*l.* a year. Mr. Doyle had been priest of the parish, and a Mr. Macdonell was Mr. Alcock's Curate, and against neither of them did he mean to say anything. But they were both clever men, in the prime of life, and of great activity, and it was not perhaps surprising, if they were apt to come into collision. Upon the whole he was convinced, that these disputes could never be put an end to, nor could the parties be pacified, until a liberal provision was made for the Catholic Clergy, and sooner or later the subject must be taken up by the Legislature.

Lord *Farnham* thought himself called upon to make a few observations on the statement of his noble friend. He had no sort of doubt but that many letters would be written on the subject, owing to the statement which he had thought it his duty to make the other night, and owing partly, no doubt, to the state of excitement in which the minds of the Irish people were kept on the subject of tithes. As to his statement, he had only said that which he had good reason to believe to be true. He had never stated, nor pretended to state, the genealogy of the Doyle race, about which he had no positive information, although he had been informed that Mr. Doyle, who was, or had been, parish priest of Graig, was a relative of Doctor Doyle, the Catholic Archbishop, who had promoted him. But he had no reason to doubt the facts which he had mentioned, which were, that Mr. Doyle had harangued the people against the payment of tithes, and had suggested measures to resist that payment—that he had encouraged tumultuous assemblies with the same view, and had made propositions to them on the subject, and encouraged them to adopt measures for securing a reduction of tithes—that tumultuous meetings were in consequence held on the subject of tithes, and for the purpose of resisting the payment, or reducing the amount. These were facts which had not been denied, and he was fully authorised in stating them. As for Mr. Doyle himself, he had said, that he was a person of great talent and activity, and he formerly had a very high opinion of him; but since he had been promoted by Dr. Doyle, he had assumed a very different character from that which he bore when he (Lord Farnham) first knew him. As to the proposition for granting a liberal provision out of the public money for the support of the Catholic Clergy, that was a plan in which he could never concur; and if ever it was proposed, he would resist it to the utmost of his power; and the principle on which he did it was this—that he never could consent to make a Church a member of the State, which he believed to be completely in error. The Roman Catholic Church was founded in error, and ought never to be made a constituent member of a Protestant State. He fully agreed that some vigorous measures ought to be adopted, to repel the conspiracy which existed in some parts of Ireland, against the payment of tithes, otherwise the Clergy of the Protestant Church there, would be left without a revenue, except through the medium of a distress; for there appeared to be conspiracies existing to refuse the payment of tithes by any other method.

Viscount *Clifden*.—The letters which he had received stated, that Mr. Doyle denied these charges point blank, and that he was preparing affidavits in contradiction to them. As to a provision for the Roman Catholic Clergy, they had the best of all titles to such a provision, for they possessed the flocks.

Petition laid on the Table.

Ministerial Plan of Reform.] The *Lord Chancellor* stated, that he had a variety of Petitions in his hand, praying for Parliamentary Reform. On that subject he would imitate the proper and prudent example of the noble Lords who had alluded to it the other night, and would abstain, for the present, from making any observations on the plan of Reform now under consideration in the other House, reserving himself till the question should come regularly before their Lordships for discussion.

The Duke of *Buckingham* begged to interrupt the noble Lord, to inquire if these petitions prayed for the Ballot?

The *Lord Chancellor* could not undertake to say that he had classed the whole of the Petitions, but a great part of them was from Scotch Counties and Boroughs, and he was not aware that any predilection for the Ballot had prevailed in that country. If it had extended to that country at all, it was certain that it was not generally prevalent. His Lordship then presented Petitions, praying for Parliamentary Reform, from St. Pancras, the borough of Ferres, from Petersfield, from Ludlow, from Lyme Regis, from Newburgh, in Fife, from Roxburgh, from St. Luke's, in Middlesex, from Fain, from Thurse, and from different places in Yorkshire and other Counties—in all thirty-one. He had to apologise to the very respectable and numerous persons by whom the petitions had been signed, in thus reading them like a catalogue, instead of presenting them one by one, and having the prayers of them read in the ordinary manner. But he trusted that he should be excused, when it was considered, there being such a multitude of these Petitions brought forward, and in the course of being brought forward, that their Lordships would be overwhelmed with them, and a great deal of valuable time would be lost, if the ordinary course were to be followed.

The Duke of *Norfolk* spoke as follows: I am anxious, my Lords, to avail myself of this opportunity, publicly to express the high pleasure and satisfaction which I have derived from that excellent and admirable measure of Reform which his Majesty's Ministers have introduced into the other House of Parliament—a measure remarkably calculated to ensure the public confidence, and a general attachment to the institutions of the country. It is a measure which cannot fail to prove highly satisfactory to the nation, since it will be one of the best guarantees that could be devised for the public prosperity, and for the liberties and the happiness of all classes of his Majesty's subjects. There is already proof that it has been regarded with high satisfaction by the country, for a Common Council has been held this day in London, and a Meeting in Westminster, for the purpose of conveying to his Majesty's Ministers the sense of gratitude entertained towards them by these most important portions of the community, for the comprehensive and effective, yet wise, moderate, and prudent plan of Reform which they have submitted to Parliament; and it is worthy of remark, that the addresses were agreed to unanimously. It is to be regretted, that much excitement and irritation has prevailed in this country of late, in consequence of distress among the humbler and poorer classes, but nothing could be better calculated to allay these feelings than such a measure as this. I myself have always been a friend to Reform. I have been so from an early period of my life, as is well known to my noble friend at the head of the Administration. I am one of those who must suffer some loss from the adoption of the plan of Reform now under comsideration; but still I rejoice that such a measure has been brought forward; and I shall rejoice still more, if it should be passed into a law. I would gladly sacrifice ten times as much as I shall be called on to sacrifice, for the sake of a measure which will form so admirable a safeguard for the liberties of the subject, and is so well calculated to promote in every way the best interests of the nation.

The Petitions presented by the Lord Chancellor were then laid on the Table.

Agitation for the Repeal of the Union.] The Earl of *Wicklow* rose to present a Petition from certain Noblemen, Gentlemen, Magistrates, and Occupiers of Land in the County of Wicklow, declaring their abhorrence of those measures of agitation which had lately prevailed in various parts of Ireland, under the pretence of procuring a Repeal of the Union between Great Britain and Ireland. They stated, that they could regard such a repeal in no other light than as a dismemberment of the empire; and they prayed that the Legislature should adopt some strong measure to put an end to these agitations, which prevented the enjoyment by Ireland of those advantages which they had been led to expect from the Union. He was aware that agitation was no new feature in that country, for it prevailed among all classes before the passing of the measure for admitting the Roman Catholics into the Constitution, which had received the assent of the Legislature two years ago. Before that time, it was not surprising, that there should be constant agitation among all classes, but now that these political divisions were abolished, and that all classes were admitted to the privileges and blessings of the Constitution—when there was a real, instead of a nominal union, the petitioners thought it hard, that by these disturbances they should be deprived of the advantages which had been held out to them more than thirty years ago, as likely to result from the Union. He recollected, that the late Secretary for Ireland had mentioned in the House of Commons, last year, that there were several measures of amelioration in contemplation, to be brought forward for Ireland; and the noble Marquis (Lansdown) had mentioned something of the same kind previous to the recess. Now, considering that the present Ministers had had the advantage of whatever previous arrangements might have been made by the former Ministers, he was rather surprised that none of these measures had been as yet brought before either House of Parliament. The noble Marquis had said, that they could not all be brought forward in the present Session; but he was rather surprised that none had as yet appeared. He was anxious that they should be brought forward, and if he found them calculated to be of advantage to Ireland they would meet with his cordial co-operation. He had no doubt but that his Majesty's Ministers were aware of the awful situation of that country, and he was anxious that there should be as little delay as possible in the application of such remedies as it might be in the power of the Administration to apply.

Earl *Grey* said, that no man could more fully concur than he did in the views of the petitioners, when they stated, that the agitation which had been lately set on foot was most pernicious to Ireland. He fully concurred with them too, that the object of the agitation would, if attained, be most disadvantageous, if not fatal, to the empire, and that the Repeal of the Union, if carried, would lead to its dismemberment. This was his view of the question, and so thinking of it, he, for one, in whatever situation he might be placed would give to any project for the Repeal of the Union his most decided and determined opposition. As to the prayer of the petition, that the Legislature should adopt some strong measures for putting down the agitation, most undoubtedly he should be prepared to apply to the Legislature to arm the Government with additional powers to put an end to these excesses, in case it should appear that such a course was necessary. But as long as the Government could entertain a reasonable hope that they could be restrained by the existing law, it was highly desirable to abstain from applying for additional powers. It did not require the recommendation of the petitioners to call the most anxious attention of the Government to this subject. The Government had already carefully and continually attended to it; and he appealed to their Lordships, whether there was any want of due attention, vigour, and decision in the Government of Ireland, in making use of the means afforded by the existing law to put an end to these pernicious tumults and agitations. And here he could not deny himself the satisfaction of bearing his testimony to the wise and prudent, yet vigorous course which the Lord Lieutenant and the Irish Government had adopted, in the trying crisis in which they were placed; and it was to be hoped, that they would be enabled, by means of the existing law, to put down a system of agitation which was so detrimental to members of the community, but more particularly to those who were deluded by it. As to the notice which had been given of an intention on the part of the late Secretary for Ireland and his noble friend, respecting his intention to bring forward measures for the amelioration of Ireland, the noble Earl ought to consider that his Majesty's Ministers had had a great deal of other business in hand; that much was to be done before the measures in question could be put in such a shape as to be brought before Parliament. One measure had been already prepared—that which related to the Subletting Act; but it had been found necessary to send it back to Ireland, in order to have it as clear as possible from objections when it should be brought before the House. The bill, it was expected, would soon be returned from Ireland, and when returned, no time would be lost in laying it before Parliament.

The Duke of *Wellington* wished to ask the noble Earl, whether it was his intention to renew the law giving the Lord Lieutenant powers to suppress illegal meetings by Proclamation? The noble Earl was aware that it would expire in no very long time.

Earl *Grey* replied, that it was certainly his intention at present to propose to the Legislature the renewal of the law in question, before the period of its expiration.

The Marquis of *Londonderry* was surprised that the noble Earl (Wicklow) should now reproach the Ministers with delay, when he had formerly complained of them for their promptitude and activity. He fully concurred in the compliment that had been paid to the Lord Lieutenant and Irish Government.

The Earl of *Wicklow* had only observed on a former occasion, that he was afraid that Ministers might undertake too much if they did more, at the outset, than adopt the measures prepared by their predecessors. The late Secretary for Ireland had stated in his place, that it was in contemplation to bring forward seven or eight measures for the amelioration of Ireland, and he had been led to infer from that, that they might have been in such a state of forwardness as to enable the present Ministers to introduce them without much delay. He most fully concurred in the just tribute of praise that had been paid to the Lord Lieutenant and the Irish Government, who had conducted themselves with equal prudence and courage.

The Marquis of *Lansdown* said, that the measures which the present Ministers meant to propose were not those which their predecessors might have had in contemplation. To be sure the subjects to which they related were the same, but the principles and views on which they were founded had not been pointed out by the late Ministers, but had been laid down in a most valuable Report of a Committee of the other House, the Chairman of which now held a high situation in his Majesty's Government. The notice given by the Secretary for Ireland, in the course of the last Session, was, that it was in contemplation to introduce measures founded on these reports. The present Ministers had the same principles, recommendations, and evidence before them as the late Ministers; but it did not follow that they were to adopt exactly the same measures. They had their measures to prepare for themselves, and every possible attention had been paid to them. But then, when it was considered what details were to be gone through, and how many points required attention, and how many technical objections were to be guarded against, it must be obvious that some time must elapse before these measures could be put into a proper shape for introduction into Parliament. Before they were brought forward, it was necessary that all the details should be thoroughly sifted.

Petition laid on the Table.

COMMITTEE ON THE POOR-LAWS REPORT.] The Marquis of *Salisbury* laid on the Table of the House the evidence given before the Committee on the state of the Poor, as far as it had been hitherto taken, and called the attention of their Lordships particularly to that part of it which related to the advantage which the poor would derive from having plots of land in their occupation.

Earl *Stanhope* also recommended that part of the evidence to the attention of their Lordships. He thought the plan would be attended with great advantage.

The Duke of *Richmond* thought, that it would have been better to have reserved the evidence until the whole of it had been taken; and the Committee had been occupied from the morning till four o'clock in discussing whether this portion of the evidence should be laid before the House now or not. He was anxious that it should not go forth to the public that giving the poor garden-plots was all the measure of relief which the Committee meant to recommend. The opinion of the Chairman might not be that of the Committee, and it was but fair that the noble Marquis should have stated that to the House. In his opinion, the distress—more particularly in the south-eastern districts of the country, arose from a superabundance of population—that was, in the existence in these districts of more hands than could find employment, so that the wages of labour were reduced to too low a rate, and many could not find employment at all for a great part of the year. Under these circumstances, he thought that a voluntary emigration might be attended with advantage, and that a plan might be devised, to enable such as chose it to emigrate to the Colonies, where there was a great demand for labour, and where the labourers were well paid. In the mean time, perhaps, it would have been better that the subject should not have been alluded to at all.

The Marquis of *Salisbury* never meant to say that giving the poor plots of ground was all that the Committee intended to recommend for them, nor was he aware that he had made any such statement. He had only recommended to the attention of their Lordships one point, which he thought had, on the evidence, been clearly made out. He had not said, that the plots of ground were to be limited merely to gardens.

Earl *Stanhope* concurred with the noble Marquis, that it was never meant to be stated, nor was it stated, that all that the Committee had to recommend for the advantage of the poor was the allowing them some allotments of ground, nor was it intended that these allotments should be confined to garden-plots. Every one must be aware of the advantage which the poor man derived from being able to keep a cow. In his opinion, it was highly proper that the evidence should, from time to time, be laid before the House, that the different subjects might be discussed, from time to time, before the Committee should make their Report.

The Duke of *Richmond* had no inclination to prolong the conversation. His only object was, that there should be no misconception. His own wish was, that the Committee should have waited till it could make its report; but since the secrets of the prison-house must come out, he would mention, that some were of opinion that the poor should have one acre, some that they should have two, and some three. The noble Earl (Stanhope), to be sure, had not said much about currency, but he made ample amends by means of a witness which he produced, and who recommended, as the grand specific for the relief of the country, an alteration in the currency.

Lord *Suffield* concurred in the opinion, that it would be useful that the poor should have small allotments of land, but he certainly was not of opinion that the relief to be given to the poor ought to be confined to that. He was of opinion that where there was a superabundance of population, the plan of voluntary emigration might be properly resorted to. But superabundance of population was a relative term, and meant that there were more hands than could find employment. The business, therefore, was, to find employment for the poor, and he was of opinion, that every possible means ought to be adopted for finding them employment at home, before any encouragement was held out to them to emigrate to the colonies or any where else.

The Earl of *Carnarvon* thought, that if these interminable conversations went on, the time of the House would be as much mis-spent as the noble Duke represented that of the Committee to have been that day. He thought that it would be advantageous that the evidence should be laid from time to time before the House; and that portion of it now presented, certainly did go strongly to make out that it would be desirable that the poor should have small allotments of land. As to emigration, to compel that was entirely out of the question, but he did think that it would afford considerable relief to the poor to enable them to emigrate to the colonies, where there was a great demand for labour, and where, consequently, the remuneration for it was ample.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Friday, March 4, 1831.

Minutes.] Mr. F. Lewis brought up the Report of the Clare Election Committee. The Committee declared, that they found Mr. James Patrick O'Gorman Mahon not duly elected; that the last Election for the County of Clare was void, so far as related to the said James Patrick O'Gorman Mahon; that the Petition against the return was not frivolous or vexatious, nor was the opposition thereto. The Committee further declared, that it appeared to them that Mr. O'Gorman Mahon had been, by his friends and agents, guilty of bribery and corruption.

On the Motion of Mr. F. Lewis, a new Writ for the County of Clare was ordered to be issued.

Lord Duncannon took the Oaths and his Seat for Kilkenny (County).

Bills. The Calico Duties Repeal Bill was read a first time; as was also a Bill to Consolidate and Amend the Laws for suppressing the illicit making of Malt and distillation of Spirits in Ireland.

Returns ordered. On the Motion of Mr. Spring Rice, the number of gallons of foreign Wine upon which duty has been paid for home consumption in the United Kingdom, and the rate of Duty per gallon, stated in the imperial measure, for the year ending 5th January, 1831; distinguishing Cape, French, Madeira, Portugal, Spanish, Rhenish, and other sorts, and stating the gross and nett produce of duty for the year:—On the Motion of Mr. Herries, the quantity and value of all Timber, Deals, and other Wood, imported annually into Great Britain, in British and foreign Ships, from Denmark, Norway, Sweden, Prussia, and Russia, respectively, from the year 1819, to the latest period; also from the several British North American Colonies; the real and official values of British and Irish, and of foreign exports, annually from Great Britain to Denmark, Norway, Sweden, Prussia, and Russia, respectively, from the year 1819, to the latest period; also to the several British North American Colonies; the number of Ships, Men, and Tonnage, British and foreign, employed in the trade between Great Britain and Denmark, Norway, Sweden, Prussia, and Russia, respectively, since 1828 to the latest period; also between the several British North American Colonies; similar account of the trade of Ireland; the quantity and value of the whole imports and exports, and the tonnage, inwards and outwards, British and foreign, of the several British North American Colonies, to all parts of the world respectively, in each of the years 1790, 1791, and 1792, 1800, 1801, and 1802, 1818, 1819, and 1820, and of the three latest years; also, the number of Emigrants arrived in the several British North American Colonies, in each of the years 1790, 1791, 1792, 1800, 1801, and 1802, and from 1810, to the latest period.

Petitions presented. By Mr. Hunt, from Keighley, Yorkshire, complaining of a want of sympathy in the House of Commons, and of the passing of the Corn Bill, and praying for Universal Suffrage, Annual Parliaments, Vote by Ballot, and the Repeal of the Corn Laws. By Mr. Wyse, two from Parishes in Tipperary, and three from other parts of Ireland, for the Repeal of the Union; from Caher, against Slavery; and from a Parish of Tipperary, against the system of National Education.

Petitions for Reform.] The Sheriffs of London presented a Petition from the Lord Mayor, Aldermen, and Common Council of London, in favour of Parliamentary Reform, and especially in favour of the present measure of Reform introduced by Ministers. They declared their high approval of the principle of the measure, and expressed a sincere hope that, the Bill might be passed into a law.

Mr. Alderman *Wood* said, that, after what had been stated by the hon. and learned member for Boroughbridge respecting Corporation robbery, the House might, perhaps, be surprised that the Corporation of the City of London should thus have come down to that House to give this measure of "Corporation robbery" their decided support. He could, however, assure the House, that the support was not only sincerely and cordially, but almost unanimously given; for, out of a most numerous meeting of the members of the Corporation, only one was found to hold up his hand against the measure, and that Gentleman was known to be one who would oppose not only this measure of Reform, but all Reform whatever. He had taken the opportunity of saying this, because many persons had really come to him to ask him whether the invasion of Corporation privileges contained in the proposed measure would not frighten the Corporation of London: whether, in fact, they did not fear what the hon. and learned member for Boroughbridge had threatened them with? He had assured those Gentlemen that the Corporation of London need not have the least fear on the subject; and this Petition from them fully confirmed his statement. He would add one other observation. It was the usual custom of the City of London, when his Majesty was pleased to make a change in his Ministry, to express their satisfaction at the change; but, on the present occasion, they had waited to see whether the new Ministry were in earnest with respect to the measure of Reform; and having been satisfied on that point by the measure now about to be introduced, they had come to that House to declare their support of it. They saw in that measure a wish to save the country from its dangers and difficulties, and they gave the Ministers their best thanks for it. The Corporation of London were so satisfied with the measure, that they intended also to Address the Throne. If the Corporation of London were called on to make any sacrifices under this Bill for the benefit of the country, they would do so most readily, for they were not to be frightened by them.

Mr. Alderman *Waithman* begged to add to the statement just made by his hon. Colleague, that he had never witnessed any measure carried in a more cordial manner, or with stronger feelings of approbation, than was the present Petition. Many individuals, who, on other occasions, had been opposed to Reform, had changed their opinions, and gave their warm approbation to the present measure, in which they saw the safety and interests of the country so well provided for.

Sir *J. Mackintosh* said, that the presentation of this Petition, and the observations it had called forth, gave him the sincerest pleasure. He regretted, however, the absence of the hon. and learned Gentleman, and of the right hon. Gentleman, and of those who with them had almost appealed to the decision of the City of London as conclusive upon the subject, whether this was or not a fatal precedent with respect to the security of Corporate rights. He did not speak of such phrases as that of Corporation robbery, for they had no meaning whatever—they were exaggerated and violent language, calculated to create exaggerated notions, not at all applicable to the contents of this Bill. The name of Jefferies had been used to terrify the Corporations of this country, but the Corporation of the City of London were not to be terrified by the name of Jefferies, nor by the supposition that this Bill was only a precedent that would afterwards be used to destroy Corporation privileges. He believed, that the whole kingdom would follow the example of the City of London, and give the most perfect proof that the opinion of the people of England was in favour of this measure. He must say for himself, that he viewed the Bill as the best safeguard of public liberty. He was proud that it was his fortune to live in a day when the Ministers of the Crown came down with a measure of Reform of this kind —a measure which showed they relied less on private patronage and favour, than on the support of public opinion. To the present Administration he was much attached, on personal grounds, of course, for he had long known and admired the Members of it; but on political grounds also, because he was convinced that the sole object of their Government would be the good of the country. On every ground he wished them success in the task they had undertaken. If they were bound, in the event of a failure of this Bill, to leave their places (though he saw no reason for their doing so), he should say that they had enjoyed their places long enough; and for himself, he thought that he had lived long enough when he saw a Bill introduced into that House so conducive to the maintenance of the rights and liberties of the people, so calculated to preserve and consecrate the authority of the laws, and so essential to secure the stability of the Throne and preserve the purity of Parliament.

Mr. *Calcraft* denied the statement made by the right hon. Gentleman, that the hon. and learned Gentleman, and right hon. Gentleman on that side of the House had appealed to the decision of the Corporation of London for confirmation of their fears for the precedent set by this Bill. For himself, he fully agreed with those fears, when he saw property so invaded as it was by the present measure. He asserted, that public and private rights were unjustifiably interfered with. He set at nought the rights of those Gentlemen who were patrons of boroughs, but the rights of the voters in those boroughs were not to be treated so lightly. He saw no justification for this wholesale condemnation of what were called rotten and decayed boroughs. His hon. friend (Mr. Baring) had told them that there were in the borough which he had the honour to represent 200 scot and lot voters, who had never been guilty of any crime. Another Gentleman had told them that in the borough which he represented there were 500 persons in the same situation, and yet, when the franchise of these voters was taken from them Gentlemen had the courage to get up and declare that the rights of these 700 voters were not sacrificed. The voters in the borough which he had the honour to represent were to suffer a similar confiscation; but as he intended to enter into their cases when he addressed the House on the motion of the noble Lord, he would not say a word more on that topic at present. In his opinion the innocent voters in the majority of boroughs ought not to be punished for the guilt of the voters in a few of them.

Lord *Morpeth* said, that though he was at such a distance from his Yorkshire constituents as not to be enabled to state with accuracy the opinion of the freeholders of that county, yet, as the calls of business, especially at this season of the year, brought a great number of Gentlemen from Yorkshire to town, he had some opportunity of forming an opinion on the subject; and as far as he was able, from these auguries, to form any opinion, he was induced to think that his constituents cordially approved of the measure, and were most highly gratified by its introduction.

Lord *G. Lennox* said, that after what had been stated of the opinion of the Corporation of the City of London, he begged to state, that that Corporation was not the only one in favour of this measure. The Corporation of the town which he had the honour to represent, uninfluenced by the alarming forebodings of the hon. and learned member for Boroughbridge, had also shown their inclination to support the Bill, and he should, at the first opportunity, have a Petition to that effect to present from them. He begged leave now to thank his Majesty's Ministers in the name of the Corporation of Chichester, and in his own name, for the Bill they had thus introduced, and he expressed his sincere hope that the Ministers would fearlessly pursue their course, and if they were not supported in it by that House, that they would call on the country for its opinion by dissolving the Parliament that had thrown out such a measure.

Mr. *John Smith* confirmed the statement of the noble Lord, his colleague, as to the opinion of the Corporation of Chichester. He believed that these sentiments of the Corporation were not of very ancient duration; but since the Corporation had made up their minds on the subject, they had but one opinion upon it, and he believed that those who had formerly been most averse from Reform, were now most ardent and earnest for the success of the measure. He believed that the whole population of England, from Sutherland to the Land's End, entertained but one opinion on the subject; and for proof of that he referred to the great number of Petitions now on the Table of the House. That number, if time had permitted would, he had no doubt, have been doubled.

Mr. *Sykes* said, that the noble Lord (the Member for Yorkshire) had rightly estimated the feelings of the people in that county, at least he (Mr. Sykes) could speak positively as to that part of the county with which he was connected. In a few days he should lay on the Table of the House a proof that the population of that part of the county were to a man in favour of the measure now before the House.

Mr. *C. Calvert* made a similar statement with respect to Southwark, from which, he said, he expected, in a few days, to present a Petition most numerously signed.

Mr. *Hunt* said, he could not let this petition from the Corporation of the City of London pass without making a few observations upon it. He was one of those who would suffer by the present measure being carried into effect—he should be one of the disfranchised; for, as he was a non-resident Liveryman of the City of London, he should lose his vote there; but he thanked God and his Majesty's Ministers for the measure, for all that. He could not, however, but feel some surprise at this petition from the Corporation of London, as expressive of the opinions of the Livery, for the Corporation had little to do with the Livery, except jobbing in the City—they were no political body—they were not even chosen by the body who elected the Members for the City; they were a body appointed to look after the paving, the watching, and the lighting of the City. The Livery themselves would meet on Monday, and he had no doubt they would express their full concurrence with the measure. He had always advocated the cause of Reform, carried to an extent far beyond that approved of either by the Livery or the Common Council. He was therefore inclined to go, not only the length of this Bill, but far beyond it. An hon. Member had just stated, that all the population was satisfied with this measure. He could not hear such an assertion advanced without saying that all the population was not satisfied with it. That all the country was delighted that this measure of Reform was introduced into Parliament he readily admitted, but he denied that they were satisfied with it. Numbers of petitions had been presented in favour of Reform; but in two petitions only, one of which came from Bristol, did the petitioners pray for a Reform Bill of exclusion, or, in other words, that one part of the community should be freemen and the other slaves. He had always contended, and as long as he lived he always would contend, that the only difference between political liberty and political slavery was this,—he who has a share in making the laws which affect his person, his property, and his life, is a free man; he who has not a share in making them, is a slave. Now this Bill would place a vast proportion of the community, and the most valuable part of it too — the mechanics, who lived in small houses and tenements,—in a state of political slavery, for it would exclude them from the right of choosing Representatives. Ought he, therefore, who during all his political career had always contended for the equal rights of all,—ought he, because certain excellent friends, with whom he was proud to act, declared themselves to be satisfied with this measure, to conceal his dissatisfaction with it for not going far enough? It had been said that this Bill did not touch corporate rights. Now one of the great reasons which he had for approving this Bill was, that it did touch corporations, and that it would take from them the infamous influence which they now enjoyed. It would take influence from the corporation of the city of London, and that was with him a good reason for supporting the measure.

Mr. Alderman *Thompson* said, that, after what the hon. member for Preston had just stated, the House could not be surprised if he said a few words upon this subject. That hon. Member had described the Corporation of London as jobbers; as persons who had little else to do with the City than to superintend the scavengers, and manage the dirty work of the City of London. He was surprised at that observation from the hon. member for Preston, for the members of the Corporation were elected on the principle that the hon. member for Preston most approved—namely, that of annual elections by the freemen householders of the City of London. He had himself expressed his apprehensions of the principle of this Bill with reference to corporate rights. They took a different view of the subject but he had stated to the Corporation what was his view of the subject—namely, that the disfranchisement was large and important, and affected the whole of the body that had hitherto been the electors of the City of London. If, however, the Livery should on Monday next differ from him in opinion, and believe that the measure tended so much to the public good as to be ready to make the sacrifice of their own franchise, he should feel absolved from the engagement he had made to protect, as far as he could, their rights and privileges.

Mr. *D. W. Harvey* observed, that if it were true that the Corporation of London were so corrupt as the hon. member for Preston had stated, he should be inclined to regret that he could not congratulate the hon. member for Preston that its power to do mischief was extinguished by this Bill. It was a mistake to say, that this Bill interfered in any respect with Corporate rights. Whatever power any Corporation had for good—whatever resources for evil—would remain in full vigour when this Bill was passed into law. He rose at present as a Liveryman of London, to express his concurrence in the measure which the petition of the Corporation supported. He could not reconcile the hostility which the hon. member for Preston felt to this measure with the past declarations of that hon. Member on the subject of Reform, but he must say, that if Ministers had withheld their plan of Reform until they had devised a plan likely to meet the unanimous support of the people of England, he was afraid that the Corporation of London must have waited long before it had its present opportunity of affording the homage of its gratitude to Ministers for this wise and statesman-like measure. He begged leave to inform the hon. member for Preston, that this measure was not one of exclusion but of regulation. There was not any man of ordinary industry in the country who might not become a recipient of its benefits. The assurances which he had that morning from several of his constituents at Colchester, enabled him to inform the House, that the tidings of this Bill had received the assent of all the most enlightened and intelligent members of that place. There was no individual Member of Parliament whose electioneering interests would be more affected by the results of this measure than his would be; and yet he was prepared, from a sense of the benefits which it would confer upon his country, to give his vote in its support, even though the effect of that vote might be to close the doors of Parliament against him. With respect to what fell from the hon. member for Wareham, he would merely observe, that the question, in considering whether the small boroughs should be disfranchised, was not whether the electors were pure, but whether they were independent.

Mr. *Capell* said, this Bill would deprive of their rights many of his constituents who did not rent houses of 10*l.* a year. It would also deprive him of his vote as a liveryman of London, and therefore he meant to oppose it.

Mr. *Calcraft*, in reply to the hon. member for Colchester, contended, that his constituents were perfectly independent, and might reject him as their Representative if they were displeased with his conduct. They were all scot and lot voters, holding leases for life, and therefore exonerated from any improper influence.

Mr. Alderman *Waithman* did not think it necessary to vindicate the character of the Corporation of London, in which there were no more jobs than in other large communities. Of this he was certain, that no public body in the empire was more fairly chosen.

The Petition to lie upon the Table, and be printed.

REPEAL OF THE UNION (IRELAND).] Sir Robert A. Fergusson presented a Petition from the Apprentices of Londonderry, against the Repeal of the Union between England and Ireland.

An hon. *Member*, under the gallery, said, that the Repeal of the Union would so completely separate England and Ireland, that the latter would no longer form a part of the empire.

Mr. *O'Connell* was thoroughly convinced, that if the Union were not repealed, Ireland would indeed soon cease to be a constituent part of the British empire. It was necessary to the welfare and happiness of Ireland that she should have a domestic Legislature. If anything could retard the Repeal of the Union, by remedying existing evils, it would be the beneficial measure of Reform now under discussion. It was a calumny upon the friends of the Repeal of the Union, to say that they wished for political separation.

Sir *R. Bateson* said, that he had attended the meeting at which the petition was agreed to, and it reminded him of the manner in which in former times the "apprentice boys of Londonderry" had opposed themselves to bigotry and Popish supremacy. He also noticed the fact, that at one of the dinners he had attended, the hon. member for Waterford had drunk the health of the Orangemen of Ireland in Boyne water. He applauded the energy of the present Government, which had stopped the progress of mischief, by encouraging the loyal, and alarming the disaffected; he especially approved of the measure of calling out the Yeomanry.

Mr. *O'Connell* admitted, that he had drunk the health of the Orangemen of Ireland, as he wished to bury in oblivion all animosity, but contended that the word "Popish," which the hon. Baronet had used with reference to the conduct of the apprentices of Londonderry, ought not now to be introduced into Debate. The Irish Roman Catholics had even resisted the bigotry of James 2nd.

Mr. *Villiers Stewart* begged to put this question to the hon. member for Waterford—whether it was his intention in the present Session to bring the question of the Repeal of the Union before the House.

Mr. *O'Connell* replied, that it would depend very much upon the fate of the Reform Bill. If it were rejected, he hoped, before the close of the Session, to bring the question of the Repeal of the Union before the House.

Petition to be printed.

MINISTERIAL PLAN OF PARLIAMENTARY REFORM—ADJOURNED DEBATE—FOURTH DAY.] Mr. *Gisborne* moved, that the Order of the Day for resuming the Debate on the Motion for Reform be read, which being done, the hon. Member proceeded to say, that under ordinary circumstances he should not have put himself forward before the notice of the House, but on a question of so much importance as that which now occupied their attention, he felt a great inducement to state his opinion on it. He did not, however, rise to claim the attention of the House to his sentiments because he considered himself the properest person to answer the hon. Baronet who had spoken last on the previous evening, but because he objected to many parts of that speech, and which objections he would state to the House, if he was so fortunate as to secure its indulgence. It appeared to him, that the right hon. Baronet had, throughout his speech, assumed as an axiom, that we were really in a state of the greatest prosperity,—that we had the happiness and the glory of living under a Constitution which had borne this country to a pinnacle of power such as never before was reached —that, in a word, we were as well off as mortals could expect to be, and that if we did not know it, we ought to know it. The right hon. Baronet had also assumed, that the Parliament performed its functions properly. Now, he must say, that he thought this was assuming a great deal too much. The merit of this question greatly depended upon whether the Parliament had performed its functions ill or well. This was a point open to discussion, at least, and therefore not to be assumed as settled. To take it for granted that the Parliament performed its functions well, and then to indulge in mere declamation upon the excellence of the Constitution, was, in his opinion, to attempt to lead away the passions of the House, and to divert its attention from the real question before it. He could not help feeling that he, and the Gentlemen who took the same side of the question that he did, had great difficulties to contend with in discussing it. If they spoke of danger, they were called intimidators,—if they whispered that there were grievances, they were called exciters,—if they remonstrated, they were told that they assumed too high a tone,—and if they used the language of complaint, they were accused of a desire to inflame the people with a sense of imaginary wrongs. Thus the right hon. Baronet had occupied himself last night in finding fault with one or two expressions in the able and eloquent speech of the hon. member for Calne (Mr. Macauley), but, suddenly turning round, the right hon. Baronet had dropped the hon. member for Calne, and most strangely fixed the whole blame of those one or two unfortunate expressions upon the Ministers. The right hon. Baronet had, however, very wisely abstained from attempting to answer the arguments which had been so powerfully urged by the hon. member for Calne. Now, in spite of those restrictions, by which he felt that he and the Gentlemen who thought with him on this subject were fettered, he trusted that he might approach this question in a plain and straightforward manner, and without attempting to ride such a Pegasus as might not be unsuited to the right hon. Baronet, but which he was neither fitted nor desirous to mount. The chief and the most important of the functions of this House was the imposition of taxes; and, in considering whether the House ought or not to be reformed, he considered it most essential to inquire, whether the House had so exercised its power of taxation, and so regulated the expenditure of the country, as to conduce to the happiness and the welfare of the people. Now he had no hesitation in saying, that this question must be answered in the negative, and that hence had arisen that clamour in the country for Reform of which some hon. Members complained. That the clamour, however, was perfectly justifiable, might be easily demonstrated. He would take in proof of this position, only two of the books that were lying on the Table. These were the book of Salaries and the book of Pensions. Would any one tell him, that if they had had a reformed Parliament, it would have been possible that the salaries of their officers would have amounted to 500,000*l.*, and that their civil pensions—independent of military pensions—could have amounted to 250,000*l.*? These were not his statements, but statements which had been laid upon their Table by authority. The right hon. Baronet had denied that there were any symptoms from which it could be inferred that the country took a great interest in Parliamentary Reform; but had they not, in spite of the late hours to which the House usually sat, been compelled to devote a day, which was usually a day of adjournment, to the mere business of receiving petitions on the subject of Reform? What did the right hon. Baronet call symptoms if these did not come under his notion of symptoms? They were told that this was a revolutionary measure; but when hon. gentlemen on the other side of the House said so, he did not mean to say any thing uncivil when he stated, that he did not think that they thought so, for their acts contradicted their assertions. That, he conceived, was the just and proper interpretation to put upon their inconsistent conduct in reference to this measure. If they really thought that this was a revolutionary measure, why did they not oppose it *in limine*. As the hon. member for Waterford had said, on another occasion, "they ought to die in the first ditch." It appeared that the hon. Gentlemen opposite were willing to entertain this measure, which they had characterised as revolutionary; but, if they really thought it so, why not stop the Bill in the first stage? Why not say, we will not compromise with revolution? Though the hon. Gentlemen talked so violently, they were willing, forsooth, to let the measure come to a second reading. He required no other proof how little the violent language used was in accordance with the feelings of the opponents of the measure. The hon. and learned member for Boroughbridge had argued that Reform would afford no satisfaction, unless it was accompanied by a reduction of expenditure. He said, that though the Ministry had not cut off the malt-tax or the assessed taxes, they proposed to cut off sixty-two Members from that House. Now, as the Members of that House were to be estimated only by their public utility, he did not know but cutting off a few of them might be received by the public with some degree of gratitude and satisfaction.—When Gentlemen in that House talked of extensive measures of retrenchment, however, they ought to recollect that there was a great thing called the National Debt. It was senseless to suppose that the same public establishments should be kept up when the Funds were at 77, and when they were as high as 93. If the country was in the same state of tranquillity at home and security abroad as it had been before the late Government left office, he had no doubt that the reductions of taxation proposed by the Chancellor of the Exchequer would have been much more extensive. If the state of the country would permit of it, he had so much confidence in Ministers, that he believed they would redeem their pledges as to retrenchment as amply as they had redeemed their pledge on the subject of reform. No one took upon him to say, that Ministers had broken their pledge on the subject of reform.—But this measure had been called robbery, corporation robbery. That was the phrase; and, therefore, those who supported the measure were to be considered robbers. This part of the question, so far as the robbery of corporations was concerned, had been set at rest last night by the authorities produced by the hon. Member for Westminster (Mr. Hobhouse). A great deal had been said on the score of authority, he would now address himself to this part of the subject on the score of reason. He called upon the House to consider what it was now proposed to take away from corporations. It was not their property, real or personal; it was not their lands, goods or chattels; it was not even their municipal rights; but it was that which the law declared it to be a high crime and misdemeanour to buy or sell,—it was the power of returning Members to that House, a trust reposed in their hands by the people, and for the benefit of the people, and a trust which was to be resumed whenever the trustees acted wrong, or whenever it was for the benefit of the people that they should no longer hold the trust. He denied the doctrine, that taking away the power of a corporation to return Members of Parliament could be considered a robbery in any sense of the words: and if it was a robbery he did not hesitate to enrol himself as an accessory before the fact, and to express his willingness to take a share of the disgrace. The hon. member for Newpo t (Mr. H. Twiss) had argued, that the present system of representation was good; that the counties were represented by men of landed property, the large boroughs by commercial men, and the small boroughs introduced to the House what the hon. Member was pleased to call the professional class. Now, this description, he (Mr. Gisborne) conceived, though very ingenious, was purely imaginary. The large boroughs were not always represented by commercial men. Looking through the House, he could point out numbers who were connected with the landed interest, and represented large boroughs. There were hardly any of the commercial class representing large boroughs; and as to the professional class representing the small boroughs, that was likewise an imaginary distinction. But then it was contended, that the small boroughs were useful, as the means of bringing in men of great minds, who afterwards guided and directed the affairs of the country. As illustrations of this principle, the names of Burke, and Fox, and Canning, had been referred to. Such men as those did not seek for boroughs, to represent them; but the boroughs had found them, and returned them. If every rotten borough was closed, such men as Fox, and Burke, and Canning, must find their way into that House. It would be impossible to keep them out. The proposed measure had been called democratic, and he confessed he wished that the representation should be framed on principles somewhat democratic, and that Members should evince something of those democratic principles in their own persons. It was very important, too, that persons having habits of business should be found in that House. It was this view of the subject which made him see with great pleasure the hon. member for Preston amongst them. The great merit of the plan now proposed was, that it brought the exercise of the elective franchise within the easy reach of every industrious man. That was a great principle. He should not trespass on the House much longer. He was determined to take his stand upon this plan, as a fair, full, and effectual measure of Reform. He was not one of those who wished for annual changes in the Constitution of the country; but to prevent frequent changes, when a change was to be made, it should be made liberally. As they were much in arrear, when they did move they ought to make a long stride, if it were only to prevent constant agitation and annual excitement. It was upon this view of the subject that he solemnly declared, that if the present measure passed without any considerable amendments, should any future measure of Reform be proposed, from whoever it came, or whatever was its nature, he, for one, should be found amongst its opponents. There were many advantages, he believed, in the mode of voting by ballot; but yet, if the present measure passed, and a proposition was made to introduce the ballot, he should vote against it, upon the simple ground that enough would be done by this measure to satisfy all reasonable expectations. His judgment told him, that the measure would satisfy every reasonable mind; and, if it was carried, he should oppose any other measure as calculated to produce agitation and excitement. There were some hon. Members who contended that there was no need of Reform, and others who argued that, though Reform was desirable, there was more danger in going on than in standing still. To these hon. Gentlemen he should address no words of his own, but would content himself by quoting a short passage from Lord Bacon, who said, "Time is the greatest of all innovators; and as time, of course, will change things for the worse, if wisdom and counsel shall not come in and change them for the better, where shall be the end?"

Mr. *Freshfield* could not allow the speech of his right hon. friend (Sir Robert Peel) to be characterised as declamatory. Let that speech in all its parts and details stand on one side, and let the speech of the noble Lord, and all the supporters of this measure be placed in juxta-position with it, and then the public might decide in favour of the measure or against it. He was much surprised that the hon. Member who spoke last should charge the opponents of this measure with inconsistency, because they permitted this Bill to proceed a single step. He thought, however, that it would be of all things the most inconsistent if they put a stop to the measure in its present stage, though he believed in his conscience it was in their power to do so. If the measure was thrown out at this stage, they would be told "you oppose all Reform and all inquiry." They had heard the speech of the Paymaster of the Forces, but it was not certain that all the principles expounded in the speech would be found in the Bill. There was something so inconsistent between the previous sentiments of the noble Lord, and his speech on Tuesday night, that it was reasonable to suppose every word he had uttered would not be found in his Bill. Those who viewed the proposed measure in the same light as he did, found so much to astonish and alarm them in the speech of the noble Lord, that they doubted whether he meant to incorporate all he had stated in his Bill. They were consistent, therefore, when they said, "Let us see it in print—let us have something that we can determine and decide upon in detail." As a charge of inconsistency had been made against those who were opposed to the principle of the Bill, and suffered it to be brought in, he might be allowed to allude to what he considered egregiously inconsistent on the part of the noble Lord. The noble Lord said, he would not disfranchise scot and lot voters, and that he was anxious that property should be represented. To conciliate the lower orders, he proposed to continue scot and lot voters for the remainder of their days, at the same time that he said, they would get rid of all out-voters, who were the parties who put candidates to such enormous expense. The scot and lot voters having the right for their lives, might become out-voters, and in that character it was clear they might be brought down to control elections. The noble Lord's intentions, therefore, were clearly at variance with each other. He did not allude to this so much for the sake of proving a charge of inconsistency against the noble Lord, as for the purpose of showing that those who opposed the measure were not inconsistent in allowing it to come to that degree of maturity, when it might be seen how far one part destroyed the other. The hon. and learned Attorney General, in arguing this question, seemed anxious to arrive at the conclusion, that those who opposed this measure were the enemies of all

Reform. He represented opposition to this measure as not only inconsistent with, but dangerous to popular rights and feelings. Every one knew that the effect of such speeches was not expected to terminate within the walls of that House, but to have the greatest influence out of doors. Those speeches were made for the purpose of courting the creature of the day—what was called popular feeling. It was intended to monopolise all the liberality on the one side, and to throw all the danger on the other. The language used by the advocates of the measure to its opponents was, in effect, this—" We are the friends of popular feeling, and you are the enemies of all Reform." He could say for himself, that he was not an enemy to all Reform. He was ready to entertain every measure of practical Reform which was consistent with the maintenance of that Constitution under which he had the happiness to live, and, in defiance of the hon. Gentlemen opposite, hoped long to live. The measure of Reform proposed by the noble Marquis (Chandos), the member for Buckinghamshire, the proposed disfranchisement of the Borough of Evesham, was a practical measure. That was a safe and practical measure of Reform, though it had been ridiculed by the hon. and learned Attorney General, who had insinuated that it was nothing more than a hypocritical attempt at Reform. If the measure proposed by the noble Marquis, however, was to be considered as trifling and hypocritical, the noble Lord, the member for Tavistock, had also formerly brought forward a trifling and hypocritical measure, for his was a measure of precisely the same character. Whatever came fairly within the scope of Reform, and did not produce a dangerous and mischievous change, he was friendly to. Whatever rendered elections pure, and afforded electors an opportunity of voting freely, and independently, and conscientiously, should have his support. He denied the right, however, of the advocates of the measure to put the question as it had been put in that House. There was a specific proposition before the House; and to that he was unfriendly and hostile in the highest degree. He considered it a measure of revolution, calculated to destroy those institutions under which the country had flourished, and to substitute a system, the consequences of which no man could predicate with certainty, but which must excite the most anxious fears in the mind of every man who considered it. Some hon. Members who spoke in favour of this measure, expressed their deep sense of the danger to which the country would be exposed if this measure was not adopted. It was more than insinuated, that the country would be in a state of revolution, if the anxious wishes of the people were not met. To such a principle he could never defer. He wished his Majesty's Ministers had not given them the trouble to defeat a measure so mischievous. There might be danger in rejecting the measure; there was much more, however, in passing it. The measure was more than dangerous, it was actually destructive. He said, therefore, "let us have the probability, and not the certainty—rather than have the certainty we will take our chance of the danger." He ventured humbly, because he was an humble individual, to accuse the Ministers of that from which they could not escape—namely, that they had raised expectations, by bringing forward this measure, which they knew could never be realised. So long as the Parliament of England was honest, so long as the Parliament resolved to support the rights of the people, this measure could not be adopted. Let Ministers, then take the consequences which might follow from their propositions—propositions, as he conceived, unadvisedly and improperly presented to the House. He wished to know, for he had not yet heard, upon what grounds Ministers called upon the House to adopt this plan? The language and the arrangement of the noble Lord's speech, in proposing this measure, were creditable to him; but the views he had disclosed, and the principles he had laid down, were not new. In his speech he had embodied what was written up and down in the works of all the Reformers. His reasons were known to all who had studied or considered the subject. They had never before produced conviction, and he asked why they should now? Was it it because they came from his Majesty's Ministers? As private gentlemen, moving in a high sphere which they did, he was willing to treat them with all respect. He did them the justice to suppose, from their high reputation, that they would not do anything that they knew to be wrong. But as Ministers, he placed no confidence in them. As Statesmen, they had not shown themselves to be men, having that nice perception of the principles of national faith and public credit which should induce him to give up his judgment on their assertions. In the notable Budget which the Ministers had brought forward, they had introduced a tax on the transfer of funded property, in direct opposition to a statutory provision. [The hon. Member was about to enter into the legal question connected with this subject, when he was interrupted by loud cries of "Question."] The hon. Member continued. He was addressing himself to the question of confidence in his Majesty's Ministers, and was, therefore, not swerving much from the subject. The hon. and learned Attorney General had found out that the clause had been introduced into the Loan bills to protect the creditor from stamp duty, because all transfers were subject to stamp duty. The hon. and learned Gentleman, however, was mistaken. There was a peculiar exemption in the Stamp Act for the public creditor. He said it not out of any feeling of ill-nature to Government, but his conscientious feeling was, that the Government might be properly designated a Government of misnomers. It was a Government interfering and intermeddling, and calling itself a Government of non-interference. It was a Government throwing additional burthens on the people, and calling itself a Government of retrenchment; and it was a Government changing the Constitution, and calling itself a Government of Reform. In conclusion, he could only say, from such a Reform may we ever be delivered.

Mr. *W. Duncombe* said, that he felt overwhelmed with embarrassment and regret, to find himself unexpectedly placed in a situation of hostility to the present Administration upon a question of such importance as that now before the House. He for one, had taken part in placing the right hon. Gentlemen opposite in the seats which they now held, and he had been desirous to afford them his utmost support. But representing as he did a large constituency, from whom he had received the most distinguished reward, he meant their confidence, and feeling their interest involved in the question before the House, he considered it his duty, on that occasion, to overcome the friendly feelings which he bore towards the right hon. Gentlemen opposite, and not to give a silent vote. The right hon. the Attorney General had said, that there were only two classes in the House opposed to the Bill of the noble Lord; that which resisted all Reform; and that, for which rational Reform would be insufficient. He (Mr. Duncombe) begged to say, that he belonged to neither of these classes. He was very desirous of a rational and practical Reform. But to the proposed Reform, he was compelled to give the most uncompromising opposition; and he thought that, as respected the Constitution, the measure had been justly termed revolutionary. As respecting the House it was insulting; and, as respected the country, it was tyrannical and oppressive. He looked upon the disfranchising of the poorer classes of the people as unjust and despotic. A Reform by which hundreds and thousands of his Majesty's subjects were disfranchised, well deserved those epithets. To justify his measure the noble Lord had referred to the disfranchisement of the Irish forty-shilling freeholders; but that he considered to be a very bad precedent. He had always been adverse to that oppressive measure, which inflicted a heavy penalty on a body of men, untried and uncondemned. If even the Bill of the noble Lord was carried into a Committee, which, he hoped, would never be the case, he was sure that it would be perceived that it never could work well. The Ministers themselves had not acted on their own principle consistently throughout this Bill. If that principle was good, why was it not extended to Calne, Tavistock, Horsham, and Malton? Why had not the franchise been taken from them, whose population did not average more than 5,000, and transferred to Halifax, Huddersfield, and other towns whose population averaged more than 10,000? How could Ministers expect the question of Reform to be finally settled by such a distribution? He was sure that they would find that it was not so, even should the measure be ever carried into effect. Thinking the measure therefore, to be unprincipled, tyrannical, revolutionary, introducing a new Constitution, and destroying the balance between the several great interests of the country, he would give it his most strenuous opposition. It had been stated, that with respect to this measure his Majesty's Ministers were perfectly unanimous. He confessed that that statement surprised him not a little, when he remembered that the noble Lord opposite (the Chancellor of the Exchequer) had frequently declared himself a decided supporter of the Vote by Ballot. When he saw a Cabinet including the noble Lord, the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and the right hon. member for Inverness, he must be allowed to say, that he thought it rather a remarkable feature in the present Debate, that up to ten o'clock last night there was but one Cabinet Minister who had addressed the House. He was not less surprised to find Gentlemen also endeavouring to draw in the authority of Mr. Canning's speech on the Silk-trade, to support their own views of the question of Reform; they should have remembered, that he, above all men, was most opposed to Reform; and that if, upon a different subject, he had let fall an expression which he never intended should be applied to Reform, he left it with the House to determine what must be the extent of that candour which tortured stray remarks of a deceased statesman into the support of that, which the whole tenour of his life proved that he abhorred. The noble Lord opposite had cited the case of the disfranchisement of the Irish forty-shilling freeholders as affording a precedent to sanction his measure. It happened, rather inopportunely for the character of consistency of the present Ministry, that a noble Duke signed, in the other House of Parliament, a protest against that disfranchisement, describing it as unconstitutional, and essentially unjust. The noble Duke to whom he alluded, was the Duke of Richmond, and he was forsooth a member of that united Cabinet which brought forward the present measure. Then he found a noble and learned Lord, a distinguished member of the present Administration, supporting the Reform Bill of that united Cabinet, though, on more occasions than one, he had expressed sentiments of a character very different from those embodied in the Bill which was given to Parliament as the measure of the united Cabinet. He concluded by affirming, that the measure was revolutionary in all its tendencies, and in its principle tyrannical.

Mr. *John Smith* said, that he was one of those persons who had an interest in boroughs, but at all times he entertained a perfect conviction that such power in his hands was improperly placed; at the same time, that in justice to himself he was bound to declare, that for the nine-and-twenty years he possessed the borough in question, he never once derived a shilling of profit, from the favour of any Minister, nor was the borough of the slightest importance to him except only so far, as it enabled him to enjoy the delight of bringing one or two good Whigs into that House. In Chichester, during the election, he had been hooted and assailed, although he was one of the faction of boroughmongers. Now he could most solemnly declare that, neither directly or indirectly, had he sold his interest in the borough; and if any Member would move for the disfranchisement of Midhurst, and other boroughs of the same description, that Member should have his most cordial support; for it had been his full persuasion, that no man ought to sit in that House in right of his money. There were, however, some parts of the Bill to which he might urge some objection, but upon the whole he thought it entitled to the support of the House; and he doubted not that it would give satisfaction to the country. He declared that, when he first heard the provisions of the Bill propounded by the noble Lord, it almost took away his breath, so much was he delighted with it. It gave him the full assurance that Ministers were in earnest, and had determined to work a thorough reformation. He had heard last night the speech of the right hon. Baronet opposite, the member for Tamworth, and read it that morning; and the speech, though beautiful, elegant, and captivating, was still not convincing. That right hon. Baronet, for whom he entertained the highest respect, knew as well as any one, the way in which that House was composed; and he must know, that the disfranchisement of sixty boroughs could not fail of effecting a prodigious change in that House; at least there were many now in that House—many well-dressed, well-behaved, well-bred young Gentlemen—who, in the event of Reform, would altogether disappear: but he must take leave to say, that their loss would be well supplied by the twenty new Members from the towns which were to be enfranchised. In denying the assertion that the present was a revolutionary measure, he oberved that it would bring fifty-four country gentlemen into that House. Now he should like to ask, how the introduction of fifty-four country gentlemen into that House could have a revolutionary tendency; for if he were called on to select one class throughout the whole range of the British community more attached to our ancient institutions than another, it was the country gentlemen. He should not waste the time of the House, by insisting upon the importance of Representatives to the seven great towns mentioned; for upon that point there could be no difference of opinion, and, in fact, no such difference had been expressed. From the intercourse that he had had with persons out of doors, he was enabled to say, that great anxiety was felt upon the subject of Reform by the people at large; indeed, no better proof could be adduced of that universal feeling, than the fact of the prodigious number of petitions praying for Reform; and the reason was, that they looked to a reformed Parliament as a means of being relieved from the pressure of taxes. They also well knew, that with a reformed Parliament there was little danger of the country being again involved in such a war as the long-protracted contest with France, which this country so unwisely began and continued. The noble Lord might rest satisfied, that the people of England were with him, and that his scheme, or something on the same principle, must speedily be adopted; for the time had arrived when they could no longer postpone the great work of imparting to that House a character of independence. He believed if the measure were adopted it would go far to effect this, and make that House worthy of an independent and great nation.

Mr. *Calcraft* was understood to say, that he felt it his duty in the first place to notice the threats and intimidations with which the introduction of this measure had been accompanied. Threats had been held out to those who might have felt disposed to speak their sentiments upon this important measure, and thus to do their duty to the country, or attempt to do it. They were told, that if they did not do exactly as the promoters of this measure thought fit, the Parliament would be dissolved, and they sent back to their constituents. He always was disposed to pay the greatest deference to the demands made by public opinion, when clearly expressed; but he never would, on that occasion, or on any other, give way to the expectations of the people, if he thought that by the fulfilment of their expectations, their interests would be prejudiced. He did not mean, then, to say what were his opinions upon the subject of the present Bill; but he would state his feelings upon the conduct of those Gentlemen who assumed to themselves that they represented the opinions of the whole people of England. A new system had grown up in that House, according to which this or that Gentleman, as it might happen, spoke of the people of England, as if he alone were their Representative. Why was not he (Mr. Calcraft) to be considered as representing the people as well as any of them? Was not he, who was elected for one borough, to be considered as well as any other Member elected for a borough, containing perhaps a few hundred more people, as speaking the sentiments of the people? It was his duty to be so, for that was the doctrine and the Constitution of the country, and every man who had the honour of a seat in that House was bound to act in accordance with it. What were the sentiments of the people upon the subject of this Bill he did not pretend to know. The hon. Gentleman who had last spoken appeared to think that he knew. For his part, he hoped that an interval would be granted between the bringing in and the second reading of this Bill, in order that the opinions of the people might be learnt. He was desirous of knowing what the opinions of the people really were concerning this measure; for he did not mean to say, that those opinions ought not to have a reasonable influence and effect within the walls of that House. But what was the present measure? It did not give the people what they asked for. It was calculated to please neither the violent nor the moderate. Whether the measure was right or wrong he did not say; but, now that he had concluded this momentary excursion, he should deliver, coolly, calmly, and deliberately, his sentiments upon it. First of all, however, he would notice again the intimidation which had been resorted to, and also the use which had been made of his Majesty's name in these Debates. The right hon. Baronet (Sir J. Graham) had used intimidation before the holidays. He regretted that the right hon. Baronet was not present, for, if he had been, he would have reminded him of those persons to whom they both looked with great respect; he would remind him of Mr. Fox, who had strongly deprecated the use of the royal name in discussions in that House. As the right hon. Baronet was not present, however, he would content himself with protesting against a practice so wholly unconstitutional. As he was amongst the Members proscribed by the noble Lord's Bill, he would say nothing for himself, but he would say a word concerning those whom he had the honour to represent. The noble Lord's Bill disfranchised all those boroughs which had not 2,000 inhabitants, according to the census of 1821. The borough of Wareham, which he represented, had, according to that census, only 69 short of this number, and yet it was to be disfranchised. He wished he had known what a little increase of population would have done. As it was, however, Wareham had then only, in its three parishes, 1,931 inhabitants, though now it had 2,200 or 2,300. This measure, it would be seen, struck deeply at his constituents, who had always exercised their elective franchise without reproach—who had neither been accused of, nor tried for, abusing it—but who were, unfortunately, guilty of being sixty-nine persons less in population than the Bill required, and were, therefore, declared incompetent to vote Representatives in Parliament, not only for their own town, but for any other. Amongst the electors of that town were a great many gentlemen of property, who were as independent of him as he was of the noble Lord, except, indeed, as far as the influence of kind services, of social intercourse, and good neighbourhood, might extend. He had been for half a century connected with Wareham. He was now, however, if this Bill succeeded, to make his bow and retire from the House: but if, in his retirement, he should hear that the right hon. Baronet (Sir James Graham), with his new Parliament, was enabled to conduct the affairs of the Government, he owned that he should feel surprised. If he could not do it, he was sure that no one else could; and if he did find himself disturbed in his seat, and was still enabled to proceed, it would certainly be without either King or Lords. He had often voted for reform in Parliament, and he declared himself to be a reformer still. If he were asked to repeat whether he thought that the institutions of the country worked well or ill, he had no hesitation in saying, that they had not worked well;—but if he were asked how they would work under the new Constitution, he would say, a great deal worse. He had always thought that the evils which appertained to those institutions might have been easily remedied, but he, and those who then acted with him, could not get the House to agree with them, nor could they get the country stoutly to back them in their exertions. If, however, they passed the present measure, the mischief would be irremediable. It would overturn the balance in the Constitution, and give a preponderating influence to the one estate, which would be fatal to the other two. This he declared most solemnly to be his opinion. When he came down to the House on Tuesday, he came prepared to support the proposition of the noble Lord. This he declared upon his honour as a gentleman to be the case, and nothing but its extravagance could have deterred him from doing so. Notwithstanding his determination to support it before he was acquainted with the full extent to which it proceeded, he protested that his subsequent opposition was the result of a conscientious discharge of his duty. But to return to the Bill. He thought that there were blots in the institutions of the country which ought to be cured. There were large masses of the population which ought to be represented. All the great towns in which such a vast variety of business was carried on, ought to be admitted by their Representatives to that House, either to the increase of its numbers, or (and now he was going to admit the principle upon which the Bill proceeded), if that should be thought inconvenient and unadvisable, that some of those boroughs should be disfranchised which were without a constituency, or where the constituent body were fewest in point of numbers. Such boroughs ought, he thought, in such a case, to be sacrificed to the great principle of the *salus populi.* While, however, he was willing to make this concession, he was not willing that that House should become so far the slave of public opinion, that it should admit an overflowing influence of one of the estates of the Constitution, to the destruction of the other two. If they passed the Bill, they could not stop there. Indeed, it was not pretended that they would, for it was avowed that the duration of Parliaments and the Ballot were to be matters for future consideration. This Bill would be unsatisfactory to the thorough-going reformers, as was evident from what had fallen from the hon. member for Preston, who had said that it left out more than it took in. It left out the lowest orders of the community, who had certainly a right to be represented according to their importance in society. Of one thing he could assure the right hon.

Gentlemen opposite—the moment they should admit by this Bill four or five hundred thousand voters, that moment the people would require the Ballot. They would tell the Ministers that they had conferred a useless benefit upon them; for, as most of them would be tradesmen, they would fear offending their customers, and they would therefore say, we would vote for the hon. member for Preston, or for any other hon. Member, but we are afraid of the consequences which may ensue to our business, and therefore either take away the franchise, or give the Ballot. This Bill was giving much more than was either asked or required; if it was passed, the end would be, that they must convert the Monarchy into a Republic; and the difference between him and the new reformers that had sprung up was, that he was for Reform, and that they, with the noble Lord at their head, were for revolution. This would be the real effect of the efforts of the united Cabinet, which the country now so happily possessed; a Cabinet that made so much of its being united, though he certainly had heard that a distinguished member of it had said, that it was because they must be united, that he had agreed in the Bill, though personally he did not concur in the measure. He did not know whether this was so, but he certainly had heard it so reported. For himself, he could not bring himself to think, that he was an enemy to Reform, or to the commonalty of the country, in refusing to give his consent to this Bill, but at the same time he would unite with several hon. Gentleman who were of the same way of thinking as himself, in requesting the House to allow the Bill to be brought in without a division, in order that they might see what it really contained. That was but a sort of reasonable request for a measure that was proposed by any Government, and it would enable them to give the provisions due consideration by the time it came to its second reading.

Mr. *Stanley* had anxiously listened to the discussions that had taken place during the last eight years upon this interesting, most important, and all-absorbing, question of Reform, without, however, having ventured to give more than a silent though cordial vote in favour of the great principle which it involved. And he had adopted this course because, when the subject was under consideration before, he felt that its advocacy was in abler hands than his; in the hands of men of more commanding talent and ability than any which he could pretend to. But upon this occasion, when for the first time the nation triumphed in seeing a great and efficient measure of Parliamentary Reform brought forward (he used the words of the right hon. Gentleman opposite) by the King's Ministers, with all that authority with which their character naturally invested them,—when he saw the question thus brought forward, not as a principle vaguely thrown out by a private individual, to catch the votes of Gentlemen who dealt in generalities but fled from particulars, but as a broad systematic measure, courting discussion in all its parts, offering no concealment, but calling for the most extensive and minute inquiry, and courting public opinion upon its merits, he felt that he should be guilty of a dereliction of duty, and that he might expose himself to the possible imputation of indifference to Reform, if he refused to express his sentiments publicly upon the present occasion, and in reference to the measure under the consideration of the House. But he felt that he laboured under extraordinary difficulties in addressing the House at the present moment, because he should feel it his duty to call their attention to some portion of that commanding and powerful, he had almost said convincing, speech, to which the House had listened with so much attention at the conclusion of last night's debate; and, in the observations which he should make upon the right hon. Baronet's address, he trusted it was unnecessary for him to assure the right hon. Gentleman, as that right hon. Gentleman had assured noble Lords and right hon. Gentlemen on the Ministerial side of the House, that he entered upon the discussion with no hostile or angry feelings towards the right hon. Baronet, for there was no man in the House, of whose talents, ability, and integrity, he had a higher opinion. He could not but regret, that the right hon. Baronet's opinion, on this important question, was so directly opposed to that of his Majesty's Ministers. However, he had had the satisfaction of seeing the opinions of the right hon. Baronet gradually change on one great question, and should the present Ministers succeed in this measure, he trusted that an experience of its beneficial effects would reconcile the right hon. Baronet, to that which he now contemplated with a feeling of anxiety and disapprobation. When he said he indulged no angry feelings towards the right hon. Baronet, he should have added, that no angry feelings were called for by the terms of the right hon. Baronet's speech, in the course of which he was kind and candid enough to express his approbation of the recent conduct of the Irish Government. Such a tribute of approbation was not less creditable to the candour of the right hon. Baronet, than it must prove gratifying to the feelings of the noble Marquis at the head of that Government. But, in acknowledging this handsome and liberal conduct of the right hon. Baronet, he could not but express his regret that the right hon. Baronet should have appeared to doubt the probability of the late Government being supported in the execution of such measures as the present Government had adopted and carried into effect in Ireland. When the right hon. Baronet came forward with his great healing measure,—and he considered the present as another great healing measure,—was he opposed by those who were now in power? Who took up his cause? Who were they that, when he was deserted by his former friends, went with him hand in hand, and supported him through that cause? Who were they that advocated the principles of the right hon. Gentleman, because they were the principles which they themselves had always advocated. Why those very persons whom he now thwarted. They maintained the struggle in which he was then engaged, for they had long approved of the principle which at that time he supported. He acknowledged, that Mr. Canning, the former stedfast friend of that great measure, could not have carried it through, unless he had received such assistance as that which the right hon. Baronet and his friends could have afforded. And why? Not because the measure was not a just one, but because Mr. Canning and his party were exposed to the odium and imputation of not being true and staunch friends to the Established Church. The hon. Baronet, on the other hand, had carried the measure through, because such was the confidence reposed in him that no man could think or imagine that any proposition introduced by him could militate against the interests of that Church. But now the case was reversed in this instance. It was not possible that the right hon. Gentleman could have taken such a step as the Ministers had taken in Ireland, because he was suspected (he did not say justly) of being no very warm friend to the rights of the people. The same feeling of confidence that was placed in his Protestant principle, which enabled him to carry the Catholic Question, was placed in the present Government with regard to the rights of the people, which had enabled it, without suspicion, to carry that into effect which the right hon. Gentleman could not have done with the same success. It was a remarkable circumstance, that every Gentleman on the other side had, on this occasion, come forward with a declamation—or perhaps he ought rather to say, with a cry—that this measure was revolutionary. Now the same confidence in the rectitude of the hon. Baronet's views and principles, which enabled him to carry the Catholic Question, would, he hoped, enable Ministers to succeed in getting through the present measure, connected as it was with popular rights, without incurring any imputation of a wish or intention to injure the Constitution. He confessed that he had heard the right hon. Baronet with some sorrow join in the cry, and use, he would not say inflammatory language, when speaking of the measure, but declare that it would lead to revolution. Though, to say the truth, the right hon. Baronet was very cautious of the word; it was not a revolutionary measure—no—but it was a new Constitution.

Sir *R. Peel.*—I quoted the words of the noble Lord, and I adhere to every syllable of the noble Lord's speech, as bearing out my remark.

Mr. *Stanley.*—The distinction between the word "revolution" and the phrase "new constitution"—he meant a "new constitution" of that House of Parliament,—was very evident. Ministers had been taunted by all the Gentlemen on the other side of the House, as introducing a measure which they declared to be in its nature revolutionary; and whenever the word was mentioned, it was responded to by repeated cheers. Now his idea of revolution was this,—that revolution was a great change effected in the constitution of a country by the application of unconstitutional force,—a change effected by a force not known or recognized by the Constitution, but called by the extraordinary circumstances of the time into operation, and enabled, in consequence of the operation of those circumstances, to overthrow the Constitution. The very lowest and mildest sense in which the word could be used was, the infringement by one class of the community, by the exercise of exorbitant power, of the rights appertaining to another.

Sir *R. Peel*—What was the Revolution of 1688?

Mr. *Stanley*.—It was a revolution of which he was proud—a glorious revolution; but it was carried into effect by a Convention,—by the aid of foreign troops, and without the sanction and consent of one of the estates of the realm. But what was the case here? His Majesty's Ministers came forward to propose to that House,—whether justly or not calling themselves the Representatives of the people was of no consequence,—an alteration with respect to one estate of the realm. They had canvassed the plan in all its parts,—it was subjected to the control of public opinion, it must be submitted to the other two estates of the realm, and then he was, forsooth, to be told that this was revolution. Much had been said, also on the subject of intimidation. At every turn Ministers were met with the cry that they wished to carry this measure by intimidation. Their opponents said, "You threaten us with bloodshed and massacre, as the consequence of a refusal to agree to this plan, and thus endeavour to prevent us from doing our duty as we ought to perform it." Now on this point he was going to quote a very great authority—that of the right hon. Baronet opposite. In doing so, he did not mean to charge the right hon. Baronet with inconsistency. He admitted the justice of his argument: he agreed to every word of it. But when Ministers were told, that when they spoke of danger from the refusal to grant this measure, they were using threats and intimidation, he begged leave to read a passage from a speech delivered by the right hon. Baronet. The right hon. Baronet was arguing, as the House would anticipate, the Catholic Relief bill; and, after going very largely into the state of Ireland, he proceeded thus:—"We have also had the sad experience of that other and greater calamity, civil discord and bloodshed. Surely it is no unmanly fear that shudders at its recurrence—no degenerate impulse that prompts one to exclaim with Lord Falkland—'Peace! peace! peace!'—that looks out with anxiety for the alternatives by which civil war may be honourably averted, which may rescue the natives of the same land, and the fellow subjects of the same king, from the dire necessity of embruing their hands in each other's blood:—

> 'Coëant in fœdera dextræ
> 'Si datur—ast armis concurrant arma cavete'!"*

Now he (Mr. Stanley) asked the House, whether, in the course of the debate on the proposition of Ministers, there had been made so direct and strong an appeal as to the danger which might result from the refusal of this great and healing measure, as had been made by the right hon. Gentleman with respect to the danger which the right hon. Gentleman had adverted to, as likely to result from a refusal of the great and healing measure introduced by him? Further on, the right hon. Baronet thus expressed himself:—"That the disorganization in Ireland could not be looked on without fear; and that, to affect not to fear it, was to affect to be ignorant of what was passing around us. For his own part, he could not understand the constitution of that man's mind, who in contemplating the present state of Ireland, did not feel the most serious apprehensions." He agreed with the right hon. Baronet in every syllable contained in these observations. The right hon. Baronet's argument, on that occasion, went to this, that, entertaining the feelings which he had always entertained against the measure, still, believing that it would be a wholesome and salutary one—believing that it would be the means of averting an impending danger,—that sentiment so prevailed on his mind, that he was willing to set aside previously-formed and even still-retained opinions, in order to effect that object. When this was the case with respect to the right hon. Baronet, then, at least, let those who had always, on principles of justice and of policy, maintained and upheld this great question of Parliamentary Reform let them, in bringing their proposition forward without being told that they were endeavouring to overawe and intimidate the House, be allowed to advert to the situation of the country, as a collateral argument in favour of the measure they advocated. Surely they had a right to do so, in order to enforce their opinions on the minds of those who might be hesitating, timid and undecided, for the purpose of relieving them from their doubts, and of clearly pointing out to them from which the greater danger was to be apprehended—from the refusal or the concession of Reform. He regretted as much as any man that the name of the Sovereign had been too frequently used in that House. He was sorry that, in the anxiety and hurry of debate, any hon. member should have brought forward that name in a manner which might be supposed likely to influence their decision. But when it was remarked that the name of the Sovereign had also been made use of in the public press—to that observation he would only answer, that that House was not, that none of the Ministers were, responsible for it. That House had no influence over the public press. Neither the House nor his Majesty's Ministers were responsible for what appeared there. Ministers never used any words in the way of intimidation. It was said, that his right hon. friend near him held out the threat of a dissolution of Parliament, in the event of this measure not being carried, as a means of intimidating its opponents. But his right hon. friend positively and decidedly denied, that he had threatened a dissolution in the event of a failure of this proposition. If, however, a set of Ministers who brought forward a measure to which they were solemnly pledged, for the good of the country, found that that measure was defeated, it certainly might not be improper, in such a case, that a reference should be made by them to the opinion of the public. But the right hon. Baronet himself answered this point with a positive menace. He said, "Dissolve the Parliament if you please. If you do so, I and the 160 Members who are to be disfranchised will go to our constituents, and say, 'We are the defenders of your rights, we support your privileges, we uphold your particular interests, therefore return us. We are looking to that which will advantage you, we say nothing about the good of the nation.'" The appeal the right hon. Baronet intended to make was this—"I will go (said the right hon. Baronet) to my constituents with this Bill in my hand, and say, 'return me again, if you wish to have your privileges preserved, your rights guarded, or your franchises maintained." Thus, he supposed, every Gentleman who opposed this measure would make his appeal where he had constituents; and those who were so fortunate as not to have any constituents,—he meant individuals who were returned by the patrons of boroughs,—would doubtless make the same representation in the proper quarter. It was therefore evident, that those Gentlemen looked more to the private interests, passions, and feelings, of a portion of the people than to the welfare of the country at large. "But," said the right hon. Baronet, "If any danger arises from the failure of this measure, impute it not to those who oppose it; I throw the responsibility on your own shoulders." He, however, would contend, that the responsibility must rest with those on the other side of the House, who could not go on with the Government, because they were disposed to resist all Reform. If those Gentlemen, who, in place, resisted all efficient Reform, and who went out because they would not agree to it, though it was loudly called for by the people—if they afterwards endeavoured to baffle the efforts of those who succeeded them, —who were anxious for the success of a measure of Reform—if they strove to baffle and embarrass those who came in bound and pledged to Parliamentary Reform,—then the right hon. Baronet and his friends must take upon themselves the responsibility that would attach to the loss and defeat of the great measure. But the right hon. Baronet said, "Why has Government brought it forward? It is a bad time, and it ought not to be introduced now." In answer to this, he would ask, what was the conditional pledge upon which Ministers came in, and without which his noble friend and right hon. friends near him, would not have accepted office? It was, that they would bring forward a measure of Reform. Now, with this pledge on their lips, with those principles in their hearts which they had always maintained, they entered office. They appeared as the friends of Parliamentary Reform, hoping, as they yet did, to have the public feeling with them when they proposed a measure on that subject. And what was the kind advice which, under these circumstances, the right hon. Baronet gave them? He said, "Now that you are in office, tell the people that the time is not convenient for Reform." If the Ministers acted on such a principle as that, then, indeed, a fearful responsibility would rest upon their shoulders. Dreadful would be the consequences arising from disappointed hopes and high-raised expectations blighted and falsified by the mean conduct of those upon whom the people had relied! Procrastination in these cases was always mischievous, and the late Government might have learnt an important lesson from the consequences of delay in carrying the Catholic Question. If that had been much earlier carried, many struggles would have been spared, and that feeling which now prevailed in Ireland, the feeling of restless agitation, which had placed the population of that country in the hands and under the control of any man who sought to disturb it, would not have existed. The people would have been taught to look to other leaders and guides than those whom they had chosen, and that great measure would have been productive of the utmost good, which, now it was granted, was rendered, by the course which had been taken, comparatively useless and inefficient. All these cases of tardy political concession were like the old Sibylline Books—"the longer you delay the purchase, the higher the price you must pay, and the less the advantage you receive." He had been in hopes that a gradual Reform would have been effected in Parliament by selecting, one after another, the most notorious cases of delinquency, not as technically proved, but those great cases against which no man could close his eyes,—cases which legal evidence could not reach, but with respect to which moral conviction prevailed. They might have shown a determined desire to reform, by degrees, the abuses of the system, and then the public would have been satisfied with a less sudden and less extensive change than was now contemplated. But, let the House look back for the few last years, and mark the time, the money, and the talents, which had been wasted in discussing useless questions, with respect to boroughs charged with malpractices; inquiring, for instance, whether one voter received one guinea and another five, when it was as notorious as the sun at noon-day, that boroughs were commonly bought and sold in the market by the proprietors; and, after all this labour,—after all this investigation—after all this minute inquiry,—what had been gained for the cause of Reform? Not one great town,—not one great district—had been added to those represented in that House. Not one corrupt borough had been deprived of the means of corruption. But the right hon. member for Wareham said, that he was ready to concede to the just demands of the people. [Mr. *Calcraft:* Burke said so.] He was glad to have such good authority. That was very good authority indeed. But then why did hon. Gentlemen raise up their hands and their eyes, when they heard the demands of the people mentioned? Surely the people had not been very clamorous; they had made their representations for a long time in the mildest manner; and were they still

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* Hansard's Parliamentary Debates, vol. xx, New Series, p. 750.

> ——"in bondsman's key,
> With bated breath, and whispering humbleness,"

to sue for those privileges which he contended they ought to claim and demand as a right? Let him remind the House, that in the Bill of Rights they might find the terms, "to demand, claim, and insist upon." Was it not proper that their constituents should say to them, "At your hands we demand what are our constitutional rights?" His right hon. friend (the member for Wareham), for one who thought that the proposed measure would produce revolution, and overthrow the House of Lords, had certainly made very great concessions. He said, he would willingly give up the non-resident freemen; but, as to Wareham, he was very anxious that it should be preserved. He admitted that some boroughs ought to be disfranchised, and that certain large classes of people, and some towns, should be represented. "But," said he, "I would not have the measure of disfranchisement go so far as to those places where there were barely 2,000 inhabitants,—that step should not be taken except where the number was 1,931." This was certainly a very nice line of distinction, indeed far nicer than any that his noble friend had ever contemplated. His right hon. friend did not combat the principle of the measure, he did not contend against the propriety of drawing a line, but he wished it to be somewhere about a hundred less than his noble friend had proposed. It was clearly evident that, in adopting the principle of laying down a certain line, his noble friend had not the smallest interest at stake; but if they went on altering it, it was clear that every representative of a borough would make a request similar to that of his right hon. friend, and at length there would be no line at all. It was the opinion of Mr. Pitt, when he endeavoured to effect a Reform in Parliament, that a certain line should be fixed with respect to the disfranchisement of boroughs. Mr. Pitt having adverted to the earlier periods of the Constitution, observed,—"That as one borough decayed, and another arose, the one was abolished and the other was invested with the right." He then contended, "that the same notion should still prevail, but that it should be rescued from that accident and caprice in which it had before been involved; that the alteration should be made on principle; and that they should establish this as a clear and eternal axiom in representation,—that it should always be the same,—that it should not depend upon locality or name, but upon number and condition, and that a standard should be fixed for its size. He would submit to the world which of the two was most anxious for the preservation of the original principle of the Constitution, he who was for maintaining the exterior and name of representation, when the substance was gone, or he who, preferring the substance and reality of representation to the name and exterior, was solicitous of changing its seat from one part of the country to another, as one place might flourish and another decay?"* Now, he believed, that Wareham was one of those boroughs which might be thus dealt with. It came within the line thus pointed out, and its franchise might be advantageously bestowed on some more flourishing place. It was one of those boroughs which were so constituted that they did not give utterance to the sentiments of the community residing there. He understood that it was only necessary for the proprietor of that borough (as was the case in many others) to make a civil bow to the electors, and propose himself as their Representative. He had been told some curious circumstances, by an hon. friend of his, relative to the proceedings at Wareham. His right hon. friend near him need not feel any alarm—he was not going to divulge any secrets. The hon. friend to whom he alluded informed him, that on the occasion of his being chaired as one of the members for the borough of Wareham, he heard one elector saying to another, "Pray, who is the new Member?"—"Why, answered the person interrogated, "Calcraft is one, and a friend of his is the other; but I never saw him before, and I don't know who he is." Doubtless any person recommended by his hon. friend would be highly respectable; but he was elected without being at all known by the voters. This was not much in favour of Wareham. The opponents of the proposed measure said, "We do not object to the disfranchisement of delinquent boroughs; prove corruption, and we will give them up." Now he would ask, how was it possible for the ingenuity of man to discover delinquency in the wall at Midhurst, or corruption in the green mound at Old Sarum? The proposition of those who offered to give up the delinquent boroughs went to this,—"Those poor people who are discovered to have taken a paltry petty bribe shall be sacrificed; the boroughs they belong to shall be disfranchised, but other places, which are notoriously bought and sold, shall be preserved, because no bribery can be traced there." And why? Simply, because there is not a soul to be bribed. As to the accusation of corporation robbery and spoliation, he would say little about it; because Mr. Pitt, the hon. and learned member for Nottingham, the hon. member for Westminster, and other hon. Members, had completely and triumphantly set aside that part of the arguments advanced against this measure. He would merely ask, if delinquency were to be the rule of prostration and cashiering, as it had been called, how could the right hon. Baronet defend the disfranchisement of the 40*s.* freeholders? He agreed with the right hon. Baronet, that it was a beneficial measure for Ireland; and he did so because the franchise was exercised under the dictation of parties who looked only to their own interests, and were careless of the public good. But still the 40*s.* freeholders were not to blame: the franchise was taken away, not on account of any delinquency of theirs, but because the right, while nominally exercised by the many, was really wielded and used for their own purposes by the few. But Gentlemen objected to the sum of 10*l.* being selected as the qualification: while those Gentlemen themselves had fixed at that sum, the qualification of the freeholders of Ireland. Here was, indeed, the difference between this Bill and that by which the 40*s.* freeholders were deprived of their right—that by it not a single individual would be deprived of the right which he at present enjoyed. If hon. gentlemen would wait till the Bill came before the House, they would find that the deprivation extended to the class, and did not include individuals. The qualifications of those voters who now voted in towns or any thing less than that fixed by the Bill would not extend beyond the lives of the present possessors. No man, he repeated, therefore would be disfranchised, except by his own act. The rights of individuals were saved, but the rights of classes would be abrogated. Much had been said of the benefits of the nomination boroughs, but that had been so ably answered by the hon. member for Calne, that it would not merely be a work of supererogation in him to expose that fallacy, it would be impertinent to go over the same ground which that hon. Member went over so much to his credit. It might be true that they had been the means of bringing many able and excellent men into the House, but there was one class they could never bring; there was one point in which they must fail; they could never send to the House representatives of the people. That defect must, in the minds of the people, more than balance all the merits of such Representatives. They had been told last night that this measure would be admitting 500,000 persons to the councils of the nation. In his opinion, it would do no such thing. It would admit them to the possession of rights which belonged to them from their wealth and intelligence, and consequent importance in the political scale. By this means, they would attach them to the institutions of the country, and gain more from their affection than they could by keeping them unconnected with, and at a distance from, the benefits of the Constitution. But then it was said that the measure was revolutionary. To this it was scarcely necessary for him to urge more in reply than a mere denial of any such object on the part of those who introduced it. He should observe, however, that he was not likely to be a party to any measure of that kind. Was his noble friend who introduced the measure to the House a man without any stake in the country? Was not the name he bore in itself a guarantee against any such intention? Was his noble friend, the noble Earl at the head of the Government,—he who was said to be strenuously attached to the privileges of his order,—who had on more than one occasion been made the object of attack on that ground,—was he, he repeated, likely to advocate a measure which was to involve those privileges, and to involve the monarchy, in one common ruin? Look round at the other members of his Majesty's Government, and of those who have come forward to support them on this occasion, were they men of no fortune, mere adventurers, who would have every thing to gain and nothing to lose by a revolution? Or were they not men who have large stakes in the country, and whose individual interests are bound up with the permanent peace and security of the State? What, then could they gain by the chance-medley of a revolution? Their object was the promotion of the true interests of the country. They conceived that in no way could they more effectually secure those interests,—in no way could they render permanent the institutions of the country, than by basing them on the affections of the people. They endeavoured to strengthen the Constitution by a reformation of some of its abuses—by adjusting it to the altered circumstances of the time; yet for this wise and salutary course they were stigmatized as persons who would annihilate the power of the Crown, and of the House of Lords. For his own part, he felt no alarms of the kind for the results of the Bill. By that Bill would be upheld the influence of the aristocracy as it was before,—he meant that legitimate influence which they ought to possess,—not the influence of bribery and corruption,—not the influence of direct or indirect nomination. These were influences which it was one object of the Bill to remove, because they were unjust, and inconsistent with the principles of our Constitution. But the influence which it was always within their power to secure,—the natural influence of property, the influence arising from that respect to high rank which was no where greater than in this country,—the influence which they might obtain from affection generated by kindness and good offices to those around them,—these would all remain in full force. The only influence which the Bill would remove was that which was in itself illegal. It had been stated by a noble Lord (Stormont), that it would be difficult to find, in or out of that House, 168 Members who would be content to sign and seal their own damnation. There might, he would admit, be some—though he did not know them—who looked more to their own private interests in important public measures than they ought to do,—but one striking instance, of a very different kind, in the course of that evening had been displayed. The hon. member for Midhurst, one of the boroughs proposed to be disfranchised, had come forward and stated, that he had unjustly exercised a power which did not belong to him,—though the fault certainly was not his, but that of the Legislature which had permitted it,—that he had exercised that power too long, and he now offered it as a sacrifice to the general good of the country. Earnestly did he hope that others might follow the example, and among the 168 he had no doubt that many would think the measure was brought forward in sincerity and honesty, and would not impugn the motives under which the Ministers had acted. And let hon. Members say whatever they pleased against the policy of the measure, Ministers had come into office pledged to Economy, Reduction, and Reform. Those pledges they had redeemed. They had cut off, from themselves and their successors for ever, that corrupt patronage upon which, heretofore, so much of the influence of Government depended. With these views of the measure before the House, he earnestly implored hon. Members, by their sense of justice to the country,—by their respect to what was due to the people,—by their regard for the maintenance of that glorious Constitution which had been handed down to them by their ancestors [*great cheering on the Opposition side*],—he repeated, that Constitution which Ministers were now endeavouring, not to violate but to amend,—by their regard for the permanency of our institutions, and the peace and security of the State,—he called on them by all these considerations, by their respect for the petitions of the people, for what might be lawfully asked, and could not be constitutionally refused—to support his Majesty's Ministers in their endeavours to uphold and cement the legitimate rights of the Crown, the aristocracy, and the people, and by so doing to fix the whole, as well as their own fame, on the imperishable basis of the affections of the people.

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* Hansard's Parl. Hist. vol. xxv, p. 438-9.

Lord *Seymour* said, the measure proceeded from a desire to court popularity. It was an unjust attempt to reduce the power of the aristocracy as well as of the lower classes. If that House was the corrupt body it was represented to be, it was incompetent to settle this great constitutional question. There was no principle preserved in the measure; and the House was threatened, if it did not consent to it, with the vengeance of the Crown, and the fury of the people. Than such a large and sweeping alteration, it would be better to have a new Constitution at once. It left the indirect influence, and did away with direct influence, which of the two was the least injurious. He could not support the measure, therefore he had left the Ministerial and gone over to the Opposition side.

Mr. *C. W. Wynn* said, that he had listened with great attention to the different arguments which had been ably urged on both sides of that most important question. With the single exception of the Catholic Question, it was of magnitude unparalleled by any measure brought into Parliament for the thirty years that he had had a seat in the House. He came to the consideration of the question fairly, and destitute of all bias, except that which naturally arose from the respect he felt for his noble friend, who brought forward the subject, and except that respect he had for the different members of his Majesty's Cabinet, with whom he had been long in habits of intimacy. He trusted, that in his opinion he was not influenced by the false pride of consistency; and he held, with the right hon. Gentleman opposite, that nothing was so contemptible as knowingly to persist in error. On what was opinion formed but on the state of circumstances and of society, and of all the things around them, including the tempers and dispositions of the people, the Government of whom was placed in their hands. He believed that he could say with truth, that on this important question he had no bias. He had looked at it for many years with deep interest, and had always opposed large and general changes in the system, and visionary alterations. At the same time he had never felt that dread of innovation which had prevailed amongst some of those with whom he had lived in habits of intimacy, and for whom he felt great respect; for he was convinced that the constitution of this country was one of innovation, of perpetual innovation, and that a susceptibility to perpetual amendment and improvement was one of its leading principles. He had always been a friend to regulation and improvement; but then the amendments and improvements ought to be gradual. Measures by which large changes were contemplated ought to be gradually introduced, otherwise they might endanger the safety of the whole. He had therefore always supported bills which went gradually to ameliorate the Constitution. To those bills which had been brought in at different times to disfranchise corrupt boroughs he had been uniformly friendly. He might say without egotism, that the first proposition which was submitted to Parliament for the complete transfer of a franchise from a corrupt borough, that of Hellestone, to Yorkshire, on the motion of his noble friend, that of the Marquis of Tavistock in 1813, was drawn up by him. He thought that ameliorations of that description were necessary, and were desirable, and he had always wished to effect them. He believed, that from the period when the borough of Grampound was disfranchised, most of the friends of Constitutional order had entertained sanguine hopes, that by persevering in a course of that description, the House would run no risk of any danger, and a great and sudden change would be avoided. For many years, he must say, that House did its duty, and not a bill of that description had been proposed to that House which had not received its sanction. But, unfortunately, a practice adopted in the other House, of not passing such bills, unless the strongest and most complete judicial evidence was produced of the corruption of the borough, became a rock on which all such bills split. He did not wish to blame those at whose instance this practice was adopted. It arose, perhaps from a habit of considering these questions as merely judicial and penal, and affecting only the individuals accused, but they were also questions of remedial policy, in which Parliament was to act legislatively. At length the case of East Retford arose in which he had hoped the same course might have been pursued as with respect to Grampound, but that measure had failed and never did so small a cause produce so great an affect. His right hon. friend asked if the failure of that measure was enough to justify so great a change as the present. He would say, not intrinsically, but by the feelings it produced. When it was seen that two cases occurred together, one the strongest possible, and the other very weak; and when it was seen that the weak one was selected for the application of the strong remedy of transfer, and as had been repeatedly foretold, had failed in the House of Lords —while in the strong case, the most appropriate ever known, for a transfer of the franchise the only remedy granted was the weak one of throwing in the adjoining hundreds, the result, he believed on the general feelings was greatly mischievous. He was satisfied that it was desirable to extend the representation to large towns. How was that to be done? An addition to the numbers of the House, already inconveniently large, would not answer. It was already more than sufficiently large for the due discharge of its duties. The large towns, then, could only be represented by disfranchising some other places. His noble friend (Lord Palmerston, we believe,) could bear witness for him that he had always considered the subject to be environed with difficulties. A man must be bolder or wiser than he was, who could see his way out of these difficulties. Under these circumstances when the change took place in the Administration, the new Government pledged itself to safe and practical retrenchment, the maintenance of peace, and efficient Reform. In the propriety of the two first, all men, he believed concurred. On the third, there was more difficulty, he felt the greatest confidence in the noble Lord at the head of the Government, and in the assurances of the moderation of his views, and that confidence was increased by the admission to the Cabinet of several friends, who had for years struggled for the same opinions as his own on this subject. He had stated to that noble Lord, that he could only look at the Reform Question reluctantly, and was not willing to adopt any change, except one of great necessity. It was due to himself to state this, and he hoped the House would allow him to speak of himself. On these grounds he had accepted office, stipulating expressly on the subject of the representation, that if that question were submitted to Parliament, he reserved to himself the liberty of stating his opinions on the subject, whatever they might be on the usual implied condition of relinquishing office, if he could no longer support the Government under which he acted. In the formation of the measure submitted to Parliament, he of course had no share; and, not being a member of the Cabinet, that measure was not communicated to him till the week preceding the time it was brought forward. He had given great attention to the measure; and, in many points, he highly approved of it. He approved of the part stripping non-residents of the right of voting, confining the right of voting to the resident householders paying 10*l.* rent. That was a great improvement. He approved, too, of the regulations for taking the poll by districts, and all the regulations connected with that part of the subject, except one—the proposed Committee of the Privy Council. The power given to that Committee was, in his opinion, greater than the House was authorised to delegate to any individuals. If the counties were to be divided into districts, that could not properly be done by the Government, it must be done by Parliament, and Parliament could not and ought not to delegate the power to do this, nor suffer the Crown to delegate such a power to any individuals. There were many defects in the measure which he could conceive it possible to remedy, but he would not enter into any details. It might be altered in the Committee, but the changes must be large and extensive. He did not agree, indeed, with those Members who said it was not in the power of Parliament to alter the franchise. It was not a right to return Members to Parliament, it was a duty; and when the sovereign power which resided in Parliament thought that duty would be more advantageously fulfilled by a different class of persons than by the present voters. Parliament had a right to make any alteration it thought proper. He could not understand how any person who had voted for the disfranchising the forty-shilling freeholders could make an objection to the Bill on that score. But when he saw that the measure contained such a wide, such a sweeping proposition, as to dismiss at once nearly one-fourth of the Members of the House of Commons, replacing them by others, he felt that the change was much greater than he was prepared to agree to. The measure was much too vast to be contained in a single Bill. When 107 places were to be disfranchised, separate questions must be taken on each individual case. He was told, indeed, that the greatest care had been taken to draw the line impartially, and that only population was considered. But was population the only criterion which ought to determine their decision? He thought they also ought to look at the circumstances, wealth, and situation of a borough as well as at numbers. For example, a borough might consist of a single street, and have only half a dozen voters, but it might be close to a large town; now if such a borough was to be disfranchised, and another that had more people, but was not near so large as the town adjoining the disfranchised borough, was to retain its privileges, that would be, in his opinion, improper. He was obliged, therefore, to say, with pain and regret, that unless the Bill received modification, which could not reasonably be expected, so as to change the nature of many of its propositions—unless many parts of it were expunged, which he could not hope for—he could not give his support to the measure. He had seen times more perilous than the present, times he believed more perilous than any other in history, and the country had been safely conducted through them by the wisdom and firmness of the Government. In those critical times, many of the Members of the Boroughs it was now proposed to annihilate were the safeguards of the Constitution. He was not prepared, therefore, to make so large a sacrifice. It was said, that the measure was one of safety, as precluding further changes; that if less were now done, greater changes would speedily be required, and there would be no safety. He did not agree with that opinion. If, even in ten years, the whole of this measure would be effected, he should think that was a good reason why the measure should only be adopted in part, and that according to the success of that part, other portions should be gradually and successively adopted. He remembered that it had been well stated by his noble friend, the Lord Chancellor, that every man who set about making a reform should reflect that he was about to proceed in an untried path. The noble Lord compared such a man to a navigator exploring an unknown coast, and counselled him frequently to heave the lead. He was not satisfied that large bodies of the population should remain unrepresented; he was anxious that the manufacturing towns should be represented, and it might be desirable that room might be made for those Representatives by the disfranchisement of some place now sending Members; but he was not satisfied to adopt the large changes proposed by this measure. He differed on this point from many of those with whom he had been in the habit of acting, and whom he respected; and he must also state, that he had an additional regret in differing from a large body of his constituents, who had pronounced a very strong opinion in favour of Reform. He regretted this; but there were occasions when a man would be worse than contemptible if he did not act on his own opinion, let the consequences be what they might. It was his duty, he thought, in accepting a charge as a Representative, to state his own opinions in the best manner he could, but to do it honestly. It had been his lot, on former occasions, to differ from his constituents, and he had experienced uniformly the same confidence as at first. The opinions he had formerly given were honest; he had now, too, given an honest opinion, and he trusted that he should have the same confidence continued to him now as in former times. He had done his duty, though he had done it with pain.

The *Lord Advocate* spoke as follows: I believe, Sir, that I need scarcely state that the part of the great measure introduced to the House by the noble Lord, which first attracted my attention, was that which related to the Representation of Scotland,—a part of the subject which has hardly been noticed in the course of the debate, and which, from the general silence of the Members for Scotland, I must presume meets with their approbation. The noble Lord who explained the measure of Reform to the House, stated in a speech unusually distinct and luminous, and, considering its brevity, surprisingly complete, that Government proposed to bring in successively three bills, with the intention of reforming England, Scotland, and Ireland. If I do not greatly misapprehend the rules and forms of this House, the question relating to the representation of Scotland is now as much within the consideration of the House, as if it had been specifically brought before its notice. The duty of drawing up the bill relating to that part of the subject, has been officially intrusted to me; but I certainly have no wish to enter into what might now be considered by the House as an uncalled-for defence of that proposition. Two noble Lords on the opposite side of the House have indeed introduced the name of Scotland; but beyond a general statement of the sufficiency of the present system of representation, or rather the undoubted prosperity of the country under that system, I am not aware of their having made any impeachment of the proposed alterations, or any distinct vindication of the existing system. In so far as relates to the great measure itself which has so long engaged the attention of the House, I cannot but feel, that some of the topics which in the early part of the debate occupied a great share of the attention, and not a little of the interest of hon. Members have been already finally disposed of in the judgment of both sides of the House. I believe that the grounds on which the opposition to the measure now rest are these—the undoubted prosperity of both parts of the island under that form of representation which the proposed measure impeaches as imperfect—the want of specification of any positive or direct evils, which can be traced to alleged defects in the present system, and the want of any specification of particular benefits which the proposed alteration would produce. To these grounds of opposition I might add,—for I shall say nothing of Corporation robberies, or even of the more favoured, though not less extravagant imputation, that the measure is revolutionary,—that it was calculated to infuse too democratic a spirit into the Constitution; and was likely to lead, by gradual progression, to other alterations, which would ultimately destroy the monarchy and the hereditary branch of the Legislature. It was further urged, that no reason had been presented on the part of those who proposed these very extensive changes, except, that the country not only desired, but clamoured for them, and that with such determination of purpose and such undisguised menaces, that the House must concede to the cry of the people what it would not to the arguments of those who proposed changes; while that cry had actually been raised by those persons who had introduced the proposed measure of Reform into the House. Now, with respect to the argument which appears to me to have produced the greatest effect in this House—namely, that the country had prospered eminently under the present form of representation, for a long course of years, and that it was rash, therefore, and unnecessary, to venture on a change, I must be permitted to say, that nothing can be more fallacious than this argument, or more extravagant than the conclusions to which it necessarily led. When, I would ask, when was the time, for many hundred years back, that England was not distinguished for glory, wealth, and splendor? Is it not true, that in the days of the Tudors and the Stuarts, England had already achieved a high place among the nations of the world for wealth, splendor, and cultivation, and even for a great degree of domestic liberty? But, would it be alleged, that the people of England ought now to be satisfied with the political institutions, or the measure of political liberty which satisfied their ancestors then? The fact to which all history bore witness, and independent of that testimony a principle offered to the consideration of every reflecting person, was, that for nations to attain a great measure of prosperity, and an infinite measure of wealth, very little political freedom was necessary. The truth is, that it is most generally under such defective political institutions that nations first obtain eminence in arts, manufactures, commerce, and wealth,—and the fruit of that prosperity is liberty. The first step to regeneration was, the moderate degree of freedom granted to commercial towns, which had made some advances in civilization and wealth. The other day, the hon. and learned member for Newport, (Mr. H. Twiss) had indeed expressed great apprehension at such places being admitted within the pale of the Constitution. The hon. and learned Member, to support his own views, had quoted from a very able commentator on the British Constitution—the author of Ecclesiasticus—the following passage.—"They are wise in the work to which they have committed their minds." They might work very well, he admitted, in metal, and in wood, but were not fit to come into Council. And this might be true enough of the first generations of the industrious: but another spirit arose in the race to whom their wealth was transmitted; and to whom it imparted leisure to reflect, and to cultivate their faculties; and a sense of dignity and independence, which led at once to the assertion of political power and importance. This, in truth, was the natural history and genuine genealogy of freedom; and, in the first instance at least, though the order might be afterwards reversed, liberty was the daughter, not the mother of riches. Thus, and thus only, arose the Italian Republics, the free towns of Germany, and the acknowledged germs and seeds of our own liberty, the trading towns and Corporations which were the first to be emancipated from the oppressions of feudal tyranny. As wealth accumulated, men became anxious to have protection from vexatious and illegal interferences with their concerns; and, soon after, the increase of cultivation, and the diffused intelligence which wealth had created, required, from time to time, more and more intelligence, and skill, and concern for the general good, on the part of the Legislature, and a more minute acquaintance with the wants of the community. The fact was deducible from principles which admitted of no question, that as long as nations continue crescent and progressive in wealth they constantly and successively outgrow the dimensions of their political institutions; and it becomes necessary to alter, adapt, and enlarge those institutions, in order to accommodate the continually increasing number of intelligent and independent citizens who are entitled to share in their benefits, and to meet the great and accumulating difficulties which grow out of such complicated interests. Accordingly, what had been the progress in England? We were prosperous and splendid, while we were saddled with the Star Chamber, with the prerogative, with purveyance, and with ship-money. At that time there were merchants of great opulence, men of spirit and intelligence in public affairs, and authors of unequalled talent, and immortal glory. England, in fact, then bore as proud a name among the nations as at any after period; but as wealth multiplied, intelligence spread among the population; and in the same proportion it was found necessary to widen the basis on which the Constitution rested, in order to provide room for the multiplied children of freedom. The question, then, was, whether that basis was wide enough at this moment, or whether more room must not still be made for those who had now become entitled to better accommodation? The great question, therefore, is, whether it can be seriously doubted, that within the last twenty-five or thirty years, there has been generated and developed among the people of this country, a vast mass, not of intelligence and independence only, but of political capacity and interest; a power to understand, and a desire to possess, their constitutional rights, compared with which, all which I have spoken of as existing in the most glorious periods of our older history, was proportionably insignificant. We all knew how, in feudal times, the Barons extorted charters from tyrannical sovereigns; and how towns were taken under the protecting wings of the Barons, or the Sovereign, in order to give strength to one or other of those parties. Then the serfs and villains were emancipated; and, last of all, the burgesses rose into wealth and importance. But, where was the man who would say, that at any of those periods the improvement and enlargement of our political institutions should have finally stopped? Or can any man, who looks at the present condition of these institutions, aver that they are actually such as no improvement in the wealth, numbers, and intelligence, of the community, could justify us in enlarging? By what criterion is a judgment to be formed as to the point beyond which it would be impossible to go with advantage? This is truly a matter of feeling and observation, rather than of reasoning. Wherever there is lasting and reasonable discontent, there is, probably, need for reformation. I know no limits to such improvements, but the limits to the desires of intelligent men, who crave, and render reasons for their craving, or some plain unsoundness in the arguments by which their desires must be defended. But I shall now come to the fact; for it really seems to be little else than a matter of fact that is in dispute between the two sides of the House. I wish, in the first place, to look for a moment, exclusively, to the great number of persons of wealth, respectability, intelligence, and loyalty, belonging to the middle ranks, in London and Manchester, who are now unrepresented. Is it true, in point of fact, that that great body of persons are discontented and dissatisfied, soured and alienated, by their exclusion? [" *No, no,*" *and Cheers.*] I think I may venture to answer the question. I think I may assume, without much presumption, that it is generally known in the country, that petitions in favour of Reform have been laid on the Table of this House, uncountable in number; signed, not by tens, or twenties, but by fifties, and hundreds of thousands. Now, if it was, indeed, true, that these petitions did not speak the desires of the wealthy, intelligent, and industrious persons, whose names they assume, if it was true that the great body of respectable people in the districts I have mentioned, did not share the sentiments of the petitioners, how was it they had not sent other petitions to that House expressive of their opinions, and denying the statement of their dissatisfaction? The petitions were not got up in a corner, nor were they looked upon, either in this House, or without it, as so notoriously false and absurd, as to be deserving of no answer. On the contrary, they had shaken the country from border to border, and had sent forth the boldest defiances and challenges to any one to dispute the truth of their allegations; yet these challenges had not been accepted; and those who were now said to be contented, had been silent under the defiance. So far as I can recollect, I have heard in this House but of one petition which has been presented against Reform, and that came from Bristol, and contained a sort of mimicry of the language of the Iron Barons of Merton;—" We do not wish the laws of England to be changed." But it is more eculiarly my province, as it is my pride, to call the attention of the House to the vast number of petitions which have been presented in favour of Reform from different parts of Scotland; and as to the greater part of which, I think I may say, with confidence, that not the slightest influence had been exercised to get them up. I must advert particularly to the petitions, not merely from the merchants, bankers, and manufacturers, but from the Magistrates, and Town Councils of Glasgow, Dundee, Aberdeen, and from the citizens of Edinburgh; the latter of which I know to be signed from my own personal knowledge, by four-fifths, if not five-fifths of all the persons of wealth and respectability in that city: and also, that a large proportion of the 180 persons who signed the requisition for the meeting at which it was carried, had been converted from a feeling of distrust towards Reform, to a sense of the propriety of its concession. There are two points upon which objections have been taken to the measure; one, the giving of the elective franchise to those who had it not; the other, the taking it away from some of those who had it. At present, I wish to speak only to the first of these points; and with regard to it, would any man say that a body of unrepresented persons, equal in numbers, and far superior in wealth, to double the population of some of the capitals of Europe, should not have a Member to represent them? Was not this, then, a great advantage in this Bill? It was not easy indeed to comprehend the grounds upon which this part of the measure is objected to; and even the luminous statements of the hon. member for Callington have left it in utter darkness. Why should the men of wealth, intelligence, and industry, in certain parts of London and in Leeds, not have Representatives, as well as men in the same, or a lower condition, in other parts of London, or in Nottingham? The member for Callington had made no answer to that question; but had gone off in a fine-spun and hypothetical dissertation on the advantages attending the present system, under which the hereditary aristocracy and the democracy were so harmoniously mingled in the House of Commons! and he said, "If you change this system, you lose these advantages." But how would this part of the Bill interfere with these imaginary advantages? The advantages flowed, it seems, from the close and rotten-borough part of the system; and were not diminished by the franchise in old London or in Nottingham. How, then, should they be diminished by the creation of similar franchises in newer parts of London, or in Manchester or Birmingham? But the truth was, that these supposed advantages were purely ideal and imaginary; and that the hon. Member's whole exposition and deduction of them, was a conspicuous example of the strange, fantastical, and unsound speculations by which ingenious men will cover the palpable unsoundness of tenets which it is their interest or inclination at all events to maintain. There was, in truth, no advantage in the Peerage or the Crown having an influence in the Commons House of Parliament; and if there were, it was manifest that the present system of election did not secure that advantage. The matter is settled every where, except in this House; and I should like nothing better than to see the hon. member for Callington proposing his fanciful theory to the merchants of Leeds or Manchester; not in the streets or market-places, to an inflamed or ignorant multitude, but there, where merchants most do congregate, in the counting-houses and wealthy dwellings of men, as cultivated and intelligent as himself. Let him see how such men would deal with his theory. Let him consider how the Press already treats it out of doors. Every body knows what strange tricks interest will play with a man's faculties, and how unconsciously we are duped by our own prejudices and partialities. Let the House consider, but for an instant, what is the amount of the hon. Member's argument about Peers possessing their native authority, and privileges, and prerogatives, in the House of Commons. I must take leave to say, in the first place, that I am not aware that Members of the House of Lords, in their individual capacity, do now possess any prerogatives or privilege at all, except that of being hereditary legislators; which privilege they could not possibly exercise any where but in their own House. It is not therefore as Peers, but only as rich proprietors, that they could ever enjoy this extraordinary privilege, and there was an end, therefore, at once, to the dream of these two branches of the Legislature, blending their functions, in some inexpressibly benignant manner, in this House. But, in the next place, it is not true that the privilege belongs to rich proprietors, or is a beneficial way of bringing the legitimate influence of property to bear on public concerns. The richest proprietor in the land has no such privilege, unless he is proprietor of a borough: and many men own boroughs, who have little other property. Take the average wealth of all the borough-holders in the country, and I will undertake to shew that, for every one of them, there are fifty men of equal wealth, who have no boroughs, and thus there is an end also of the other dream, of this arrangement being a desireable means of giving weight to property! In fact, it is not the influence of large property at all; and it is not a fair influence of any property. Many poor men invest their capital in boroughs, in hopes to enrich themselves by the illicit sale of them; and many rich men grow poor by the unskilful management of the same illegal traffic. If it were right that rich men or Peers should have this strange privilege, why is it not given to them openly? Upon the theory of the hon. Gentleman opposite, every Peer, with an income of 10,000*l.* a-year, should have a Member to sit in that House to represent him; and every commoner with 20,000*l.* should have his Member too; then there would be ensured a proper appendage to rank and opulence, instead of there being, as at present, a narrow and unjust monopoly of the privilege. There is no doubt, I believe, in any quarter, that property ought to have a large influence in the election of Members of Parliament. But is it really pretended, either that the proposed Bill will destroy that influence, or that the present system gives a fair or secure scope to it? That it would not destroy or exclude that influence, seemed to be conceded by the hon. member for Callington, when he referred to the influence of the Bedford family in Tavistock, and said, "that, after the proposed measure had done its worst, he would still ensure the present Member's Seat for that borough, for half-a-crown." I think the hon. Member would very probably be safe with that cheap insurance. But could there be a more conclusive proof that the fair and legitimate influence of rank and property will not be diminished by this Bill? In my opinion, indeed, it will be very much increased; for, as things now stand, a very large proportion of boroughs are withdrawn from the natural and benignant influence of property bestowed in acts of kindness and judicious charity; and, instead of being cheered by the undebasing bounty of a munificent and hospitable neighbour, are degraded and enslaved by a sordid and tyrannical dependency on a sordid and tyrannical master. The objectors to the measure were singularly contradictory; some objected to it as too popular and democratic; and then they also objected that it excluded the lowest classes. How were these objections to be reconciled? It was said that tradesmen, and attornies, and petty householders, would be admitted to the elective franchise, under the qualification of 10*l*., and that therefore the qualification was too low. Now, the fact happens to be, that, in ninety-nine cases out of one hundred, the qualification, whenever it is altered, is raised. In the counties, where it had always stood at 40*s*., it is now 10*l*. In boroughs, again, the corporators, if resident, are left during their lives; but instead of scot and lot, or pot-walloppers, a 10*l*. qualification will be required. Gentlemen argued, too, as if the qualification was not to include houses above 10*l*., whereas it was 10*l*. and upwards, and that might be 100 or 1,000 fold. Was that to inundate the land with a democracy? Really, if the 40*s*. freeholders and the pot-wallopers of the present system did not produce that effect, it was not easy to see how it was to be produced by raising the qualification. But even if the qualification had been lowered, it seems to me a strange mistake to suppose that it would be likely to produce dissatisfaction or disloyalty, or an indisposition to acknowledge the authority of the law. Would it be said that a comparatively poor man was less interested in the security of his little property, than the rich man who was dying of ennui in the midst of his useless hoards? On the contrary, a man who had acquired a certain degree of competency, looked with the greatest anxiety on what affected the security of his property and was of all others the most likely to rally round the only authority by which that property would be defended. He felt himself lifted above that want which he once endured; and though he felt pride in contemplating his own elevation in the scale of society, he looked down with sympathy and affection upon those who were still struggling with adversity. He was the person, therefore, whom it most behoved the Government to attach to itself by kindness, and by conceding his rights, and the firmest reliance might then be placed on his fidelity. And if it be indeed true, that there are individuals, or associations, in this country, who meditate an attack on property, and set lawful authority at defiance, such persons as he would be ready to join hand and heart in resistance to them. No thinking man, who reflected upon the subject, would contend that the safety of the country rested upon any other basis than a regard for the security of property; and when society was founded upon that basis, the coronet was in no danger of being touched, nor a jewel of the diadem of being soiled. I have, therefore, no distrust of this 10*l*. qualification; nor, indeed, am I able to imagine by what process of reasoning a contrary conclusion has been formed. Had the Bill done the reverse, and proposed to reduce the qualification, there might have been some reason in the objection. How this inconsistency is to be explained, I confess I am unable to conjecture; but I think I have found a key to some of the mysteries of the opposite side of the House, in their wilful blindness to a distinction, the full perception of which I humbly conceive to be essential to any just views of the great measure before us. To me, Sir, it seems evident, that there are at this moment two entirely separate classes of discontented persons in this country, whom it is most important not to confound in our deliberations, but incomparably more important not to identify and drive together by our proceedings. The one—by far the most numerous and important—consists of those loyal, orderly and industrious persons, who are unjustly excluded from their share in the Representation, and are, on that account, offended, alienated, and dissatisfied with those who have so long persisted in rejecting their earnest and humble petitions. The other consists of far more desperate, and dangerous individuals—persons, not many I trust in number, but multiplied of late years, by I know not what causes, who utterly distrust and despise all the institutions of the country; who hate law and authority, and aim directly, and, with little disguise or equivocation, at the destruction of all property, and the abolition of all dignities. It is painful to think, that there should be such a faction in such a country; but, I am persuaded, that no man who moves about in society, with his eyes and his ears open, can fail to be convinced of the fact. It is, perhaps, but an aggravated form of the old feud, which has always subsisted between those who have nothing, and those who have something; but frightfully embittered of late years among us, partly, perhaps, by the long-continued pressure of distress; and, partly, by the increased intelligence and easier means of concert among the lower orders: but, no doubt, in a still greater degree, by the effect of infamous publications and harangues, proceeding from wicked and designing, or most misled and deluded individuals. But, be that as it may, the point I wish chiefly to impress on the House, is, that those men are not to be confounded with the former; that their discontent does not proceed from their exclusion from elective franchises, and that they neither petition for Reform, nor would be in any degree gratified by its largest concession. Their views go far beyond the sphere of Parliamentary Reform: they care nothing for laws or law-givers, or those by whom law-givers are appointed; and make a mockery quite as much of Commons, as of Lords, or of King. Their object is the invasion of all property, the cessation of all authority, the levelling of all ranks and degrees, every man for himself, and God—or some other personage—for all! No blunder then could be so great, no injustice so flagrant, as to confound these men with those who petition for a better system of Representation; or to draw inferences as to the consequences of yielding to the prayers of the latter, which might be applicable to capitulating with the demands of the former. But, there is something far worse, and more practically dangerous, in confounding those two distinct kinds of discontent, than the mere blunder in reasoning, or injustice in moral judgment. Your petitioners, though naturally, and actually, loyal and orderly, are not all, of course, philosophically patient, or religiously meek. If, then, their just claims are disregarded, they will all be offended, and many will be excessive in their resentment and their hatred, and in expressions of anger and dislike. They will join, therefore, in the language at least, of the apostles of disorder and anarchy, and plainly be in danger of imbibing a share of their passions and opinions. They will join with them to the extent of distrusting, and perhaps despising this House; of believing that the Government is corrupt and oppressive, and that their ineffectual petitions must be reinforced by something more energetic and irresistible. I am persuaded, I need not dwell on a topic so painful. If the fact be admitted, that a great part of the petitioners are not to be confounded with the desperate and wicked individuals to whom I have alluded, can anything be so plain, as that it is the first and foremost of our duties, to prevent the one from graduating into the other, or from being exposed to the infection, even of a partial or nominal alliance? to snatch them from the tremendous dangers of such a communication, and at once to deprive the mischievous of the encouragement and credit of their apparent support, and to detach them, by merely doing them justice, from that perilous community of discontent, in which, by its refusal, they are now unhappily involved. To the question, therefore, of—what are the actual evils of the present system, and what the actual benefits you expect from its reform, I now answer boldly, that the evil is the grievous discontent, gradually passing into disaffection, which it produces in those who suffer from it, and that the inestimable benefit to be derived from its reformation, is the cure of that discontent—the redemption of great bodies of meritorious citizens from the hazard of being seduced into fatal disorders and excesses; the visible separation of those who mean mischief, and seek pillage, from those who insist only for right and justice, and the final embodying of all the latter, in support of property and lawful authority, against the implacable enemies of both. I grant, at once, that no Reform will satisfy those whose real object is, not Reform but confusion. I not only grant, but I maintain, as the very basis of my argument, that no reasonable improvements will satisfy those who are unreasonable. But it is implied, in the very terms of this proposition, that they will satisfy the reasonable; and when the reasonable are once satisfied, can any man doubt or deny that we shall be better able, with their aid, to deal with the unreasonable who remain? The mischief is, that by refusing just requests, we not only alienate those who desire no more than justice, but give a colour to the malignant imputations of those who say, that we love injustice for itself, or for the peculations and oppressions for the sake of which it is committed. The Catholic remedy for the evil in all its aspects, the true cure for the actual sufferer, the infallible exposure of the turbulent pretender, is, to do justice fearlessly, and fearlessly to resist all unjust encroachments. From the very first time my attention has been directed to this subject, it was in this aspect that it has presented itself to me. The great object is, to allay reasonable discontent, and to win back alienated confidence and affection, on the one hand, and, on the other, to disarm sedition and mischief of its most powerful means of seduction, by separating from it, and, finally, arraying against it, all that is fundamentally sound in the great mass of the population; all, that is to say, who, by the possession of property, and political rights, can be made to feel that they have an interest in the protection of property, and the maintenance of lawful authority. In the present agitated state of the country, when the flood is growing on the land, I would fain draw a firmament, and impassable barrier, between the pure and wholesome waters that are above, and the noisome and polluted contents of the dark abysses below: and this is the first good effect I venture to anticipate from the Bill now proposed. It will not only pacify and appease multitudes who are now discontented, and likely to be ranged in hostility to Government, and authority generally; but it will array them into a great phalanx for the protection of property, and the maintenance of the Constitution and the law. They are all persons of property, generally speaking, of larger property than the body of English electors have heretofore been required to possess; and if those electors have hitherto been found true to their country and their trust, I confess my inability to understand how merely multiplying their numbers, and raising their rank, can be supposed to debase their characters, or pervert their views. I have, perhaps, said enough already on the value I attach to property, as a qualification for electors. It is not the property, certainly, not the acres, or the pound sterling that are to be directly represented; but the will and intelligence of the men to whom they belong. If property were the sole and ultimate qualification, I do not see how we could avoid recurring to the scheme of a famous Reformer in his day, the late Mr. Horne Tooke, who seriously proposed, that votes should be multiplied according as property increased; and that a rich man should be allowed to vote seven times at an election, when a poor man voted but once. That theory, however, has been long discarded; and I rather think men of all parties are now agreed, that the only reasons for requiring electors to have property, are, first, as a sort of test or presumption, that they have rather more intelligence and information than are usually found in persons of the very lowest condition; and, secondly, as a pledge of their interest and disposition to maintain that respect for property in general, which all thinking men must feel to be at the bottom of all civil institutions, and the true foundation, not only of law and good order, but of liberty and of society itself. I have already endeavoured to shew, that a very moderate share of property is as likely to give this disposition as a greater share; and I cannot but think, in opposition to the hon. member for Preston, that the standard taken in the proposed Bill is not on the other hand too high. If I understand that hon. Member rightly, he, too, is for some qualification of property. But, wherever the line is drawn, it must necessarily appear to bear hard upon those who are immediately below it. The hon. Member said, that there are many persons, who occupy houses worth from 4*l.* to 9*l.* a-year, who would make as good electors as those who paid 10*l.* I have no doubt it may be so. But, if the standard were let down to 4*l.*, the same thing might no doubt be said as to renters at 3*l.* 10*s.* By a little further effort of industry and frugality, the 9*l.* renter might surely, in most cases, raise himself to 10*l.*; and the motive—no longer a sordid or base motive—that this Bill holds out for such efforts, is not the least of its recommendations. But, in the mean time, and on the whole, I cannot persuade myself, that the occupancy of a house, worth 10*l.* a-year, is too high a qualification; and if it brings in 500,000 new voters, who are now excluded from all share in the Representation, it is impossible not to feel, that while it enlarges to this great extent, the basis on which the Constitution reposes, it binds, at the same time, to the better protection of that Constitution, a prodigious mass of actual property, and does all that can now be done to secure the confidence and affection of this great body of proprietors. It is curious to observe, how extremes meet, in the arguments of disputants who are reduced to extremities, and what contradictions are hazarded by those who can dispense with no auxiliaries. The same persons, who rest their chief objection to this measure, on the ground of its throwing too large an infusion of popular or democratic influence into the Legislature, are also the loudest to clamour against its tyrannical and aristocratic rejection of the pot-wallopers, and scot and lot electors of Preston and Honiton. Nay, the hon. member for Callington does not scruple to say, that the best way to give property its due effect in the Representation, is to give almost the whole of that Representation to those who have either very large fortunes, or no fortunes at all—to take special care of the rights of pot-wallopers, and of opulent Peers and boroughmongers, but to look with jealousy on the claims of the middling and upper classes! He is for a circulation of 100*l.* notes, and of farthings, and from which shillings and sovereigns are to be, in a great measure, excluded! I confess I do not know how to deal with such an argument. But it should always be remembered, that the existing pot-wallopers are to retain their franchise for their lives; and that as it is but in a few places that this right now exists, it is absurd to represent its ultimate cessation in those places, as the disfranchisement of a great class of electors, long known to the Constitution, and acting an important part in its structure. If this extreme element of democracy could ever have been defended in such a Government as our's, it could only have been as a counterbalance to the extreme, and equally indefensible element of aristocracy, arising from the nomination borough in the hands of Peers, and other persons of great wealth; and if it is right to exclude the latter, as alike contrary to the letter and spirit of the Constitution, there can no longer be any good reason for retaining the former. To represent the franchise of a few bands of pot-wallopers, in certain towns, scattered thinly over the face of the country, as the vital link by which the great body of the labouring classes are connected with the Constitution, does appear to me, I confess, a very notable extravagance. The great body of the labouring classes have, in fact, no participation in this franchise; and can derive no comfort or benefit from its occasional exercise, probably utterly unknown or unheard of by them, in Preston or Honiton, or a few other insulated places. The extension of the franchise to 500,000 new voters, occupying houses of 10*l.* and upwards, is a far more substantial opening of the Constitution to the labouring classes in general. It will reach, indeed, directly to a considerable proportion of those classes; and it admits, at all events, an immense multitude of those who have recently risen from those classes, whose relations and sympathies are all still in that circle, and whose mere elevation will excite a most beneficial ambition in the whole body, to acquire, by increased industry and economy, the very moderate qualification which will entitle them also to its full participation. I think, Sir, I have already sufficiently answered the demand for some specification of the ill effects of the present system, and of the benefits we expect from its Reform. But it would be easy to extend that answer. One benefit, which I rather think has not yet been suggested to the House, I will, with their indulgence now venture to explain: I mean the great advantage which I have no doubt a reformed Parliament would have in insuring the more prompt, steady, and effectual operation of public opinion on the Legislature, and the measures of the Government. I do not deny, that, even as things now are, public opinion is, in the long run, irresistible. But infinite evils and dangers have constantly resulted from the tardiness with which it operates, the dissatisfaction which is generated by long opposition to it, and the contempt which but too often follows the reluctant triumph it obtains. I shall not be understood, I trust, as if I thought that this House, and much less the Legislature at large, ought to yield or respond to every casual and transient impulse of popular feeling or excitement. It is its first duty, on the other hand, to watch such impulses with jealousy, and wherever it truly appears that they are but casual and transient, to resist them with firmness and dignity. But I think it can scarcely be denied, that, from want of a due sympathy, or sufficient means of communication, this resistance has been too often, and I would almost say, systematically, continued far longer than was justifiable, and extended to cases where it should never for a moment have existed. I would say, generally, that most wars have been inexcusably protracted, for years after the public voice had justly condemned them. I would say the same thing of the abomination of the Slave-trade, of the sanguinary parts of our Criminal-law, of the Game-laws, and generally of that system of wasteful expenditure, and scandalous abuse of patronage, for purposes of selfishness or corruption, from which the Government was only driven, after incurable distaste and resentment had been excited by nearly half a century of resistance. The mere needless continuance of the folly and abuse, is but a small part of the mischief of this habitual rejection of public opinion—this obstinate clinging to discredited and detected iniquities. The fatal evil is, the distrust and dislike of which the Legislature, and this House especially, necessarily become the objects, which alienates from the Government the confidence and affections of the people, and produces that unhappy state of public feeling, which is truly aggravated, rather than allayed, by the tardy and compulsive compliance which is at last ungracefully yielded, and thanklessly and scornfully received. In a reformed Parliament, I think it is obvious that no such thing could occur. But there is another advantage which I think this Reform can scarcely fail to secure, which appears to me of still greater importance, with regard both to the contentment and the permanent prosperity of the people. I am aware that no Reform will give them absolute prosperity. No man can be more deeply convinced, that the greater part of their distresses arise from causes over which Government has no control; and I think that those who would teach them otherwise, act a very weak or a very wicked part. But such, unhappily, is not their general opinion; they think, naturally enough, perhaps, in most cases certainly excusably, that most of their sufferings are owing to our misgovernment; and that if it was not for the selfishness and hard-hearted indifference of the Legislature, they might all be comfortable and happy. Nothing, I admit, can be more absurd and extravagant. But, as long as they see the Legislature composed entirely of persons, nominated almost exclusively by the higher aristocracy, and find themselves, very generally, excluded from all share in the election of their Representatives, you may be assured, that they will continue to be of that opinion; and to indulge in all those feelings of animosity and distrust, that now prevail to so unfortunate an extent among them. But the Reform we now propose, will disabuse them, I think, of these errors,—and is the only thing that will disabuse them. They will not take our word, when we tell them, that we feel deeply for their sufferings, and are doing all we can for their relief, although for much of their miseries there is no relief in our power. They will not take our word for this,—for we are strangers to them, and are sent here, apparently at least, for other interests than theirs. But when at last they have Representatives of their own choosing—when they have deputed to Parliament individuals, on whose thorough knowledge of their situation, and whose sincere anxiety to befriend them, they place entire reliance, they will, and they must believe the testimony which is brought back to them by these Representatives. And if they report, as they must necessarily do, that this House is not deaf to their prayers, nor insensible to their sufferings; but that, while measures are actually taking for their partial relief, it appears to be really impossible to eradicate poverty, or to create beneficial employment, I do not think I am too sanguine, when I conclude, that they may, at last, be taught that there are evils, in every human lot, for which Governments are no way responsible, and for which laws can provide no effectual remedy; and that, instead of indulging in idle resentments, or deluding themselves with the hopes of impossible relief, they should co-operate, by their own providence, with the beneficent intentions of Government, and wait, in patience, for that fortunate change in their relations, which cannot be accelerated, though it may be retarded, by turbulence and abuse. For this reason, as well as for many others, I hail the appearance of the hon. member for Preston in this House. I flatter myself, he has already learned to think more favourably than when he first entered it, of the disposition of this House towards those classes, whom he considers as more peculiarly his constituents; that he now believes in their sincere sympathy with their sufferings, and even that there are far greater difficulties in the way of their relief than he had formerly imagined; and I trust, that he will not fail to report his altered opinion to those over whom he has so much influence; and so begin the good work, which, I trust, this great measure will complete. [Here the hon. member for Preston intimated his dissent in some points from the speaker, who went on.] I am sorry the hon. Member does not quite agree with me; but he is yet but in his noviciate; and when we have had him a little longer among us, I doubt not that we shall convert him entirely. In the mean time, allow me to say a word on the subject of that cry or clamour, which hon. Gentlemen, on the other side, will have it, is all that the advocates for this Reform can produce to justify or support it, and on the strange allegation of their having themselves been the raisers of that cry! There has been a cry certainly; and, certainly, it has not only been raised in former times, but it has also, apparently, subsided, or been intermitted; from which they would infer, that its causes are merely temporary, that it may now be resisted as safely as it has been resisted before; and that if we merely do nothing, we shall speedily see it subside, and die away. I cannot persuade myself, that those read either the past or the present with intelligence, who so interpret the signs of the times before us. True, the cry for Reform has formerly subsided; but has it not always revived; and, at every revival, been echoed from a wider circle, and in a louder tone? Is not the very fact, that all national excitements, of whatever kind, the pressure of internal distress, the sympathy with foreign triumphs, uniformly receive this passion for Reform—a proof that it is not an accidental symptom, but a constitutional affection—the indication of a deep-rooted disease, which every excitement calls into action, and at every recurrence in an aggravated form? It has slept, indeed, by fits, but has never been dead; and it wakes, at last, like a giant refreshed, to bid defiance to all attempts at opposition. Occasional causes there have been, no doubt; but the great exciting cause has been the spread of intelligence, and the actual increase of the grievance, from the increasing numbers of those who suffer by its continuance. When the right hon. Secretary for Foreign Affairs said, that but for the proceedings as to East Retford, this Bill might not have been necessary, he did not mean that a better issue of those proceedings would have finally satisfied the wishes of English Reformers, but only that it might have, for a while, postponed the crisis, which an opposite issue contributed to bring on. There were occasional causes, no doubt, at work, along with the great internal agencies, which determined, perhaps, the moment of that consummation, which, of themselves, they could neither produce, nor prevent. The manner and the moment of all great events, are ever determined by such causes; but the events themselves have always a deeper principle, and depend on a higher fate. Mr. Fox has recorded, that the year before the Revolution, 1688, the tyranny of the Stuarts seemed more secure, and the cause of liberty more hopeless, than at any other period. Some authors ascribe the immediate cause of that great event to the trial of the Bishops, and some to the proceedings at Oxford; but no men of common sense will, therefore, contend that the event itself was casual, or that it had any other real cause than the gradual accumulation of just discontent and apprehension, arising from a systematic persistance in injustice, and an obstinate refusal of redress. There were occasional causes here, too; the mortifying issue of the proceedings as to East Retford, and the fatal determination which the people read in those proceedings, to resist any measure, and any degree of Reform; the proceedings, and the tone and temper of the defence of the proceedings, at Newark, the shameful exposure of the state of our official pensions, and, generally, the disgusting spectacle of corruption and venality which was displayed at the general election; these things naturally excited the impatience and the zeal of the people. To say that the passion for Reform originated with the present Ministers, or the present Ministry, is too palpably absurd, and contradictory to dates and transactions. It was a common topic at most of the elections, before the present Ministry had been imagined, or its members communicated with each other; and the absence of all reference to it in the King's Speech, at the opening of the Session, occasioned a general disappointment, as well as the omission of all mention of prevailing distress. Then came the fatal pledge of the head of the former Government against all Reform, along with a repeated denial of the existence of general distress; and in that moment, the cry of indignation and impatience went forth from all parts of the land; and it was seen and felt that Reform was unavoidable, if the peace of the country was to be preserved. The Ministry gave way before that cry; and the very men who could not keep their places against it, while it was yet but a popular clamour, and unaccredited by official countenance, now hope to regain them by opposing it, when it has taken the shape of a grave and deliberate measure of the accredited Ministers of the Crown! I have said more than enough, perhaps, on this strange proposition; but as a Member for Scotland, I cannot pass over the most important, perhaps, of the occasional causes by which the feelings of that part of the country have been excited on this occasion; I mean the memorable declaration of the right hon. member for Edinburgh, that he did not believe there was any desire for Reform in that city, or in the country in general. The reason assigned for that opinion is not less singular than the opinion itself. It was, that a petition had been sent from Edinburgh, but a few years before, earnestly praying for Reform, and signed by 7,000 or 8,000 persons; but that no new petition had been since presented. The challenge thus given, was accepted; the construction thus unfeelingly put on their forbearance was indignantly refuted; and in a few weeks a new petition, signed by upwards of 21,000 persons, was sent up from the citizens of Edinburgh. Glasgow followed with 33,000; and from every city, town, village, and parish, almost, of the country, similar petitions have ever since poured in. And here, for the sake of my countrymen, I am bound to state, not only that those petitions do not proceed from any persons entertaining designs against the Government, or in rebellion against the law; but that so far as Scotland is concerned, there is really no room for such an imputation. The disorders that have afflicted portions of the south, have not penetrated to that country. It is my official duty to ascertain the condition of all its districts as to disorders, and tendency to crime; and I am proud to say, that it never was in a more orderly or peaceful condition. We have had no burnings, and no machine-breaking. Some movements towards combinations about wages may have been traced near Glasgow, but even these attended with no violence or terror, and the minds even of the distressed operatives so generally informed, that I observe the Society for the Promotion of Useful Knowledge, in a most meritorious work they have recently published, have bottomed their argument in favour of the use of machinery, on the answers made on that subject by an unemployed Glasgow weaver, when examined before a Committee of that Society. I am not aware that the present Ministers are accused of having extended their agitations to Scotland; and yet from that peaceful, thoughtful, orderly, and loyal people, more petitions for Reform have been sent up, than from any other equal portion of the population. One word more, Sir, on the subject of intimidation, and I have done. I shall say nothing as to the intimidation which the advocates of this measure are accused of having practised upon their opponents—for that imputation really seems too absurd to deserve an answer—I shall speak only to that of which they are supposed to be themselves the victims. The right hon. Baronet opposite has told us, that instead of submitting their fears to their judgment, they seemed to have submitted their judgment to their fears. If to foresee and to provide against coming danger, be unworthy of a courageous Statesman, they probably deserve this heavy imputation. But I will not now trespass on the indulgence of the House by pursuing that discussion. I wish only, in concluding, to point out the difference between the fears of these magnanimous Gentlemen who reproach the authors of this measure with pusillanimity, and the fears by which it has been partly suggested. The main argument against the measure is founded on fear—a fear, I must say, the most exaggerated, and least likely to fall on a brave or constant man, of any I can well imagine—the fear that by yielding their just demands to the loyal, respectable, and intelligent proprietors of middle rank in this kingdom, such strength will be given to the disloyal, ignorant, and destitute persons who hate the Constitution, and defy the law, that it will be no longer possible to protect it against them. This, Sir, I do submit to the House, is a visionary and fantastic fear; and I think stands not very reputably contrasted with the fears which those who are actuated by it impute to their opponents. We fear, Sir, and do not scruple to confess that we fear, the consequences of refusing the just requests of a petitioning nation: but we do not fear the threats or the clamours of those who would invade the property, or insult the laws of the country; and the difference between us and our antagonists is shortly this—that we fear to do injustice, lest the right should be too strong for us; and that they fear to do justice, lest those who seek more than justice should profit by the example.

Mr. *Hunt*, having been alluded to by the hon. and learned Lord, felt it right to say, that he had been misunderstood. What he had said was, that in his mind every man liable to be called out to serve in the militia should have a vote for the Representatives who made that call. He never could mean to extend the franchise to paupers, as the law of England disqualified all paupers from voting.

Mr. *Croker* spoke to the following effect: *—I feel, Sir, that under any circumstances, I should require the indulgence of the House; and I am aware that, at so late a period of so protracted a Debate, I must stand peculiarly in need of that indulgence. I can assure the House that, if I did not, in my heart and conscience, feel that this is by far the most important—the most vital and tremendous—question, that has ever yet been agitated within these walls, there are at this moment abundant personal reasons which would deter me from intruding upon its patience. Sir, I listened with very great pleasure—pleasure does not always imply assent, and still less conviction—to the very eloquent and ingenious speech of the learned Member who has just sat down (Mr. Jeffrey, Lord Advocate of Scotland); but I confess, Sir, that there was one part of that address which was, I think, not quite consistent with good taste, or the decorum of this House. I do not think that it was either parliamentary or prudent in him to cast imputations upon Gentlemen who take the opposite side of the question, as if they were persons already stigmatized and disqualified, as being Members for corrupt and delinquent boroughs, who can only be heard by courtesy and sufferance, and only be allowed to plead here, like convicted criminals, for the indulgence of what is called a long day. Sir, the learned Lord, with his high legal authority, has told us that the strict rules of a court of justice would exclude the majority—nay, would exclude, he said, without almost a single exception, the whole of the opponents of this proposal, as interested parties, from voting on this question, or even addressing the House in this Debate. Sir, I tell that learned Lord, that such is not the law either of Parliament or common sense; and that his pretended analogies derived from the courts of justice are wholly inapplicable to the case of any deliberative assembly. I might have overlooked such a mode of argument, if it had emanated from an inferior authority, and treated it with what it would, perhaps, better deserve than any observation; but I pay so much respect to the learned Lord's official station, and his late appearance in this House, as to acquaint him, that it is equally irregular in form, and erroneous in fact, to impute such motives or influences to any of those whom, as long as our Constitution lasts, I must assert to be the Representatives of England. I shall take the liberty of adding, that, if I was surprised at an observation so unconstitutional falling from a gentleman of the learned Lord's profession, I was doubly astonished to hear it from a person placed in the situation in which the learned Lord stands in this House. The learned Lord's claim to a seat in this House being, as he has been told by the straight-forward and plain-spoken member for Preston, suspected of being more than fictitious—

Mr. *Kennedy* rose to order. There had been presented against the return of the

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* The following speech (as also the notes) is printed by permission from the corrected Report of the right hon. Gentleman's speech.

Lord Advocate a petition, which had been referred to an Election Committee. He put it to the House, whether it was usual for Members, even of such authority as the ex-Secretary of the Admiralty, to anticipate what might be the decision of the Committee sworn to try the merits of that petition.

The *Speaker* said, that if he could have foreseen that the observation of the right hon. Member on the floor would have been taken in the light which it had been taken, or that it had been intended in that light, he hoped that he should not have been backward in calling the right hon. Member to order. The reason why he had not interrupted the right hon. Member on the score of order, depended upon his understanding of what the right hon. Member had said, and upon his knowledge of the right hon. Member's intention in making that statement. He understood the right hon. Member to complain of a statement made by the learned Lord in his speech, that a certain number of Members were to be disqualified from stating their opinions on this measure, because the boroughs for which they then sat were to be disfranchised by it. Further than that, the right hon. Gentleman not only wondered at the quarter from which the observation came, but also at its coming from a person in the learned Lord's situation, inasmuch as the learned Lord was himself returned to the House for a seat of this description, and must be aware that his right to his seat was disputed by others, inasmuch as it was even now forming the subject of a contest before a Committee. He did not conceive that anything which had fallen from the right hon. Member on the floor could be interpreted as giving either a determination or a decision on the merits of that petition, much less as having been uttered with any intention of inflaming the feelings of such Members as might be the sworn judges on that petition.

Lord *John Russell* said, that he should not have risen upon this point of order, if his apprehension of it had been the same as that of Mr. Speaker; but he wished to remind the House, that the right hon. member for Aldborough had said, that the seat of the learned Lord was suspected of being more than fictitious. It appeared to him that such words ought not to be used of any Member of Parliament, whose right to his seat was to be tried before sworn judges on an Election Committee; and therefore he thought that the right hon. Gentleman was not in order.

Mr. *Kennedy* said, that if he owed an apology either to the Speaker or to the House for the step which he had just taken, he was very ready to make it: but with all deference to the Speaker, he conceived, that such language as the right hon. Gentleman had used was calculated to mislead the judgment of Gentlemen who might have to sit as sworn judges on the petition against the learned Lord's return.

Mr. *Croker* then proceeded—Sir, I by no means complain of the interference of the hon. and learned Gentleman. I only wish that he had used a little of the same vigilance heretofore, and I hope he will exercise a more peculiar vigilance hereafter, when he hears repeated, as I have no doubt he will, that which has been so often stated in the course of this Debate, namely, that we are all sitting here fictitious Representatives of the people. I trust that his legal knowledge, his personal candour, and parliamentary jealousy, will induce him to interfere on every such occasion which may again present itself. Sir, I return to the speech of the learned Lord—the most remarkable point of which was the boldness with which he assailed, and the success with which he overthrew the speech of the noble Lord who introduced this measure. The learned Lord began by saying, "Is it possible that you can at this time of day throw away your time in debating on a Constitution generated in the barbarous or tyrannical days of the Tudors and the Stuarts? Are you not aware that those times go for nothing, and that a new light is broken in upon us, and new doctrines been established throughout the political world, within the last five-and-twenty years, and that it is on these we must decide?" Such, however, are not the principles adopted by the noble Lord, the member for Tavistock; for he has gone back to the days, not merely of the Stuarts and Tudors, but even of those of Edward 1st, and fixed the *data* of his proposition at that remote period. He has exhibited his antiquarian lore, and even quoted the venerable statute *de tallagio non concedendo*, as the grounds of a measure which his learned Colleague, coming with a second and better sight, wholly abjures as obsolete and absurd, and tells us, that there is no question here of any statute of Edward 1st, or any thing done in the time of the Tudors or Stuarts; but that the subject must be discussed on present expediency—on views of a new political philosophy—on a consideration of the French revolution—of the Belgian revolt—of the disorders so rapidly spreading abroad—of the blasphemy, sedition, and extraordinary excitement of the lower classes at home,—which he, by-the-by, would allay with every kind of fresh excitement; acting in this respect like one who, meeting a mob determined to break into his cellar, attempts to quiet them by brandy. I say, that this is a just description of the learned Lord's argument, and before I have done with him, the learned Lord shall himself be obliged to confess it. The learned Lord has told us, that he takes his stand on the petitions of a supplicating people—he has told us to look at those petitions—he has told us that those petitions do not come from the dangerous classes of the community—he has told us that they are the petitions of those more favoured orders of society which the noble Paymaster of the Forces wishes to introduce into political life—and he concluded all, by warning us, that if we did not grant the prayers of these petitions, we ran great risk and danger of a tremendous convulsion. I will take the liberty of asking the learned Lord, whether he has read the petitions on which he professes his readiness to take his stand. I am sorry to say that I have looked through two or three hundred of them, for a purpose which I will proceed to explain as concisely as I can to the House. I challenge the other side, out of the whole mass of petitions which they now wield as weapons against my side of the House, to produce one solitary petition, in which the petitioners state that they will be satisfied with this extent of Parliamentary Reform. In the numerous petitions which I have recently read, there are indeed two or three worded with that happy generality which leaves the reader to infer every thing or nothing from them. But the rest are unanimous in their language and their prayers; and I have selected one of them to read to the House, because it is couched in moderate language, because its arguments are placed in regular order, and because it is one of the best specimens which I can find of the demands of the people. It is the petition of the artisans of Merthyr Tydvil, in the county of Glamorgan, a large manufacturing place, where a great mass of intelligence has, I suppose, been collected together. That petition asks for four classes of Reform, one only of which the noble Lord's Bill even affects to concede. The first is the right—and they call it the just right—of having all placemen dismissed from the House of Commons. The second is the right of having annual, or at least triennial Parliaments. The third is that which would now be given them by the noble Lord's measure—the right of having all the large towns and populous districts of the country represented in the House of Commons, and that those close and decayed boroughs containing but a few inhabitants, which now return Members to Parliament, should be disfranchised. The fourth is the right of every man to have a vote in the election of Members of the House of Commons, who is in any way called upon to contribute to either national or local taxation, either direct or indirect. "These," say the petitioners, "are the principal rights we demand." Of this, one of the most moderate of the petitions, the proposed Reform will satisfy but one class of demands out of four. What is to become of the other three? Is this measure of universal conciliation and satisfaction to leave them rankling in the hearts of a discontented population? But the great majority of the petitions are by no means so precise or so moderate. They deal in more extravagant generalities. To demands—the same or equivalent to those I have just mentioned—they add, almost without exception, a call for a wide reduction of taxation, and they solicit Parliamentary Reform, chiefly as a step to the abolition of tithes. Do those who lay such stress upon the petitions mean to concede these points? Are all taxes to be abrogated, and is the Church to be despoiled of its property? This, indeed, will satisfy the petitioners—nothing else—if we are to take their own words—will. And so far will the noble Lord's measure be from quieting the petitioners, that I am convinced it would create nothing but an increase of demand, and an increase of disappointment. The learned Lord has insisted, with extraordinary anxiety, that great mischief is to be apprehended from discontent, arising from a refusal of, what he assumes to be, the just rights of these petitioners; but I must, before I submit to that argument, ask what has occasioned that discontent? and I will produce the evidence of the noble Lord who brought in this Bill, to answer that question. The noble Lord, alluding to the assertion of my late right hon. friend Mr. Canning, that the people were not anxious for Parliamentary Reform, admitted that there was great weight in that argument some years ago; "but," said the noble Lord, "I and others have since appealed to the people on that subject, and they have responded to our call, and, as a proof of our success, we have now collected an immense number of petitions in favour of Reform." What, Sir, that all-engrossing subject which is now, as we are told, rankling in the heart, and prompting the tongue, and arming the hand of every man in the country against the constituted authorities, was, it seems, dead (my noble friend, the Secretary of State, said it was only asleep), until the noble Lord and his associates summoned it once more into life, and gave it fresh powers of animation. And they now summon us, in the name of the people, to yield to a clamour which they confess, that they themselves have excited. Dead, or very sound asleep indeed, was the rage for Reform, if we are to judge by the very test that the noble and learned Lords referred to—the petitions of the people. I find that, in the year 1821, nineteen petitions only were presented in favour of Reform. In the year 1822 the number was reduced to twelve. In the year 1823 the number was twenty-nine. In the year 1824, there was no petition at all. In the year 1825, no petition,—in the year 1826, no petition,—in the year 1827, no petition,—in the year 1828, no petition,—in the year 1829, no petition,—and even in the session 1830, only fourteen petitions presented in favour of Reform. Such, then, was the state of the public mind on this subject up to that date. Then came the late dissolution of Parliament. The noble Lord and his political friends then sat on the side of the House from which I am addressing you, and they went from these seats to the elections, little dreaming that they should so soon change their situation to the other side of the House. They looked about for a political lever to move the Government of the day from its place, and then, from hustings and windows, and their different places of canvass, they instigated the clamours of the people in favour of Reform; and the people, as the noble Lord boasts, responded to their call: 650 petitions have been the result of that appeal! Now, I will venture to affirm, that in all—no, I will not say all, for I have not yet looked through those which were presented in a mass on Saturday last—but that in the vast majority of them, the most prominent demand of the petitioners is, as I have just stated, for the abolition of tithes and taxes. The first object of the petitioners is, generally, reduction of taxation; the second is the suppression of tithes; and Reform occupies, most frequently, only the third place in the prayers of the petitioners. And, again I ask, are these demands to be conceded? But this is not all. Some of the petitions are still more exigent, and more extensive in their demands. In this crusade of petitions on Reform, a right hon. Baronet (the First Lord of the Admiralty) opposite was most anxious that an influential part of the community—the respectable inhabitants of Cockermouth—should bear their part in expressing their opinions on this important subject, and straightway there came from Cockermouth a petition which, for the moderation of its language and the sobriety of its desires, is most worthy the attention of the House. That petition complains 'of misery and distress, and of excessive suffering, owing to the representation not being Reformed; of the unjustifiable monopoly of twenty-four East India Directors; of that disgrace to the country, colonial slavery; and of the Corn-laws;' and says, that the 'Corn-laws have commissioned the pestiferous demon of hunger to stalk through this unhappy land, spreading interminable ruin upon all who have come into its baneful influence, while thousands have fallen victims, and have been brought to a premature termination of their existence, by his merciless grasp.' Do the right hon. Gentlemen opposite expect to satisfy such petitioners as these by a measure like the present? Will a change of the right of voting, however extensive, appease the pestiferous demon of hunger? The quixotic enterprise of satisfying such petitioners would be ridiculous, if the consequences were not so frightful and appalling! When the noble Lord and the House flatter the people that such petitions ought to be and will be attended to, have they considered what the result may be, when, on the contrary, they shall be obliged to tell the excited and deluded multitude, that compliance is impossible? But let us examine a little, the plan of the noble Lord. My first objection to it is, that he introduces it under the name of a restoration of obsolete or usurped rights, whilst, instead of being in fact anything like restoration, it is an entire novelty and a complete substitution of new modes and principles in every part of our system. I believe it is unparalleled in the annals of political history, that a restoration of rights should be the pretence of a measure which does not preserve one single right, or maintain any one principle that ever existed before. Scot-and-lot voters are swept away; potwallopers are annihilated; freemen wholly disfranchised; burgage tenures are not to be heard of; corporations are mentioned only that the House may be informed that they are to be utterly abolished; and in place of all these, a new, untried, and unexampled right of election is created—not in one place, by way of experiment, nor for a limited time, but throughout the whole country, and, as we are told, for all futurity! In place of the various modes of election which are acknowledged by the law and the constitution, the noble Lord undertakes to substitute this novel fabric of his own, and modestly proposes to extend it over every portion of the constituency of the empire. This, Sir, is no experiment of transferring the privilege of a disfranchised borough to Birmingham, where, perhaps, it might have been expedient to adopt a new right of voting, for the purpose of trying whether the practical effect of such a new sort of franchise, mixed up with the others, might not be advantageous: not such is the plan of the noble Lord; he makes his new fancy the undeviating franchise of the whole kingdom. Now, Sir, let us see what this general principle is, and how it is likely to work. The noble Lord has selected houses rated at 10*l.* annual value as the universal qualification; but why he has made this selection, he has not condescended to inform us. I will not pretend to divine the noble Lord's reason for fixing upon that particular qualification, but I will say, that it has always been my opinion, that one of the greatest advantages of our Constitution is, that we have under it great varieties of franchise, and rights of election, because this circumstance offers a variety of modes by which varieties of men may enter this House, and every class and degree of our complicated society find means to make itself heard; and I will affirm, tha t nothing can be more dangerous than to put all the political power in the kingdom into the hands of any one particular class of persons, which will be the inevitable effect of the noble Lord's plan. If, in popular places, there should prevail a temporary panic—or if hatred should arise in one constituency to any particular person or party—then there is a place of refuge to be found in a borough which may not participate in the same passion or prejudice. While, on the other hand, if there happen to be an individual politician obnoxious to the Aristocracy, or to the Government, or even to the middling orders, there are such places as Preston, and a few others—they are, and ought to be, but a few—by which such a person may come into this House. The complexity of the British Constitution, like the complexity of the universe, is a complexity only to the eye; for its apparent irregularities all tend to general order, and seeming anomalies and counteractions contribute to produce the most admirable symmetry and the most beautiful proportions. Yet the noble Lord thinks he has done a miracle of political wisdom by getting rid of that well-regulated diversity —and by submitting the whole representation of the country, as far as regards cities and towns, to one undeviating form. But, Sir, I shall now proceed to show, that this attempt at theoretical uniformity, while it fails for any good or useful purpose, will be found, in practice, to work the most monstrous and incredible injustice. For, let us now see, how this plan of the noble Lord will work. I have looked into the returns of the number and value of houses, and I have found that there are in England about 378,000 rated houses. Those 378,000 houses are divided into sixteen classes, and the three lowest classes comprise no less than 250,000, namely, two-thirds of the whole number in England, while the proportion of the lowest to the highest class of householders is, I believe, still greater in Scotland,—nearly, I believe, three-fourths. The consequence, therefore, will be, that by the noble Lord's plan, so far from property having a proportional influence, all the power of election will be thrown into the lowest classes of householders. I have no doubt that when we shall have the means of examining these matters in detail, it will be found that the majority of voters in every town will belong to the very lowest class of houses, and that, consequently, the effective representation of the whole empire will be thrown into the hands of one single class, and that, too, a very narrow class of the people.* See, again, the consequences of this. If it should happen at any time that an individual Minister could not find his way to this House, it would perhaps be thought a matter of little consequence: but if, in extraordinary times, in a storm of popular ferment, it were necessary that a whole Ministry should find seats, what but the most dangerous results must be anticipated from the mode in which the noble Lord would fix the elective franchise throughout the kingdom? The choice of the Crown must be fettered by, and dependent on the mere potential suffrages of the 10*l.* householders. But the noble Lord has told us that he was obliged to draw a line somewhere, and that, therefore, he had drawn this line. Why, Sir, if the noble Lord were consistent, and would obey the wishes of the petitioners—for whose opinions he professes so much respect—he would find that they have given him a line, which, in my humble judgment, is much more intelligible and plausible than his. It is not an arbitrary line—it is one for which, in the theory of the Constitution, there is some shadow of foundation —it is that which the hon. member for Preston advocates—namely, that every man who is called upon to contribute to the exigences of the State, should, either by himself or his representative, have a share in voting the taxes which he has to pay. When the noble Lord is founding a new and theoretic Constitution on the will of the people, why does he abandon this plain course, and substitute such an unequal and narrow franchise as 10*l.* householders? But observe the effects of this new system —at present men of every class, the lowest as well as the highest, are somewhere represented. No one class can be said to be predominant; there is variety, perhaps partiality, but no exclusion—the poorest inhabitants and potwallopers have in many places the most powerful influence; but under the new and arbitrary plan of the noble Lord—the millions who inhabit houses under 10*l.* value, and the thousands who inhabit houses above 20*l.*, will be equally over-borne and virtually excluded by the noble Lord's favoured class of 10*l.* householders. Will this satisfy, on the one hand, the petitioners for a more extended right of suffrage; or, on the other, those who expect some attention to the proportionable influence of property. No, Sir, it considers neither property nor population, and will as far as I can see, throw the predominant power of the state into the hands of about 200,000 persons. But, Sir, if the noble Lord's line of suffrage be arbitrary, the lines which he has drawn to include or exclude the several boroughs which are to be maintained or annihilated, are still more arbitrary and unintelligible. The House will, doubtless, recollect that the hon. Member for Callington last night intimated his suspicions that the line of the noble Lord had been drawn partially; I too, have my suspicions on this subject. Not that I mean to impute any personal interest to the noble Lord but that I think he has been partial, not only between two sets of constituents, but between two classes of boroughs; and has therefore drawn lines which will throw all the power into a certain constituency, and will have the effect of preserving the franchise in certain boroughs, which he no doubt thinks better entitled to those favours, than those which another—and what I might think fairer—line, would have selected. It therefore becomes really important to observe the effects which this line will produce. The noble Lord has told us that he drew his first line at places containing 2,000 inhabitants; but the noble Lord gave no reason for that. The noble Lord told us that he drew his second line at 4,000; but for that, also, he has not condescended to give any reason. It is all *sic volo, sic jubeo*, with the noble Lord: however, such are the lines, and all below 2,000 are disfranchised,—all that come up to 4,000 are to have the right of sending one Member—all who pass the line of 4,000 are to have the right of sending two Members. There are no reasons whatsoever assigned for these arrangements. 'These are my lines,' said the noble Lord, these my arrangements; I cannot tell you 'why I made them; all I can tell you is, that they are lines and arrangements, and that you may approve of them or not as you please, but they are the unalterable system of the measure I propose.' I now proceed to call the attention of the House to a very serious point; one that I consider exceedingly important. The noble Lord in another part of his plan, and for a different though a similar purpose, has also drawn two other lines; I mean, when he comes to distribute his franchise to the new boroughs which he designs to create. Then he draws one line at places having 10,000 inhabitants, and another at 20,000: and to all above the 10,000 line he gives one Member, just as he gives one to the boroughs under 4,000: and to all past 20,000, he gives precisely the same number of Members as he gave to Knaresborough and Tavistock! or in other words, the noble Lord's system of arithmetical proportion treats 2,000 inhabitants on the same footing as 10,000; and 20,000 or 30,000 inhabitants receive from his impartial hands exactly the same measure as 4,000. I ask the noble Lord how he can justify this to the country;—how he and his Colleagues—his Colleagues I may call them *ad hoc*,—will defend this mode of disposing of the elective franchise. When we hear propositions—affecting, too, to be founded on mathematical proportions—which so outrageously set arithmetic and common sense at defiance, it is not extraordinary that suspicions should be excited, and that we should be inclined to inquire, with the hon. Gentleman I have already alluded to (Mr. Baring), why the noble Lord on his way to Callington had not stopped at Tavistock. I was, I confess, curious to find out the places which would mark the limit between the fatal proscriptive line of 2,000, and the happy conservative line of 4,000;* and I have been still more curious to discover the place which will exhibit the still greater good fortune of urning the corner—the lucky corner of 4,000. The line of 2,000 falls oddly enough, and when we come—if ever we come—to examine the minor details of this measure, there will be some serious explanation required on that point; but for my present and more general purpose (and not to weary the House) I shall pass by the line of 2,000, and call the attention of the House only to the others. However, I must premise,—and I say it with the utmost candour,—that in pointing out the circumstance to which I am about to allude I do not mean to make the slightest personal imputation against the noble Earl whose borough I shall be obliged to mention. If the case is a bad one, let it be recollected that it is a case of the noble Lord's selection, not of mine. The noble Lord has drawn an arithmetical line, and I have therefore no choice in mentioning the place that approaches nearest to the line so drawn. Well, then, the borough which just passed the bridge as the fiend was ready to catch it—the fortunate borough which has escaped into the Elysium of undiminished patronage, is the borough of Malton, in Yorkshire. And how has this borough contrived to escape? Oh, fortunate Malton! it has exactly 4,005 inhabitants;—four thousand and— —five —— inhabitants! But the noble Lord refers us to the population returns*—ay, the population returns of 1821: they are the Pandects of our new Justinian. It is in the dry numerical details of that mass of figures that our tyro legislator looks for the seeds of a new social and political Constitution. There have been statesmen—Pitts and Foxes, Burkes and Cannings,—who looked at the constituent classes not merely numerically; who saw in the body of the people various interests, various localities, various pursuits, and various conditions of persons and property; and who, when they approved of our Constitution, approved of it mainly because every local spot had its local customs and its local jurisdiction fitted for its peculiar uses; but our new Justinian has very different views,—he will not look out upon the face of nature,—he will not enter into the pursuits of society,—he will not examine the works of man in their large capacity. No; the noble Lord sits himself down with the population returns of 1821 before him, as the guide and manual of a new Constitution, and proceeds to remodel all the institutions of the empire by the four rules of arithmetic. I suspect, Sir, that the worthy gentleman at the Table (Mr. Rickman, the clerk), who took so much pains in arranging these population returns, little thought to what high purposes his numerical labours were to be applied; and must, at this moment, feel exceedingly surprised, no doubt, at finding himself turned into the Solon or Lycurgus of regenerated England. I am sorry to disturb the noble Lord in his arithmetical calculations; but I must say, that the result of them appears to me the most narrow-minded, the most unstatesman-like attempt at legislation that ever was made; and that in his endeavour to produce his beloved uniformity in franchise, he has—no doubt, undesignedly—committed an act of the most flagrant injustice on the great body of the country, and conferred the most indecent patronage on a small number of—I do not say favoured—but certainly fortunate, boroughs. The House, already surprised at what I have stated, will be still more so by the detail I am about to lay before it. No wonder that the noble Lord was so sore last night when we asked him a question or two about Returns. "How," said he, "do you want to shut out all information?—too much light blinds as well as too little; for God's sake be content with my little candle, and don't think of letting in a blaze that will distract the country!" I was astonished that so trifling a matter should have created such an alarm, and immediately suspected that it must have some serious though secret cause. The noble Lord told those who made the inquiries I allude to, with the greatest gravity, "The returns are on the Table of the House." Why, Sir, I know as well as the noble Lord that the materials of his legislation are on the Table of the House,—here they are (holding up a large volume), and tolerably bulky they are; but what can we learn from such a mass as this? [Lord *John Russell.*—There is the small return.] Yes, but the small return is not yet delivered to us, and will not, I believe, show what I am about to explain. I was saying that the House will be surprised at the combination I am about to develop with regard to Malton: I have been informed that the noble Lord's new Constitution will not essentially alter the influence at Malton. Malton is now a scot-and-lot borough, with as I understand, between 400 and 500 electors: under the pretended Reform, the number of electors will, I imagine, be very much diminished; and if, as I am led to believe, the town and neighbourhood are the property of Lord Fitzwillam, his Lordship will not find it more troublesome to manage 300 10*l.* householders than 500 scot-and-lot men. Happy Lord Fitzwilliam, whose influence will stand almost alone and safe, while that of so many others must perish in the general wreck! When we are told that all influence is to be abolished, and that near 200 nominations to seats in this House are to be suppressed, what a vast and incalculable increase of authority will be given to any leviathan aristocrat who shall retain his influence, while that of all the rest of his class is swept away! We see and admit —indeed, it is the chief point of the case of our adversaries—the vast power that one or two nominations, even in the present state of the representation, confer on an individual; but who can calculate what the influence will be, in the new Constitution, of any two or three individuals who may, by the accidents and irregularities of this act of uniformity, happen to preserve their patronage? They can be but very few indeed; but the smallness of their number will only render them more powerful and dangerous. I beg that I may not be misunderstood. I consider Lord Fitzwilliam as one of the most amiable men alive; and I would not for the world say one word which could give him a moment's uneasiness, or which should have the slightest appearance of disrespect towards a nobleman who is so much and so deservedly respected. But I am speaking of the public character, not of the individual person; and the noble Lord has forced me to allude to this person and to this place, by drawing his line of favour just below Malton. Lord Fitzwilliam then, or the Lord Fitzwilliam of the day or Lord A, B, or C. call him what you please, who happens to be possessed of this property,—he will stand unshaken amidst the general crash and must inevitably rise to exorbitant and dangerous power. I have specially referred to the case of Malton, because it happens to fall nearest to the noble Lord's line; but there are several others which deserve to be looked at with the same jealousy and apprehension—and not merely on the score of influence, but as operating great comparative injustice to other places, and laying the foundation of future complaints and just dissatisfaction. Let us see, Sir, how this just and healing measure, as the learned Lord calls it,—how this just and healing measure will practically operate in the great county of York. There are three boroughs in the North riding of Yorkshire,—Malton, Richmond and Thirsk. These three old boroughs contain a population, according to the noble Lord's return of 10,000 persons, viz.—

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* By the return No. 202, of the number and value of inhabited houses in the several cities, towns, and boroughs, presented since this speech was delivered, it appears that the occupiers of houses of the value of 10*l.* and under 20*l.* will constitute a vast majority over all other electors. In great and well-built towns like the metropolis, Bath, Brighton, &c. the upper class of houses have a superiority, but taking the whole constituency of the country, the lower class has an immense majority.

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* The borough which, according to the return No. 202, stands lowest on the new constituency—*viz.* 10*l.* householders—is the borough of Downton, now belonging to Lord Radnor. If that noble Lord happens to have the majority of the property in or about that borough, he will probably have as much influence there after this Reform as he has now. This much is certain, that there are now but nine persons, entitled to vote under the new system, resident within that borough, and that the line must have been drawn on strange principles, which, in such circumstances, preserves one member for an obscure borough like Downton, with nine 10*l.* householders and disfranchises a county town like Buckingham, with eight times that number.

* It seems as strange as all the rest of this proceeding, that the Population Returns of 1821 should have been selected as the sole guide in this general and momentous change just at the very moment that their inapplicability to the present state of the country is so notorious, that an Act of Parliament has been passed in the present year for a new census. There can be little doubt that the new census will exhibit an increase of about 2,000,000 souls.

Thirsk	2533
Richmond	3546
Malton	4005
	10,084

and they are, by the new Constitution, to send four Members to Parliament; being at about the rate of one Member for every 2,500 persons. Now, let us, by way of comparison, examine what is proposed for three new boroughs which are to be created in the West Riding of the same county,—Huddersfield, Halifax, and Wakefield. These three great and increasing towns contain a population of 36,000 souls, viz.—

Huddersfield	13,200
Halifax	12,600
Wakefield	10,700
	36,500

Will it be believed that, when the 10,000 inhabitants of Malton, Richmond, and Thirsk, are to send four Members to Parliament, the 36,000 inhabitants of these three towns are to send only three—only three—one for every 12,000 inhabitants? What can the noble Lord allege for this monstrous anomaly? Where is his principle? Where is his justice? I invite any one to say how the proposition of the noble Lord can be explained? Is Malton more independent than Huddersfield? Is Thirsk more populous than Halifax? Is Richmond more important than Wakefield? What are the superior claims of the North Riding over the West? I tell the noble Lord, that he must explain this extraordinary fact to the country. I warn the noble Lord, that I am now making a charge against him of the gravest description,—a charge certainly not of personal partiality, but a charge of negligence and temerity,—a charge of not having duly, nor according to any principle of justice, considered the great and momentous operation of the measure he has proposed; and I charge the measure itself with being founded on principles so false and fallacious, that its first and most prominent operation is, to produce such extraordinary anomalies and extravagant irregularities. Now, Sir, I will proceed to show how this system will work in other parts of the country. There is a certain borough in the south of England which certainly never stood higher in this House than it does at this moment, in consequence of the able and eloquent speech made by its Representative (Mr. Macauley) the other night,—I mean the borough of Calne. I have looked into the noble Lord's Pandect—the volume of Population Returns—and there I find the town of Calne described with an adjunct which I think will amuse the House, 'Calne, and the Liberty of Bowood. Calne, and the Liberty of Bowood, is certainly rather a singular coincidence. Well, Sir, this borough of Calne contains 4,612 inhabitants; Tavistock—where the noble Lord would not so much as stop on his road to Callington—Tavistock contains 5,482 inhabitants; Knaresborough contains 5,280; and Bedford 5,466 inhabitants; and by the operation of one of the noble Lord's lines, each of these places is to send (like Malton) two members to the Reformed Parliament. I request the House to take notice, that in selecting these boroughs for observation, I have no personal, nor even local, object,—I mention them rather than others, because they have already been referred to by other Gentlemen in former parts of the debate. Well, Sir, Calne, Tavistock, Knaresborough, and Bedford, contain altogether about 20,000 inhabitants, viz.—

Calne	4612
Tavistock	5482
Knaresborough	5280
Bedford	5466
	20,840

and these 20,000 inhabitants are allowed, by the new economical distribution of representative patronage, to send, as I have already stated, eight Members to this House. It has, I am aware, been said, that although the noble Lord preserves the franchise to these towns, he alters the right of voting, so that the old aristocratical influence will no longer exist. Sir, this might be true of large places, such as Bath, which are now in the hands of a limited Corporation, and which will hereafter fall into those of 10*l.* householders: but it is not true of the class of small towns to which I now allude; a place containing 4,000 or 5,000 souls is not so large, but that it may be the property of one man. Some of those towns that I have named are, I believe, in this very condition; and in such of them as happen to be scot and lot boroughs, the alteration of the franchise, so far from extending, would narrow the limits of the franchise, and render some of them as close as Gatton. I entreat the House to look at this important consideration in all its bearings, and to weigh the danger, as well as the injustice, of throwing such enormous, undivided, and unbalanced patronage and power into the hands of half-a-dozen selected individuals. But leaving—though certainly not exhausting—the moral and political part of the subject, I proceed to apply the noble Lord's own arithmetic to a comparison of these four old boroughs with some of the new ones which he is about to call into existence. Now, Sir, it appears that, while Calne, with 4,612 inhabitants, is to return two Members, Bolton, with 22,000 inhabitants, is to return but one;—while Knaresborough, with 5,280 inhabitants, is to nominate two Members, Blackburn, with 22,000 inhabitants, is to be limited to one;—Bedford, with 5,466, and Tavistock, with 5,482 inhabitants, are still to be favoured with the double representation; while Tynemouth and Brighthelmstone, with each above 24,000, are to be put off with one. Thus, to recapitulate, four small and now close boroughs, and which in the new system may become still closer, containing about 20,000 inhabitants, are to have the undiminished number of eight Members; while four great cities, I may call them, containing 94,000 inhabitants are to be insultingly restricted to four Representatives. But let us give the noble Lord the full advantage of the largest and most comprehensive view of his plan—what is the result?—eighteen of the old boroughs which his arbitrary line includes, containing about 80,000 inhabitants, will send thirty-six members to this House; while eighteen new boroughs, with a population of about 280,000, are to have barely eighteen Representatives: in the former case, one Representative for every 2,300 souls; in the latter, one for every 16,500. And this astonishing disproportion is not the result of any restriction imposed on the noble Lord. He was stopped by no regard for vested rights or ancient interests—he was, with a free and unfettered hand, recasting the whole Constitution, and might, if he had so pleased, have given Bolton two members as well as Tavistock. Nor can he plead that he had no Members to spare. He found

> "Ample room and verge enough
> The characters of hell to trace—"

and might have easily found a little space to enable him to do justice—justice on his own principles—to the larger towns. He has lopped off sixty-two Members from the House, some of whom he might have retained to correct these disproportions; or granting that the new number of Members assigned to this House is the exactly right one, still he might have preserved it, and yet have acted with something like fairness, by varying his proposition, and assigning two to Bolton and only one to Tavistock. Thus, Sir, I have shown that the noble Lord's plan is totally inconsistent with itself; and no wonder—when we find, as was so admirably proved by my right hon. friend (Sir Robert Peel) last night, that the noble Lord is so entirely inconsistent with himself. I shall take the liberty of recalling to the noble Lord's recollection another instance of his inconsistency. Among former exhibitions of his talents in this House, there was one occasion on which he distinguished himself by replying to an hon. Baronet, whom I see over the way (Sir Francis Burdett), on the occasion of his proposing a plan of Reform, which the noble Lord characterized as impracticable and unconstitutional. Now, Sir, I will venture to say, the hon. Baronet's plan was not more violent, not more extensive, nor more daring, than the plan of to-day: it was not a more direct infraction of private and public interests—not a more comprehensive violation of the Constitution than that of the noble Lord. It was, in other respects, much better; it had the advantage of being, at least, simple and clear, intelligible and impartial; it did not leave the door open to improper patronage, nor operate to benefit one class of interests at the expense of others. Of the two, I should infinitely prefer the plan of the hon. Baronet; and, therefore, even if I were friendly to a wide and general principle of Reform, I should feel it my duty to resist what I call so injurious and disproportionate a plan as that of the noble Lord. We have been told, that these great changes are to be made in order to satisfy the people; but this proposition is not only not what the people ask, but it is not what the people will accept; nothing like it—"they ask for bread, and you give them a stone." They do not ask, that Bolton and Blackburn, with four times the population, should have only half the representation of Calne or Tavistock; and I will venture to say, that whenever the scheme of the noble Lord comes to be generally known and perfectly understood, you will have petitions—just, reasonable, and irresistible petitions—presented from the inhabitants of those towns, who will find themselves so unjustly and partially cut off from the privilege, promised them by the noble Lord, of returning a fair proportion of Representatives. Is this a plan to make the system of Representation more full, more free, and more equal? Is it not, on the contrary, certain to scatter the seeds of contention and discord throughout the country? Will Huddersfield, Halifax, and Wakefield be contented?—can they, on any principle of proportionable Representation, be satisfied with one Representative, when twenty small boroughs are to have two? I assert, Sir, that this is the most monstrous inconsistency that ever was heard of; and I now boldly tell the noble Lord, that he will not be able to carry it. There are other reasons, powerful and numerous, which will prevent such a catastrophe; but I repeat, even those who may be favourable to a free and equal Reform cannot be friendly to one so incongruous and so partial. But, Sir, this Reform has already had another very injurious and lamentable effect; it tends to make the most natural and legitimate influence so suspicious and odious, that sensitive minds are in haste to disclaim it. Let me exemplify this by what the noble Marquis opposite has said with respect to the beautiful and flourishing little town of which he bears the title—Tavistock. The Duke of Bedford—as everybody knows who knows anything of that part of the country—has paid peculiar attention to that town; he has enriched it by his munificence, and adorned it by his taste; and it is, therefore, not to be wondered at that its inhabitants should be influenced towards his Grace by feelings of gratitude for the benefits which have been conferred upon them. And yet, Sir, the noble Marquis, the son of that noble Duke, felt it necessary the other night to rise in his place, and assure you, that his noble father would never again allow any influence of his family to mingle with the representation of that town. What, Sir, is it come to this, that it shall be considered as a kind of contamination if a Russell shall represent Tavistock?—come to this, that the delicacy of the noble Marquis obliges him to declare, that nobody bearing his name—a name illustrious in our annals—shall represent that town with which they have been for centuries connected, and on which they have recently conferred so much enlightened protection? God forbid, that we should ever see the time when the natural influence of a munificent and beneficent landlord like the Duke of Bedford is to be annihilated. And yet, Sir, such is the apprehended operation of this fatal Bill—such is the odium of the comparisons which it creates between such places as Bolton and Tavistock—that the heir of that illustrious house repudiates for the future an influence which is so natural and so legitimate that I hope and believe it is also inevitable and imperishable! Now, Sir, I shall, with permission of the House, proceed to say a very few words on the general principle of the noble Lord. Sir, the learned Lord declares that he and his noble friend intend to remodel and reconstruct the Constitution. In what sense does he mean to remodel and reconstruct it? It is a matter of complaint, on the other side, that the measure has been called revolutionary. I do not assert that it is meant to be so, nor that, in its present state, it is so in a legal sense; but I assert and insist that it has a revolutionary tendency, and will, if carried, at last end inevitably in a revolution. The design of the noble Lord may be honest and moderate, but human nature and circumstances will be too strong for him; and when once he has set this mighty globe in motion—down the declivity of what he calls Reform, but what I know to be Revolution—

it will descend with increasing force and rapidity, and all that it may meet in its progress will be involved in the wide and irreparable ruin! The first sensible effect will probably be on that part of the prerogative which gives to the Crown the choice of its Ministers—a most serious and fearful consideration; but the next, and perhaps even more important, will be the operation of this House, when it shall be the direct and immediate delegate of the democracy, on the other branches of the Legislature. By what new influence is the House of Lords to maintain its independent position in the State? Even constituted as we now are, the House of Commons has occasionally shown a disposition to encroach upon the other branch of the Legislature. I will not allude to the bad times when the Peers of the realm were voted needless nuisances, but to a more modern instance—in the year 1742, when a Bill of Indemnity for certain witnesses was sent to the Lords, which they—in their double and doubly-sacred character of Legislators and Judges, thought fit to reject—at that date a noble Lord (the Lord Strange, the eldest son of the then Earl of Derby) was found in the House of Commons to propose a vote of censure upon the House of Lords, for exercising this its most indisputable right. The good sense of the House at that day rejected this factious and dangerous motion; but such a state of things, I fear, will soon again occur, if this measure receive the sanction of Parliament. Such must be the result of human infirmity influenced by human passion. I never was more surprised than when, this night, I heard the learned Lord, through a great part of his able speech, employ himself in showing, that the indirect mode in which the influence of the Aristocracy makes itself felt in this House, is not only wrong in theory, but injurious in practice. The learned Lord argued that point with great assiduity and ample force of expression; but in reply to him I can produce, if not a higher, at least a more mature and better-reasoned authority. Sir, I hold in my hand a publication of which the learned Lord may know something. I am not entitled to say that the learned Lord wrote the article to which I am about to direct the attention of the House, but he at least gave it his sanction; however, whether he wrote it or only sanctioned it, or whether it was written by the noble and learned Lord now on the Woolsack, to whom report more generally assigns the authorship—I say, let it be written by whomsoever it may, it deserves the highest praise; for sounder sense and closer argument were, I believe, never yet published, and it applies exactly and in every point to the present argument. The passage I am about to read occurs in the Edinburgh Review for July 1809, p. 300. After suggesting some objections to the inequalities of the present system of representation, and some improvements in the details of elections, the author of the article goes on to say—"Such a Reform as this, we are convinced, might be effected with perfect safety, and, we make no doubt, with considerable benefit to the country. Its beneficial effects, however, we are persuaded, would be confined to the points we have just mentioned. It would not materially touch the state of taxation or of influence; and as for altering the composition of the House of Commons, by excluding from it all who are sent there by the interest of the Ministry or of noble families, we can only say, that if we believed it at all likely to produce such an effect, we should think it our duty to strive against it, as against a measure which would deprive us of all the practical blessings of our Constitution. We took the liberty, on a former occasion, to say a good deal upon this subject; and after observing that the whole substantial power of the Government was now manifestly vested in the House of Commons, we proceeded to show that the balance of the Constitution was preserved, and could only be preserved, by being transferred into that House, where a certain proportion of the influence of the Crown and of the great families of the land was advantageously, though somewhat irregularly, mingled with the proper representation of the people. The expediency, and indeed the necessity of this arrangement, we should humbly conceive, must be manifest to all who will but consider the distractions and dreadful convulsions that would ensue if the three branches of the Legislature were really to be kept apart in their practical operations, and to check and control each other, not by an infusion of their elementary principles into all the measures of each, but by working separately to thwart or undo what had been undertaken by the other, without any means of concert or co-operation. In the first place, it is perfectly obvious, that if the House of Commons, with its absolute power over the supplies, and its connexion with the physical force of the nation, were to be composed entirely of the representatives of the yeomanry of the countries and the tradesmen of the burghs. (This appears to have been uttered in a spirit of prophecy) —and the tradesmen of the burghs were to be actuated solely by the feelings and interests which are peculiar to that class of men, it would infallibly convert the Government into a mere democracy, and speedily sweep away the encumbrance of Lords and Commons, who could not exist at all, therefore, if they had not an influence in this assembly." In answer to the learned Lord, therefore, Sir, I produce the Edinburgh Reviewer. I certainly concur with the intelligent and able personage who wrote that article, whoever he may be, and I think the learned Lord will not find it easy to refute it. And now, Sir, I approach the conclusion of what I have to say—I approach the great and important conclusion—which is, or ought to be, the object, end, and aim, of the whole discussion—What is to be gained by this change in the Representation? The learned Lord has most powerfully described the brightening prospects and happy state of this country; he has dwelt upon its "undeniable prosperity," and congratulated us on its "wealth, splendor, and happiness." Those were the very words of the learned Lord; and these or similar expressions are to be found in the speeches of every Member who has addressed you. But amidst these general admissions, that our present Constitution has produced all these glorious results, what better prospects, what happier consequences, this fine scheme is to open or to realize—that, Sir, no one has ventured, even in remote anticipation, to predict. Why, I ask, then, are we to change the certainty of so much good for a perilous uncertainty? Why are we to consent to this vital experiment without any statement, nay, without the slightest conjecture, of any possible advantage that is to arise from this measure, further at least than, as we have been told, it will satisfy the petitioners? But it is plain, from the prayer of those petitioners, as I have already shown, that this measure does not attempt to conciliate them, and will certainly not give satisfaction to those whose clamours you hope to silence. Are we then to throw away admitted and substantial benefits, in the pursuit of an undefined, inexplicable, and, to my view, most frightful phantasy? Sir, the learned Lord, after exhausting his eloquence in the praise of the general prosperity of the country, turned short round on us, and drew a frightful and metaphorical picture of the present state of the country, and the appalling consequences of refusing the concessions which the existing clamour demands. He told you, Sir, that the stormy tides of popular commotion were rising around us, that the Stygian waters were rapidly gaining upon us, and that it was time for us—and barely time, to endeavour to save ourselves from being swallowed up by the devouring waves. He told you that the deluge of public opinion was about to overwhelm you, and he invited you to embark with him on this frail and crazy raft, constructed in the blundering haste of terror, as the only means of escaping from destruction. No, Sir, no; trust not

—that fatal and perfidious bark!
Built in the eclipse, and rigged with curses dark,

No, Sir, stand firm where you are, and wait until the threatening waters subside. What you hear is not only a fictitious but a factitious clamour. Be you calm—steady and bold; and the people, under the influence of your wisdom and courage, will recover their wonted judgment, and become sensible of the value of what they would lose by this scheme, and of the uselessness of what they might gain. Of the Constitution of this country there might perhaps have been a better theoretical arrangement; but I do in my heart firmly believe, that no human ingenuity could, *à priori*, have conceived so admirable a practical system, promoting, in such nice and just degrees, the wealth, happiness, and liberties of the community at large—

Where jarring interests, reconciled, create
Th' according music of a well-mixed state;
Where small and great, where weak and strong
are made
To serve, not suffer—strengthen not invade;
More powerful each, as needful to the rest,
And, in proportion as it blesses, blest!

Such, Sir, is the combination of the British Constitution,—a Constitution which, as my right hon. friend ably observed in his speech last night,—a speech which, from its ability, reminds us of the best days of this House, and by its principles recalls the best times of the Constitution, —a Constitution which eminent speculative writers of antiquity shadowed out as of almost hopeless perfection, and which the words of the philosophic poet I have quoted, so admirably describe as the best of human combinations. This perfect government the country possesses, and long may it continue to enjoy it unchanged! Among its advantages is one with which I beg to conclude—that however popular clamour may be excited—however popular delusion may be created—in point of fact the nation is always attentive to the voice of the House of Commons; in the long-run, the people always acquiesce in its decisions. Government could not exist if it were otherwise, and all history attests the fact. Look back into other times, and you will find that whenever the House of Commons has done its duty, the people have returned to theirs. The noble Lord has told you that it was appeals from this House that roused the people. I admit the fact, and reply that it is the moral influence of this House which again must quiet them. At your voice disorder will subside—error will be corrected, and violence repressed—under your auspices and guidance, good sense, Constitutional opinions, and respect and love for our ancient institutions will recover their sway, and restore the nation to its accustomed moderation, tranquillity, and happiness.

Exæstuantis pectoris impetum
——— tu regis arbiter;
Mentisque, te tollente, surgunt,
Te, resident, moderante, fluctus!

On the motion of Colonel Sibthorp, the Debate was adjourned to Monday.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Monday, March 7, 1831.

MINUTES.] Bills. The Transfer of Aid, the Consolidated Fund, and the Pensions Bills, were read a third time.

Petitions presented. Against Slavery, by the Earl of HARDWICKE, the Marquis of DOWNSHIRE, and the Archbishop of YORK. Against Tithes, by Earl STANHOPE, from Wrotham:—By Lord KING, from various Parishes in Ireland. For Reform, by Earl RADNOR, from Windhill. For a Repeal of the Union, and for a Repeal of the Duty on Sugar made by free labour, by Lord FARNHAM. By Earl STANHOPE, from the Shipowners of South Shields, complaining of Distress.

MINISTERIAL PLAN OF REFORM.] Lord *Wharncliffe* said, that when he gave notice of moving for Returns, with a view of calling the attention of their Lordships to the subject of Reform, he had no idea that the discussion on the question would be in the state that it now was in the other House, and he would therefore withdraw his notice for Thursday, and not name another day for the present, though he was fully determined not to let his object escape.

Earl *Grey* said, he concurred fully in the propriety of the withdrawal of the notice, though he begged the noble Lord might take his own time, as he was always prepared to discuss the subject in any way that it could be fairly or regularly brought before their Lordships.

The Duke of *Sussex*, in presenting a Petition from Hammersmith, for Reform, and for the Vote by Ballot, said, that he was bound to declare, that the person who had waited on him with the petition had stated, that though they and those who had joined them were in favour of the Ballot, yet that opinion was not shared by the inhabitants in general. At the same time he thought it well to say, though he was not called on to declare what his sentiments were with respect to Ballot, that that proposition must be rendered more clear to him than it was at present, before he could be convinced of its utility. He could not lay this petition on the Table without congratulating his noble friend at the head of his Majesty's Government, and his colleagues, most heartily, at the manner in which they had brought the great question of Parliamentary Reform before the country, and he could only assure them, when it came to this House, the measure should have his full and cordial support.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Monday, March 7, 1831.

MINUTES.] Colonel DAVIES brought up the Report of the Committee on the Election of the Borough of Seaford, in Sussex, declaring that the Hon. F. W. Ellis was not, and that W. Lyons, Esq., was, duly elected.

A new Writ was issued for the Borough of Milbourne Port, in the room of Mr. S. BOURNE (accepted the Stewardship of the Chiltern Hundreds;) and for the Borough of Eye, in the room of Sir P. SIDNEY.

Bills. Calico Duty and Malt Distillation (Ireland) Bills read a second time.

Returns ordered. On the Motion of Mr. GUEST, the Population of each Town in Wales, not now returning Members to Parliament, which amounted in 1821 to 10,000, or upwards; from the Clerk of the Peace for the County of Glamorgan, of the assessment for the County Rate, for the year 1829, upon the following places respectively:—Merthyr Tidvil, Swansea, Cardiff, Kinfig, Neath, Cowbridge, Caerphilly, Aberavon, Llandaff, Lougham, and Aberdare.

Petitions presented. Against the Vestries Act, from the Parishes of Bristol, by Mr. HART DAVIS. For permission to retain the Presentation of Churches built and endowed by individuals, from Manchester, by Mr. H. HUGHES. In favour of Reform, by Sir T. D. ACLAND, from Okehampton:—By Colonel BAILLIE, from the Political Union Society of Bristol:—By Sir W. HEATHCOTE, from Hampshire:—By Mr. H. Johnstone, from Moffat:—By Mr. Watson, from Canterbury:—By Mr. Warburton, from Bridport:—By Mr. Benett, from West Lavington and Market Lavington. For a Repeal of the Duties on Coals, by Mr. H. Howard, from New Shoreham:—By Mr. Bell, from North Shields. By Sir M. W. Ridley, from Newcastle-upon-Tyne. Against any Alteration in the Timber Duties, by Mr. H. Howard, from New Shoreham:—By Mr. H. Drummond, from Port Glasgow:—By Sir R. Ferguson, from Londonderry:—By Mr. Bell, from North Shields:—By Sir G. Cockburn, from the Chamber of Commerce, Plymouth. For the Repeal of the Beer Bill, by Mr. Phillpotts, from Stroud. For the Reduction of the Duty on Insurances, by Mr. Chaplin, from Ashwardhurn. For the Abolition of Slavery, by Viscount Bernard, from Inneshannon:—By Mr. Chaplin, from Broxholme. For the continuance of Excise Licenses to Candle-makers, by Mr. Benett, from the Candle-makers of Wilton, Salisbury, and Sturminster. For the Repeal of the Union (Ireland), by Colonel Chichester, from Palasgrean and Templebraden:—By Colonel O'Grady, from Tacumshane and Kilrane.

PETITIONS FOR REFORM.] Mr. *Denison* presented a Petition from St. Mary, Newington, which parish contained no less than 40,000 inhabitants. The Petitioners expressed their gratitude to his Majesty's Ministers for the proposed measure of Reform, and implored the House to pass it into a law. The Petitioners further expressed their implicit confidence in his Majesty's present Ministry, and declared it to be their opinion, that the measures which were constantly pursued and contemplated by the late Ministry, were those which had inflicted so much distress and misery on the country. He had seen a great number of his constituents since the measure had been brought forward, and of all that he had seen, only one person had expressed his dissent from it. He hoped that the hon. member for Guildford would not fail to attend the County meeting, which would be held at Epsom next Saturday, in order that he might inform himself of the opinion of the majority of the freeholders with respect to the boroughs. He hoped that the measure of Reform would receive the sanction of the House, as it had that of the country.

Mr. *Bethell* observed, that there were many meetings to take place in the West Riding of Yorkshire on the subject of the present measure. The hon. Member read a letter from a person in that county, which described the people as highly pleased and satisfied with the measure, but expressing at the same time, their fears that, in the present condition of the House, the Ministers would never be able to carry their intentions into effect.

Mr. *Briscoe* begged to offer his mite of gratitude to the Ministers for the measure they had proposed, and to congratulate the House and the country at the prospect of a Reform in Parliament being at length carried into effect. The creation of a new body of half-a-million electors, would, in his opinion, have the effect of raising a National Guard, the moral force of which would in future form a safeguard and a bulwark to the nation, and ward off all future danger to the Constitution. He begged to support the petition, and to remark that of all the petitions that had come before the House on the subject, only one had been opposed to the measure, which was represented to be so strongly condemned, and so greatly dreaded.

Mr. *Hart Davis* objected to hon. Members' reading to the House private letters addressed to themselves. He had received many letters full of the most fearful forebodings as to the consequences of the measure now under consideration, but he had refrained from reading them, or any part of them, to the House.

Mr. *Warburton* observed, that it was not only perfectly right, but absolutely necessary, that the opinions of hon. Members' constituents in the country, on a measure of so much importance, should be stated to the House. He had a petition to present from the town which he had the honour to represent, which was signed by most of the Corporation and 200 of the inhabitants, who were to be disfranchised by the measure, and who had expressed their entire acquiescence in it. They hoped that it would be found to promote the future glory and welfare of England, and that the House would carry it into a law as it stood.

Mr. *Labouchere* observed, that the pot-wallopers of Taunton, together with all the classes of his constituents had received the scheme of the Ministers with regard to Reform with the utmost satisfaction. He did not believe that the pot-wallopers considered themselves injured or aggrieved by the measure.

Petition to be printed.

Mr. *Adeane* presented a Petition from the City of Ely, in favour of Reform. The petitioners stated it to be their opinion that the measure of Reform would tend to give stability to the Throne, and a due weight to the other branches of the Legislature. This being the first petition he had had the honour to present in favour of the Ministerial measure, he considered it right to express his approval of that measure, and his opinion that the principles upon which it was founded were sound; but, at the same time, he feared that they were carried a little too far; and though he approved of the soundness of the principle displayed by the Bill, and should support it, he did not hesitate to say, that his support would only be extended to it up to the second reading; and unless some of the provisions were greatly modified whilst the Bill was in the Committee, he did not think it would be in his power to continue his support. The petition he held in his hand prayed that the measure should pass into a law.

Sir *Charles Burrell* concurred in what had fallen from the hon. member for Cambridge, and would support the Bill in all its stages up to the second reading and committal, when he intended to look into some of the clauses very narrowly, and such of them as were objectionable he should oppose, and substitute such other provisions as might be better suited to the Constitution, which he was anxious to see amended, and not destroyed.

Sir *M. W. Ridley* presented a petition from Tynemouth and its vicinity in favour of the Reform Bill. A meeting had been convened of those persons who were the friends of Reform, in order to express their approval of the measure now before the House; and the Radical Reformers of Tynemouth and its vicinity, had, in the course of four hours, put their signatures to the petition to the number of 3,000, and many more would have been added but for their anxiety to lay the petition before the House as soon as possible. They stated their entire approval of the outline of the Bill, by which the country would possess an equal Representation. They expressed their satisfaction that the holders of rotten boroughs were to receive no compensation, and they hailed the measure as one which promised the commencement of a new and happy era, when the Throne and the House of Commons would be placed on a footing more stable and constitutional than had ever hitherto been the case. The Radical Reformers of Tynemouth expressed their regret that the Vote by Ballot was not contemplated. They, however, hoped that the Parliament would support Ministers in the measure until it had passed into a law. The hon. Member expressed his concurrence in what had fallen from the hon. Baronet behind him (Sir C. Burrell), and also from the hon. member for Cambridge (Mr. Adeane), and thought with them that some alteration in the Bill, when in the Committee, would be, essential towards rendering its operation beneficial. This was not, however, the time for making such observations, and he should therefore abstain from offering any more remarks until the Bill was in that stage when they could be useful.

Sir *Charles Forbes* asked, how this measure could be called an extension of franchise when the effect in many boroughs would be, to reduce the number of electors, and that too in a manner as unexpected as unpleasant? Every means were used, both in that House and out of it, to deter hon. Members from doing their duty, and he would take that opportunity of saying, that neither threats nor arguments of any other description should deter him, whilst he sat within those walls, from pursuing that path which he deemed the right one. It was his duty, as an independent Member, notwithstanding he was only the Representative of one of those boroughs which, he might say, the noble Paymaster had denounced, to express his hopes that the true friends of the country would not allow that measure to succeed which was so defective, and so well calculated to defeat the wishes for Reform. It was radically bad, as well as deficient in its chief enactments. Of all the speeches that he had heard on the subject of the noble Lord's Motion, that of the hon. member for Preston was most to the point, and contained the strongest arguments. That hon. Member said candidly, that the Radical Reformers would certainly take this concession thankfully, but that they would come back again and ask for more; "The people," said the hon. Member, "will not be satisfied; they will have you proceed step by step to grant them Universal Suffrage, Annual Parliaments, the Ballot, and will never stop until they have overthrown the Constitution of King, Lords, and Commons." Most unwarrantable threats, the hon. Baronet observed, in conclusion, had been held out against those who opposed the measure. He for one was not prepared to shut out all measures of Reform, but the measure proposed was so radically bad, that he thought it ought to be put aside.

Mr. *Hodgson* rose to observe, that the town of Shields, which had been referred to, had a population of between 16,000 and 17,000 souls. He believed it would be found that the number of householders assessed over 10*l.* would not fall far short of from 1,000 to 1,200 persons. He expressed his satisfaction at the measure proposed generally, reserving himself, however, upon certain of the details when they were brought forward. The principle of the measure, however, should have his most strenuous support.

Petition to be printed.

Sir *John Wrottesley* said, that petitions were coming up to town in great numbers, approving of the measure proposed by his Majesty's Ministers. He had received such a petition from a meeting held at Wolverhampton, attended by above 12,000 persons, which had been called as soon as the measure proposed by Ministers came to their knowledge. The petitioners emphatically expressed their gratification at the measure proposed, and that they considered it temperate and decisive—just in principle, and practical in all its details—tending to bring back an alienated people to respect for the Government, and to restore the country to prosperity. He had no doubt that all the populous districts in the neighbourhood of Wolverhampton would shortly transmit petitions to the same effect.

Petition to lie on the Table.

ASSESSED TAXES—AND TAXES ON NEWSPAPERS.] Lord *Granville Somerset*, in presenting a Petition from a place in Monmouthshire, for the Repeal of the Assessed Taxes, begged to ask the noble Lord, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, whether it was his intention to propose the reduction or repeal of the class of taxes alluded to by the petitioners, during the present Session?

Lord *Althorp* was perfectly aware of the severity with which the Assessed Taxes and many others pressed on the people; but he was not able to hold out any expectation of any further reduction of taxation at present. The taxes which he had already proposed to reduce were those the reduction of which his Majesty's Government thought would be most for the benefit of the people, and he could not at present hold out any expectation of further reductions.

An hon. *Member* said, he would take the liberty of suggesting to the noble Lord a method by which he might reduce a portion at least of the assessed taxes, which pressed so severely upon the industrious classes. The whole number of householders paying the house-duty amounted to 380,000. Of that number 120,000 paid only the lowest rate of duty, and from their payments a sum of only 100,000*l.* went into the Exchequer. Now 100,000*l.* was the sum which the noble Lord proposed to give up, by reducing the tax on newspapers. The whole amount of stamp-duty which he calculated upon giving up was 180,000*l.*; but then he reckoned upon a gain of 80,000*l.*, in consequence of the increased consumption which he expected from the reduction. 100,000*l.* therefore, was the sum proposed to be given up by reducing the news-paper duty, which did not appear to afford great satisfaction to any class. Even the newspaper proprietors were not at all grateful for it, and the reduction was not called for. By allowing the duty on newspapers to continue as at present, the noble Lord would be enabled to relieve 120,000 householders from the house-duty.

Mr. *Charles Buller* could not at all agree with the hon. Member who spoke last, that the reduction of the newspaper-duty would not afford satisfaction, and be productive of great public benefit. It might be very true that the proposed reduction was not grateful to the great newspaper proprietors, as taking off the tax was, in point of fact, breaking in upon their monopoly; but the great body of the people felt that the tax on newspapers was one of the worst description of taxes—a tax upon knowledge. He (Mr. Buller) was so impressed with the necessity of repealing the tax, that when the question came before the House, he should take the liberty of proposing that the duty on newspapers should be reduced to one half-penny.

Colonel *Sibthorp* regretted to hear from the Chancellor of the Exchequer, that no farther reduction of taxation was proposed. He believed if an angel came down from Heaven, and became Chancellor of the Exchequer, he could not please every one; but he did hope that the noble Lord would reconsider this subject, and endeavour to give some relief to the people, who were labouring under those most partial, unjust, and obnoxious taxes, the House and Window Taxes.

An hon. *Member* asked the noble Lord at what time he intended the proposed reduction of the duty on newspapers should take place.

Lord *Althorp* replied, that it was his intention to bring in a bill for the consolidation of the Stamp Duties. That bill would take a considerable time in passing through the House; and as it would comprehend the measure for reducing the stamp duty on newspapers, he did not intend that the reduction should take place before the 5th of July.

Lord *G. Somerset,* in moving that the petition be printed, took an opportunity of asking the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he had made up his mind with respect to the stock of coals on hand, and which had already paid duty. If the duty was not returned, the merchants who had large stocks on hand would be sufferers to a great amount.

Lord *Althorp* replied, that it had been his intention, as he had before stated, to defer the reduction of the duty on coals shipped coastwise for three months. In carrying this determination, however, into effect, he had found, as in many other cases, various difficulties arising. As to the suggestion to return the duty paid on the stock in hand, that could not be complied with. He still hoped, however, that some delay would answer the purpose, and prevent those who had large stocks from being sufferers to any great extent.

Petition to be printed.

MINISTERIAL PLAN OF PARLIAMENTARY REFORM—ADJOURNED DEBATE—FIFTH DAY.] Colonel Sibthorp moved the Order of the Day for resuming the Adjourned Debate on Lord J. Russell's Motion, for leave to bring in a Bill to amend the Representation in England and Wales,

The Marquis of *Chandos* rose and said —It is with deep regret I come forward, on this occasion, to interrupt for a minute the resumption of the Adjourned Debate. It is only through the courtesy of my gallant friend (Colonel Sibthorp) that the opportunity has been afforded to me; and I assure the House, that I should not come forward on such an occasion if I did not think it my duty to allude to a circumstance which I consider it most important should be brought to the notice of this House. Every one must admit, that it is highly necessary that our deliberations on the measure now under consideration should be unbiassed, unfettered, and conducted calmly, and without excitement. It is a matter of the deepest regret to me, therefore, to find that persons—friends, too, of his Majesty's Ministers—not content with expressing their own opinions in support of the measure proposed, are going abroad amongst the people, trying to influence the minds of the lower classes on this subject, and to intimidate Members of this House in the performance of what they may consider their public duty on this question. I state here, before this House and the country, that no threat nor intimidation shall ever sway me in my conduct in this House, nor drive me to adopt any other course but that which I shall consider most conducive to the interests of the country. I scorn the opinions of those men, who take such means to influence public opinion—who endeavour, by violent speeches, to inflame the minds of the people, and who go so far as to teach them that, if not by free discussion within those walls, by resorting to physical force, the measure proposed by his Majesty's Ministers must be carried. I caution the noble Lord to put a stop to the progress of such proceedings out of doors. I call upon the noble Lord to show that his Majesty's Government are determined to have a just display of the opinions of the House and the public feeling on this measure; and not by the influence of such means as I have alluded to, to direct and control their minds. I call upon him to allow the people to manifest their feelings honestly; and when the decision is come to in this House, to let every Member be able to say, that he has voted honestly, according to his conscience, and that he has not been biassed or intimidated. A meeting was held on Friday last, at the Crown and Anchor Tavern, in the Strand, the proceedings at which have been reported in the *Morning Chronicle*, and which call, as I think, for the serious attention of this House. At that meeting Colonel De Lacy Evans, lately a Member of this House, the member for Rye, is reported to have stated that he had lately come up from the coast of Sussex, where there had been two Reform Meetings; and that he knew there were 10,000 men ready to march up to London, from that part of the country, if Ministers were defeated in the measure they have brought forward. Now, it really does appear to me, Sir, that his Majesty's Ministers are called upon to notice such statements. In my opinion, no means should be allowed to be taken, directly or indirectly, of biassing the determination of the Members of this House, or endeavouring by intimidation of this sort, to deter them from the performance of their duty. I have thought it my duty to call the attention of his Majesty's Ministers to this subject, and the answer I receive from the noble Lord will bias me very much in the course I shall take. It is for his Majesty's Government and the House to say what steps they consider it necessary to take in such a case, but certainly such proceedings ought not to be tolerated.

Lord *Althorp* :—Sir, I really do not know what ground the noble Marquis has for presuming that his Majesty's Ministers are encouraging any persons to inflame the public mind, with a view to disturb the deliberations of this House. I beg distinctly to state, that the Ministers have done no such thing. All we wish is, that the measure now under consideration should be calmly, dispassionately, and quietly discussed. I am aware, that the people feel a strong interest in the success of this measure, and the noble Marquis must know, as well as I do, that, when the people of this country do feel a strong interest in any public question, meetings will be held, and violent language will sometimes be used. His Majesty's Ministers have no wish, however, that the discussion of this subject should be influenced by anything but its true merits. The noble Marquis asks me what course his Majesty's Government mean to take with respect to the speech of Colonel Evans—to a passage of which the noble Marquis has called the attention of the House. I never saw any report of that speech, until my attention was drawn to it since I entered the House; but I do not hesitate to say, after having read the speech, that it appears to be a very violent and foolish speech. At the same time, I do not think it is one of those cases which the Government of the country ought to take up, and make the subject of a prosecution. If the House took up the matter as a Breach of Privilege, and I doubt very much whether we could proceed so in this instance, my experience in this House has led me to the conclusion, that nothing but strong and urgent necessity ought to induce the House to adopt that course; for, whenever such a proceeding has been adopted, I do not think the House has benefitted by it. The noble Marquis says, that he will be influenced in the course he shall pursue by my answer upon this subject. The noble Marquis must take whatever course he chooses; but I can assure him and the House, that it is not the wish of his Majesty's Government to influence any one by violence or clamour on this question. On the contrary, we think that the worst thing that could happen, as regards the success of the measure, is any display of popular violence or clamour.

Sir *Charles Wetherell* did not think the noble Lord had answered the question put to him by the noble Marquis, as explicitly as he might have done. What the step was that ought to be taken in this particular case was not the point to which the noble Marquis called the attention of his Majesty's Government. There was no Gentleman in that House, however, who wished for free discussion and mature deliberation, who could withhold from the noble Marquis the praise of having acted meritoriously, in having called the attention of the King's Ministers to the passage which had been alluded to, and by calling their attention to that, directing it also to other passages and other speeches equally violent. When the noble Lord (Althorp) stated that his Majesty's Government did not wish that external threats or intimidation should be resorted to on this question, he must allow him to say, that he had not understood his duty. He would tell the noble Lord, as the Minister of the Crown, that he ought not only not to wish external threats or intimidation to be used, but it was his duty to prevent them. He could not, therefore, consent to take the definition of his duty, which the noble Lord, as the Minister of the Crown, had given the House. His duty was not only not to wish, but preventively to interpose and put a stop to, such proceedings. The noble Lord had called the passage in the speech of Colonel Evans, to which his attention was called, "violent and foolish." This was letting it down very easy. To call that passage "violent" was, no doubt, characterising it properly; but when the noble Lord added the other epithet—"foolish,"—it was alleviating—throwing a little balsam—he might say a little milk and water on it. He wished to state distinctly, that there were persons of all ranks and professions who did not believe that his Majesty's Ministers were conniving at external threats and intimidation, but who were of opinion, that his Majesty's Ministers were bound by their duty to see that external threats and intimidation were not resorted to on this question. It would be too strong a charge against his Majesty's Government, to say it was conniving at such proceedings; but, if his Majesty's Government brought forward measures, and those who supported such measures resorted to threats and intimidation, and his Majesty's Ministers did not take means to put a stop to them, the charge of connivance might not be considered wholly unfounded. There was another topic to which he must advert. It was not to persons out of doors that this charge of "threats and intimidation" was exclusively confined; threats had been used in that House. In the speech of the noble Lord opposite (Lord John Russell) a threat had been held out, but not of such a nature as would admit of any Member calling upon the Clerk to take down the noble Lord's words. The noble Lord had talked of "convulsion," in the event of the Bill being rejected. He said, they were to take the Bill or be convulsed. Now, they were convulsed undoubtedly, not by the incitement of terror, but by the excitement of ridicule. They were threatened, however, and he maintained and asserted that the threat was not thrown out against the minority of that House. The opposers of the measure were not the minority. He was of opinion that they were the majority. That would be known, however, by and by, when the votes came to be counted. Majority or minority, however, he re-asserted that the noble Paymaster had threatened the House, though not in such a manner as that a call could be made to take down his words, with convulsion in the event of—

The *Speaker* here rose, and intimated that the hon. and learned Member could not with propriety pursue that topic any further—he was adverting to a former Debate.

Sir *Charles Wetherell* expressed his willingness, on all occasions, not only to prove his obedience to the suggestions of the Chair, but to confine himself strictly within the rules and orders of the House. He would pass by the topic to which he had been referring, and, except giving it a simple negative, would pass over another unconstitutional threat, thrown out by another member of his Majesty's Government. Threats were illegally made within and without on this question, and he repeated, that it was not consistent with the duty of Ministers not to interpose preventively. In the passage to which attention had been directed, it was thrown out that 10,000 men were to march up from the coast of Sussex, to assist them, the Ministers of that House, in their deliberations. The noble Marquis (Chandos) had done his duty by bringing this subject under the consideration of the House. If the noble Lord meant to maintain the strength and energy of Government, he should not permit threats of that description to go forth unnoticed.

Lord *Althorp* never meant to be understood as saying that, if illegal threats were thrown out, or intimidation used, his Majesty's Government ought to be contented with wishing that such proceedings had not been adopted. The noble Marquis accused the Ministers of exciting clamour out of doors on this question, and, on the part of his Majesty's Government, he denied that they had done any such thing. He knew, as well as the hon. and learned Member, that it was their duty to prevent the Members of that House from being influenced by threats or intimidation. He could assure the House that he would be as ready as the hon. and learned Gentleman, or any other Member of that House, to maintain the power of the law, and, by the vigorous exertion of that power, to prevent confusion, and punish violence, if anything of the kind were attempted.

Sir *Edward Knatchbull* thought this subject most important in two points of view—as respected the conduct of his Majesty's Government and the threats which had been thrown out with regard to the important question on which the House was engaged in deliberating. He was satisfied that, whatever had fallen from persons out of doors, it was not the wish of his Majesty's Government, or of the noble Lord who represented the Ministers of the Crown in that House, to use any threat, or any improper influence; but he was sure the noble Lord and the House would agree with him, that it would be presumed that his Majesty's Government were not unwilling to countenance such proceedings, if persons connected with his Majesty's Government adopted such a course. If persons so connected used language for the purpose of exciting and inflaming the public mind, it would become any man who disapproved of such a course of proceeding, to separate himself from those individuals who had pursued it. The House was threatened with being forced to adopt a particular line of conduct, by an army of 10,000 men, to come out of Sussex. That was a most improper threat. There was nothing to which he had a greater aversion than calling any one to the bar of that House; but he thought the case was of sufficient importance to justify an instruction to the Attorney General to prosecute.

Mr. *Benett* thought that nothing could be more unfair than to make a charge against the Government for a speech spoken out of doors, by a person who was not a member of that Government. It was in vain to endeavour to suppress public opinion, and wholly improper for Ministers, or those who agreed with them, to do anything that might, by possibility, lead to a convulsion. They had the legitimate support of the common sense and sound reason of the country in behalf of the measure, which was one of the most important that was ever introduced into Parliament.

Mr. Alderman *Wood* said, that without any allusion to what had passed in other places, he would inform the House of what had occurred at a meeting of some thousands of the livery in Common Hall. They were told most distinctly, that the franchise of many of them would be destroyed by the measure—that all those who lived out of the City would be deprived of their votes. But, with that distinct impression on their minds, they hailed the measure with enthusiasm, and voted for the resolutions unanimously, excepting that one hand was held up against one resolution, and two against another.

Mr. *Coke* confessed that he never expected to have heard such a plan of Reform proposed by Ministers as that which his noble friend (Lord J. Russell) had stated to the House. It delighted him that a Russell should have brought forward such a Bill. He had lived a great many years, and every year had convinced him more of the necessity of Reform; but he had never indulged the hope that, at one sweep, the whole of the rotten boroughs would be carried away, and the influence of the boroughmongers extinguished for ever. He came into Parliament, many years ago, as a Whig of the old school, and little did he ever expect to have seen his noble friend (Earl Grey) at the head of the Administration; who had now redeemed his pledge to the country. The plan was of the most satisfactory nature, and the feeling in favour of it was so general, that no doubt could be entertained of its success.

Order of the Day read.

Colonel *Sibthorp* rose to state his sentiments, as the Representative of a large, respectable, and intelligent body of constituents. He was desirous of supporting the Ministers of the Crown, but their conduct on this occasion prevented his doing so. He could not support the Bill; the measure was too sweeping. The hon. member for Middlesex had declared, that he was perfectly satisfied with the plan of the noble Lord, and that he, a radical reformer, was not only satisfied, but that the plan had gone beyond his expectation. If that was the sentiment of a radical reformer, what must be his sentiment, who was neither a radical nor root and branch reformer? Though he was loth to support the Bill, he was perfectly ready to admit that some Reform was required. He was quite ready to admit, that there was room for an improvement in the state of the Representation; but when he looked at the provisions of this Bill, which at "one fell swoop" took away the franchise from those who had done nothing to merit the loss, to give it to others who had no better claim to its possession, he could not help considering the measure as one which was partial and unjust in its operation. Another point, which he thought the House had a right to complain of, and which he was glad had been mentioned that evening, was, the excitement which was raised in the minds of the people on the subject; he did not intend to accuse the noble Lord, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, or the noble Lord who had brought forward this question, as having, by their conduct or their words, tended to create that excitement, but that it did exist, and that it was mischievous in its effects, there could be no doubt. He wished, therefore, that more time should be given for deliberate inquiry and calm examination. He wished that inquiry to be prosecuted under happier auspices. The noble Lord, in opening the Debate, had certainly seemed to flatter himself that he intended to act upon a principle; but he (Colonel Sibthorp) would almost consent to pledge his word that it would be found, on investigation, that most of those boroughs which were still to have one Representative left, belonged to Whig patrons, while such was not the case with those boroughs against which sentence of death had been passed without any hopes of mercy. He wished then to advert to what had been said by the First Lord of the Admiralty? That right hon. Baronet had threatened, that if the House did not support the Government, Parliament should be dissolved. But he would tell that right hon. Baronet, that he was not afraid to go back to his constituents, and no threat at any time should prevent his giving his honest vote and opinion in that House. If the Ministry really wanted to do something that should be of benefit to the country, he thought that it would be much better if they would adopt the strict letter of the Act by which no person holding place or pension was to have the right of voting in Parliament. He was a Reformer, but no Radical Reformer; but as he wished that the people of England should have full knowledge of the notable Bill which the noble Lord was about to introduce (though, in his opinion, it would never pass into a law), he should not oppose its being read a first time; but, at the same time, he would not pledge himself in that House to any single vote that he would give about it. Since this was a Bill which was to give the death-blow to one borough after another, he should like to ask the hon. member for Bletchingley (Mr. Tennyson), how he could take a seat in that House, become one of the Ministry, and actually go back to be re-elected for that very borough, when the Ministry to which he belonged had in substance declared, that the borough which he represented was incapable of sending an honest representative to Parliament? And since the noble Lord himself had relied so much upon the principle of his Bill, it might have been as well if he would have waited till a new census could be made up, before he decided on the boroughs to be disfranchised; in which case he was persuaded that it would be found, that many of those which were only to have one arm lopped off, would have had to change places with those which, according to the census of 1821, were to be killed outright. There was also one important question which the noble Lord had omitted, and one which, if the Bill should ever get as far as the Committee, he himself would take the opportunity of mentioning there. The noble Lord had said no one single word on the point which he (Colonel Sibthorp) looked upon as the *sine qua non* of a reformed Parliament, and that was, the encouragement of the liberty of the Press. In his opinion, it was highly necessary that provision should be made for all the debates in that House to go forth freely, fully, and honestly, to the public. It would at least have the advantage of showing the public what Members did their duty, and what did not. As there would, he trusted, be future opportunities of addressing the House on the merits of the Bill, he would not at that time trespass longer on their patience.

Mr. *Tennyson* said, his opinions on this question were so well known, that he would not have intruded them on the House if he had not been so pointedly called on by the hon. and gallant Member who had just spoken, and on a previous evening by the hon. member for Boroughbridge (Sir C. Wetherell). If he understood the hon. and gallant Member right, he charged him with representing the rotten borough of Bletchingley—with having received office under his Majesty's present Government—and with having been re-elected for that borough after having so accepted office. Now, with respect to the rotten part of this charge, it certainly was not fair to make it against him, as the hon. and gallant Member must very well know, that it was only in obedience to the law, and not from any choice of his own, that he had been re-elected after taking office. Neither could he see how it was any reproach to him, under the existing circumstances of the Representation of the country, to sit for that borough, though he knew that he had but one constituent. His opinions on Reform were well known; and the representation that he had enjoyed he had always used for the benefit of the people; and so long as he sat for that borough he would always so use it. Did, then, the hon. and gallant Member suppose, that he should shrink from giving a vote consistent with the principles he had always maintained on this question, even though, by so doing, he should be, according to the words of the hon. member for Callington, committing a sort of suicide? He was ready to do that, and much more, to place the liberties of his country on a permanent, and, as he trusted, on an everlasting basis. Let the hon. Member but wait till the question came to a vote, and he should have no cause to complain. To him, however, the sacrifice he should be called on to make would be small. He could but lose a seat in Parliament; but as the hon. and gallant Colonel had also mentioned his hon. relative, the member for Durham, he was bound to say for him, what the hon. Gentleman was too modest to say for himself, that he was ready to make the sacrifice of three nominations to seats in that House, which had descended to him, and by which he would place the sacrifice of 100,000*l.* on the altar of his country, to give it an opportunity of rallying against that Oligarchy which had too long overborne it. The King and the people were united. His Majesty's Ministers were at length the friends of the people. The battle they had to fight was the battle of the King and of the people. They would not shrink from any portion of the responsibility which they had undertaken, and the result would be, that they must ultimately crush and destroy that many-headed monster which had too long weighed like an incubus on the best interests and prosperity of the kingdom. In conclusion, he could but congratulate the hon. and gallant Member for having, as he said, defended the rights of his constituents, particularly as those constituents were, as he (Mr. Tennyson) was informed, about to petition in favour of the Bill.

Sir *George Clerk* had to enter his protest against the inference drawn by the Lord Advocate, that because the Scotch Members had been silent, they necessarily approved of the measure. He, as a Scotch Member, had been anxious, at an earlier period of the Debate, to offer his opinions on the question; but had not been so fortunate as to find an opportunity. He was, however, nearly precluded from entering into the question, because the noble Lord (J. Russell) had not detailed the plan with respect to Scotland. The proposition, however, with respect to the counties of Scotland was most extraordinary, for it seemed that they were to be doubled up together where the counties were not contiguous. He would not deny, that that part of the present representation was objectionable, but he did not think that the plan proposed would better it. The question now before the House was, whether there was any overbearing necessity for so violent a change in the Constitution of Great Britain as that proposed by the noble Lord? He denied that there was any ground for so extraordinary a change. It would cause a great evil, and inflict great injustice on a large body of the people. They were too apt to argue, that they might do a little wrong, in the expectation of accomplishing a great good: that was, for such fallible beings as men, a most erroneous maxim. He would not say anything as to the spoliation or robbery that had been talked of, for he agreed with the hon. member for Westminster, that the change proposed was within the power of Parliament; but the mode in which that power should be exercised was a matter of discretion. They had been asked, whether they would rest upon the Constitution as it existed in the time of the Star Chamber? His answer to that was, that he would rest upon it, as it was formed at the time of the glorious Revolution of 1688. But they were now called upon to make as great a change as the one which took place then. That was not necessary. He was prepared to alter and amend where necessary, but this Bill went to pull down and destroy, and they might never be able to rebuild. The noble Lord himself, who was now sanguine in his measure, had not always held the same tone. From the year 1823 to the year 1826, he had introduced an annual motion on the subject, and he then withdrew it, on account, according to his own statement, of the luke-warmness of the people. When Mr. Canning stated in that House that he would oppose Reform to the last day of his life, the noble Lord said, that he had proposed to his friends to make it a party question, but that they had declined. In the year 1828 there were no petitions presented for Reform. In the year 1829 there were none; but in that year the Catholic Question was passed; and those who had opposed that measure had contended, that the Parliament did not represent the voice of the people, in consequence of which they had taken every opportunity of stirring up their constituents and others to petition the House for Reform; but he believed that there were many who now bitterly repented the extremity to which they were likely to be hurried by this Bill. The crisis had been hastened on by the events at Paris, and by the ambition of individuals who would yet live to regret their folly. The learned Lord, the member for Dundee, grounded his arguments in favour of the Bill upon the petitions; but what did the petitioners demand?—not this Bill; the great majority of the Petitioners demanded the Vote by Ballot; and if the learned Lord could support Reform on such grounds he ought, on the same principle, to support Vote by Ballot. The principal reason which the people had for demanding Reform was, that they expected it would lead to a reduction of taxation and relieve their distress. He remembered that the hon. Baronet, the member for Westminster, stated a few nights ago, that the Irish people wanted food and clothing; and that the hon. member for Waterford, having told the Irish that the Repeal of the Union would give them food and clothing, they were all eager for a Repeal of the Union as a means of getting food and clothing. For a similar reason, the people of England now called for a Reform of Parliament in order to get a reduction of taxation. Reform was now to be the specific for every evil. The country was, indeed, under great obligations to the present Government for having disabused it of the error, that it was practicable to make any further reduction of taxation. The present Ministers wished to do so, but when they had been a short time in office they found it impossible. He feared, that if reduction of taxation were attained through the medium of Reform, it would be by attacking the public creditor; and such a Reform, for such an object, he was sure the great mass of the people could not desire. The petitioners, too, generally, asked for the reduction of tithes, and that reduction they were likely to obtain by a Reform, for he doubted if any property would be safe under a reformed Parliament. If the Bill were thrown out, as he believed it would be, by a large majority, they would, no doubt, be all sent to their constituents, as the First Lord of the Admiralty had threatened, and he would then recommend Ministers to go to their constituents, not as the right hon. member for Tamworth said, with that Bill in their hands, but with the Budget of the Chancellor of the Exchequer. They might say to the advocates of Parliamentary Reform and retrenchment, that the great extent of the country, and the increase of population, demanded an expensive Government; that they had found it necessary to keep up taxation; that they could only take off one tax by laying on another; and, if they did that, they would soon see the agitation cease on which they justified their measure, and the number of petitions for Reform sensibly diminish. To justify the sweeping measure of the noble Lord, what were the evils he pointed out? Formerly, the great evil always complained of, was the overwhelming influence of the Crown, which was to be overcome by strengthening the popular party. But the noble Lord had stated nothing about the influence of the Crown, because he could with no reason allege that it was on the increase. During the last four years, the greatest reductions in all the national establishments had been made, which, combined with the general diffusion of knowledge by means of the Press, prevented the influence of the Crown from being as great as it ought to be, and completely prevented it from being now employed to the detriment of the country. The House and the country were satisfied that the influence of the Crown was not now extreme. The noble Lord had described the great evils of the present system to be nomination boroughs, close corporations, and the expense of elections. The last evil was one every Member would be glad to lessen; but he doubted if the plan of the noble Lord would be efficacious for the purpose. He rather thought that the plan would increase the expense, and would give greater facility for bribery and corruption than at present. The principle of the Bill was, to establish an uniformity of suffrage, cutting off the Peers on the one hand, by cutting off the nomination boroughs, and cutting off the poor on the other, by cutting off the close corporations, and the scot and lot voters. It disfranchised Old Sarum and Gatton, but it also disfranchised non-resident freemen, and persons who had not a house of 10*l.* a year. How that class of electors in Westminster and Preston would like that he did not know. It was said, indeed, he knew, that it was not individuals who were to be disfranchised, but a class. But what would be the operation of the measure? It would not, he believed, be practicable to deprive those of their franchise; but if it were, only one interest would come to be represented—that of the middle classes. It had been said, could it be believed that a revolutionary measure would receive the support of the Representatives of the Houses of Russell, Spencer, and Stanley? But this species of argument was any thing rather than satisfactory. We must judge of measures according to their intrinsic merits, not by the men who proposed them. Disclaimers, such as he had alluded to, had been made frequently before, but how were they treated? When the noble Lord brought forward his Reform Motion in 1826, how did the noble Lord (now the Home Secretary) receive those disclaimers of revolutionary tendency and intention? Lord Melbourne (then Mr. Lamb) observed, "the noble mover had stated, that he was not favourable to democracy; the noble seconder had echoed the same opinion; and the hon. member for Westminster had declared that he wished for nothing that could tend to revolution. Now he could only say, in answer to this, that individuals did not always want what they got, nor get what they wanted. The question here was not what Gentlemen were seeking, but, supposing they got that which they sought, what effect such an event would have on the Constitution? And his opinion was, that the alteration which was proposed would trench extremely on the monarchical portion of the Constitution."* In 1821 the hon. member for Durham brought in a bill, by which it was proposed to make a material alteration in the constitution of the House,—indeed, an alteration completely analogous to the present scheme; and what was the opinion of Mr. Abercromby, now Chief Baron of Scotland, on the plan? By the way, he thought Mr. Abercromby's opinion ought to have considerable weight with some Gentlemen opposite. That hon. Member said, "he felt it necessary to state, that he never could, under any circumstances, give his assent to the plan of Reform proposed by his hon. friend, the member for Durham (Mr. Lambton). If carried into effect, he could view it in no other light than as tending to a complete revolution."† Now, the plan of 1821 so nearly resembled—nay, was so completely identified with—the present Bill, that he almost thought it came out of the same workshop. It was unnecessary to add, that he was as much opposed to this plan as Mr. Abercromby could be to its predecessor. Indeed, he felt called upon to offer every opposition in his power to the measure, which he considered unjust in principle, and dangerous to our established institutions, if reduced to practice. He should be ever proud to have his name enrolled on the list of the large majority by which he felt confident that the measure would be rejected.

Mr. *Anderson Pelham*, as the Representative of a close borough (Newton), thought it right to state his reason for supporting the measure. He was convinced that it could never have been the intention of Parliament, that a borough containing only 102 souls should return two Members, while such towns as Manchester were unrepresented. He was happy, too, in knowing that the vote he should give had the full sanction of his family, who were willing to sacrifice all private interests for the advantage of the public. Nor could he fail to express his belief, that the Isle of Wight would be as well represented by the one Member it was proposed to give it, as by the several Members its boroughs at present returned. He should vote for the Bill.

Mr. *J. T. Hope* said, he was sure that the fact of his being one of the Representatives of Gatton would not weigh with the House in judging of the free and unbiassed sentiments to which he should give utterance. He had intended, being a Scotchman, to rise in reply to the learned Lord, the member for Dundee; and he trusted that the silence of the Scottish Members would not be construed into approbation of the measure. It was not, however, necessary to trouble the House with observations on the details of a Bill—he meant the Bill affecting Scotland—which was not yet, and which, perhaps, never would be brought forward. He was actuated solely by a sense of duty in then rising to oppose the Bill. The question, as it appeared to him, resolved itself into two heads—first, as to the necessity and propriety of Reform generally; and next, as to the propriety of this particular measure of Reform. He was not going to trouble the House with his opinion as to the propriety of Reform generally, not because he represented Gatton, but because he felt that his moderate abilities, and his inexperience, must deprive that opinion of any value. But this he might be permitted to say, that if Reform were necessary or proper, the necessity or propriety did not appear from any reasons which had been adduced by Gentlemen opposite. Indeed, all their arguments resolved themselves into this simple reason, there existed a call for reform out of doors, and therefore Reform must be conceded. But he submitted, that this argument proved too much,—if it was to be received at all, it must be taken to show that it was not necessary for the House to deliberate at all, it had only to follow the popular current. He really thought that they were at present placed in the unfortunate situation which once occurred in the great Council of Persia, during, if he recollected rightly, the reign of Cambyses. That monarch asked the consent of his Council to do some act which was contrary to the immutable laws of the Medes and Persians; and, on a certain day, he came before them, not, as it appeared to them, to require advice, but in a spirit of dictation. The Council felt unwilling to depart from established rules; but happily, while they were in this state of uncertainty, they found a law by which the king was permitted to do what he liked. The case was similar here. When the sovereign people came forward with their claims, they discovered, it seemed, a law, by which they were authorized to act as they pleased. He would not call their representations a cry or a clamour, as hon. Gentlemen on the other side of the House had done, when the people raised their voices and exerted their utmost powers to prevent the granting of Catholic Emancipation. He admitted that representations on the subject of Reform, emanating from the people, did exist; but he denied that they would be of that enduring nature which the advocates of the measure described. The question of the duration of the present feeling had, in his opinion, been disposed of by several hon. Members. For his own part, not only did he believe that it would not be durable, but he further thought, that this expression of opinion might be put on a very different basis from that on which it had been placed. It struck him that Reform was not the end which was kept in view, but that it was supported as the means of attaining two very distinct and different objects by two very distinct and different classes of people. Proceeding on the maxim *fas est ab hoste doceri*, he would, in touching on this part of the subject, adopt the division which had been laid down on a former evening by the hon. and learned Lord opposite. The hon. and learned Lord had divided those who were in favour of Reform into two classes,—the one comprising the intelligence which was found in the middle class of life, the other composed of crazy radicals and visionary anarchists, who were ready to share amongst themselves the plunder of the country. Now what object, he would ask, had the middle class of society in view? Had they no other object but Parliamentary Reform? Let the House look to their petitions. Let them examine those petitions, and they would find that the petitioners almost uniformly called for a reduction of taxation. They clearly considered Parliamentary Reform as the great means of obtaining that reduction? He knew very well that taxation bore very heavily on the people; and he sincerely wished that the assessed and other taxes could be removed; but he feared that, situated as the country was, it would be impossible to afford such relief. He was sorry to observe that the people had been led away, and discontent had been fomented, by false lists of the salaries and emoluments which were granted to individuals; and Gentlemen on the other side of the House, he regretted to say, had assisted in keeping up that feeling, before they got into office; but since they had been in power, they had come down to the House and declared, that, under the existing circumstances of the country, it was out of their power to make any great or considerable reduction. Ministers ought, however, to state explicitly what those circumstances were which rendered them unable to meet the wishes of the petitioners in that respect. Would Parliamentary Reform enable them to grant relief from taxation? He thought not. Would it ameliorate the situation of Ireland? Certainly not, for it scarcely touched that country at all. Would it give relief to the agricultural labourers? No: all it would do with respect to them was to disfranchise them. Would Reform, he demanded, tend to allay the storms which now disturbed the Continent? That question he need not answer; but if Reform would do none of these things, how it could diminish the expenditure he could not possibly conjecture. He could not see the necessity for this proposed Reform; for the House, as it was now constituted, he was convinced, was anxious to do every thing that could be done for the benefit of the people. Was not every man in that House as solicitous for the national welfare as for his own private honour? Did not every Member feel and prize the high and glorious situation which this country held amongst other nations, as much as he felt and prized the liberty which it was his birth-right to enjoy? He denied, that the state of the empire would be benefitted by Parliamentary Reform, which would only create alarm, distrust, and confusion. What answer, then, should be given to those two classes of applicants? To the first he would say, "We are ready to take off taxation as far as any reformed Parliament can." With respect to the other class, the radicals and anarchists, when once they were stripped of their specious pretences, and placed distinctly before the public, they would be regarded with merited abhorrence. Would the House, then, yield to the demands of these clamorous people? If they did, it would be only adding fuel to the flame of discontent? for the radical party, he was certain, if encouraged, would not be satisfied till nothing appertaining to the Constitution was left undestroyed. As to the measure itself, he objected decidedly to it, because it drew a line of distinction, which did not at present exist between those to whom the franchise would be given, and those from whom it was withheld. It would also create a great distinction between two interests which were and ought to be intimately connected—he meant the manufacturers and the landed proprietors. These, he might be allowed to observe, were not distinct bodies, although many persons supposed them to be so. They were one and the same, having the same interests, and finding the same advantages in all public measures. The noble Lord's Bill was described as a restoration of the Constitution. That it was not; it was not a Reform according to the principles of the old Constitution, but it did, in fact, go to the establishment of a new one. The question then came to this—Was this projected Constitution a good one? He had considered the subject attentively, and he thought not, because it appeared to him to give the House of Commons too much power. In his opinion, they were about to confer the elective franchise on those who had neither sufficient property nor sufficient education to guarantee a just and correct use of that privilege. The right hon. Gentleman opposite (Mr. Stanley) had observed recently, that every tardy concession was like the celebrated Sibylline Books—the longer you put off the purchase, the more you paid, and the less you were likely to receive. Now, he had never heard of any benefit that had been derived from the extravagantly dear purchase of the Sibylline volume, and he believed that just as little good would be effected by Parliamentary Reform.

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* See Hansard's Parliamentary Debates, Vol. xv, New Series, p. 713.

† Ibid. Vol. v, p. 430.

Lord *Dudley Stuart* rose and said, Sir,—After all that has been urged by both sides on this great question, I can scarcely hope to adduce any new argument for the consideration of the House; and it would be still more presumptuous in me to expect, by any thing that I can have to say, to influence in any degree its decision. Still, Sir, feeling strongly, as I do, on the subject, I cannot be satisfied without entreating the indulgence of the House, while I endeavour, as briefly as possible, to state my views and opinions upon it. I have considered it my duty to give to this important, this awful subject, my best attention. I have listened attentively and anxiously to what has been urged on either side of the House; and, although I have heard many brilliant speeches, and much eloquence, from Gentlemen opposite, yet, I confess, that I have heard no argument which convinces me of the inexpediency or impolicy of this measure. It appears to me, Sir, that all their arguments go to the exclusion of all Reform; yet none of them are bold enough to say they are against all Reform; not one of them has ventured to raise the standard of anti-reform, and they are all, I believe, disposed to give Representatives to the large towns. I ask those Gentlemen who are now willing to grant some Reform, by giving representatives to populous places, where they were when bills were brought into the House for the purpose of disfranchising certain boroughs, and giving their representatives to large towns? If those Gentlemen had then declared the sentiments which they now profess, we should not see those important places still unrepresented; and the measure now proposed might have been unnecessary. Sir, those who are against reform, argue as if our Constitution was so perfect that it could not be improved. Our's is certainly a noble, a glorious Constitution: but there are in it defects and a symptom of decay which, if not cured, will cause the ruin of the whole. I have no sympathy with those who would rather bear the inconvenience and abuses of the present system, (although they feel and acknowledge them) than make any change; and who are afraid to make any alteration, lest what they think tolerable now, should be made very bad. Such a principle is a bar to all improvement. But we are told that this measure is unconstitutional: if we look at the history of our country, we shall find that many changes have, at different times, been made in the state of the representation; and that great statesman, Mr. Pitt, referring to history, declared that "no doctrine of antiquity was more indisputable than that the state of the representation should be changed with the changes of our circumstances." But, without going further back, we have an instance of such a change, a very short time ago, in the disfranchisement of the 40s. freeholders in Ireland. It is said, that the proposed measure will destroy the just influence of property, and overturn the aristocracy; I should be very sorry to see any such effect produced. Under this measure, the great proprietors in this country will have a just weight and influence, and they will not have an unjust influence. Under this measure they will not possess the influence of property alone; but they will require that of character also; and if they will consent to live in the country, to attend to the wants, and wishes, and interests of those who surround them, to fulfil the duties of their station, then will the great proprietors of England never be without that weight and influence which are so salutary when united with ordinary talents. I consider that one of the advantages of this measure is, that, by inducing gentlemen to reside more in the country, and to mix more with the people, it will promote good-will and sympathy between the different classes of the community, and tend greatly to cement the bonds of society. This of itself is a very beneficial consequence. The expense of county elections will, by this measure, be materially reduced, which every person must admit will be a very great amendment. But the great, the capital advantage of all is, that it will conciliate large masses of the people, and, by removing from them all just cause of discontent, restore their confidence in the Government, and confirm their attachment to our national institutions. It has been said, that this measure is conceded to intimidation and popular clamour. Sir, I deny that it is so conceded. Undoubtedly there is popular clamour, but it is popular clamour founded on just and reasonable grounds. Sir, I never would concede to popular excitement this or any measure, which I did not feel satisfied in my conscience was for the good of the country. Sir, I have said that the great advantage of this measure is, that it will conciliate large masses of the people, and I must observe, that the persons so to be conciliated are the most important of the community—the middling classes; the most virtuous, and generally the most influential, in all countries; and particularly the pride and flower of England. I certainly do rejoice, Sir, that the franchise is to be high in those towns which are now, for the first time, to have Members; at the same time I do not feel quite satisfied at the prospect of the lowest classes being altogether and in every place deprived of Representatives. I have some doubts whether that is politic or right. I also fear, that when we go into the details of the measure, it will be found that there are some very hard cases, with regard to boroughs which had not a sufficient number of inhabitants in 1821 to entitle them to Representatives in Parliament, but which have that number now. I am afraid that the inhabitants of such boroughs will feel themselves, and not altogether without reason, rather unjustly treated. I am reminded by an hon. Member, that these considerations will more properly be entertained when we go into Committee. I feel the justice of that remark, and I merely wish to throw out these observations for the consideration of his Majesty's Ministers. I have no doubt that we shall very soon have that opportunity of discussing the details of the Bill; I understand that hon. Gentlemen opposite do not intend to oppose bringing in the Bill, but whether they do or not, I have no doubt that we shall very shortly be enabled to bring in the Bill and carry it into the Committee. The hon. member for Preston, the other evening, would not allow that this House attended to the wishes and interests of the people; I trust that he will soon have grounds to change his opinion, when he sees this measure carried by a triumphant majority. I cannot, Sir, feel any apprehension for our success from the circumstance of 168 Members of this House representing close and rotten boroughs. I cannot believe that any hon. Member will be influenced by motives so sordid that I should repudiate them with scorn if imputed to myself. Sir, there is one reason which makes it very painful to me to support this measure, that is, that I fear I may be acting in a manner disagreeable to my constituents, since the borough which I have the honour to represent will lose by it one Member. Should I be so fortunate as to be chosen to represent that borough again, I should only be, what the hon. member for Guildford has facetiously called, half a man. It is undoubtedly extremely painful to me to act in any circumstances in opposition to the interests or wishes of my constituents; but, Sir, I feel that I have a great public duty to perform, and no consideration on earth shall deter me from discharging it. Sir, I envied the noble Lord who introduced this measure when I saw him, after maintaining so many struggles, and fighting so many battles in this great cause, at length stand forth as the organ of his Majesty's Ministers and propose this grand measure to this House and to this country. I thank the noble Lord for the admirable manner in which he discharged the glorious task imposed upon him. I thank his Majesty's Ministers for this, not revolutionary measure, but for this measure which will perpetuate to the country the advantages and blessings of our glorious Revolution of 1688; and, when I thank them, I am certain that I am responded to by the voice of the whole nation.

Colonel *Tyrell* assured the House that he would not occupy its attention beyond a very few minutes. In his opinion, the Debate ought to have ended with the speech delivered by a right hon. Gentleman at the close of a former evening, because that speech was not only unanswerable, but unanswered. Yes, he thought that the Debate might very well have closed there: time, however, being given, in the first instance, for the dying speech of the noble Lord opposite. Nothing new could now be said on this subject. He was sure that a novel idea would be bought up at a large premium. The hon. member for Midhurst (Mr. J. Smith) had said, that his joy was so great when Ministers brought forward this measure, that it had actually taken away his breath. He might say the same, it had also taken away his, but from a very different feeling. In consequence of the great agitation which prevailed, this question of Reform at present excited much greater interest in that House than it had ever previously done. He, however, did not believe (and he would state his reasons why) that the people were so very anxious for Reform as had been described. He had recently stood one of the most severe election contests that ever took place in the United Kingdom, and during the whole of that contest, the great question of Parliamentary Reform was altogether lost sight of. [" *No, no,*" *said Mr. Wellesley.*] The opinion which he might hold on that subject was never, he contended, demanded from him during the whole of his canvass. Neither did he feel it necessary to state what that opinion was. It did, however, occur to the hon. member for Colchester, whom he saw at the back of the Speaker's Chair, as an after-thought, to ask what opinion he had on this subject. That circumstance took place at the latter end of the contest, and the statement he made to the hon. Member then, was precisely the same as he should be inclined to make to a similar question now. He had then said, in answer to the question, that wherever corruption was proved to exist, he would be ready and willing to move for the extension of the franchise, whether that corruption was discovered in the town of Colchester or in the borough of St. Ives. It was not altogether unworthy of remark, that this great contest took place in a county abutting on this metropolis, and that county unfortunately was, like the sister kingdom, troubled with two great agitators. One of these great agitators presented a petition, no longer ago than last Monday, which petition purported to state what was the opinion of the people of Essex with respect to Parliamentary Reform. The King's representative in the county of Essex had not attached his name to that petition, and perhaps he would for thus withholding his sanction be cashiered. Probably some right hon. Gentleman opposite could inform him whether he was right in his conjecture. He would tell the Government in return, what his constituents meant by Reform; they meant reduction of taxation, they meant economy, retrenchment, and the repeal of the assessed taxes. In their opinions on those subjects for the most part he agreed, as neither he nor they were averse to the imposition of a well-regulated Property-tax, and he was himself an humble advocate for such a moderate Reform as could be effected consistently with a due regard for the ancient institutions of the country. He was opposed alike to the wild theories of the learned member for Waterford, and the dangerous whims of the hon. member for Middlesex. The measure proposed by his Majesty's present Ministers appeared to him oppressive, tyrannical and revolutionary, and he thanked the noble Lord accordingly for having exposed it to men of plain understandings, unmystified by Cabinet humbug, or the usual significant obscurity of office. The proposition, in fact, amounted to this, were they prepared at once to sacrifice their constitution, valuable as it was on account of its antiquity, not to the tricolour of Lafayette and Co., but to the quadricoloured flag of the firm of Lee, Bousfield and Co.? He could not better conclude his observations than in the words of the hon. member for Colchester, which certainly should induce them to consider what they were about; for that hon. Gentleman, every one well knew, was not a person to stand upon trifles, never having courted the reputation of being "particular to a shade." The radicals, it should be remembered, were all strenuous advocates for this notable Ministerial plan of Reform, and what said the hon. Gentleman who belonged to that party, no later than Monday last?—"The radicals," quoth he, "by their system would eventually overthrow monarchy itself, which, after all, is the most paternal form of Government which the ingenuity of man has ever been able to devise." For himself he could undertake to say, that were he thought worthy of being placed at the head of an Administration, instead of directing the energies of his Cabinet to the subject of Reform, he should propose to abolish the Assessed Taxes, and substitute a Property-tax.

Mr. *Sykes* said, that Government, in the present measure, merely designed to take away a certain power from parties who ought never to have possessed it, and he therefore felt himself justified in promoting it to the utmost of his ability. Their opponents—who, by the way, spoke the sentiments of others by whom they were habitually controlled, had called this scheme of Reform revolutionary. Now it was most desirable that those Gentlemen should define the word revolutionary, and explain the acceptation in which they had hitherto employed it. If to transfer the franchise from corrupt and depopulated boroughs, to extensive counties and important towns, was revolutionary, then revolutionary he acknowledged it to be. He would wish, however, meanwhile, to be referred to the Statute, whereby Peers were entitled to have Representatives in that House in common with the people, to whom, by every principle of the Constitution, it ostensibly belonged. If the Sovereign and the nobles of the realm had a legitimate claim to legislate for the nation in what was nominally recognized as the House of Commons, where was the necessity for a House of Lords, properly so called? Were not the prerogative of the Crown and the privileges of the peerage superfluous, if the principle of such an unconstitutional anomaly were acknowledged? He entirely denied the assertion of the hon. and learned member for Boroughbridge, that this measure would amount to a corporation robbery, and referred him to the speech of his learned friend, the Attorney General, for its triumphant refutation. He cordially approved of the policy of Ministers on the important question before them, as it would concede to the people their just rights, and raise a large portion of the most respectable and intelligent classes of the community to the station which their weight and interest in this country undeniably deserved.

Mr. *Long Wellesley* said, he should have been anxious to express his sentiments in the course of the present debate, even if his hon. friend, the member for Essex, had not taken the opportunity to utter opinions, on the part of his constituents, which, to his knowledge, a very considerable portion of that constituency disavowed. He was himself one of those Gentlemen who, according to the phrase of hon. Members opposite, were about to be despoiled of half their rights; and had, consequently, a double claim to be heard. A numerous and most respectable body of freeholders, convened at a county meeting by the sheriff, had agreed to petition in favour of Parliamentary Reform, as well as other things, and that petition he had lately had the honour to present to the House. The hon. Gentleman's colleague (Mr. Western) had been all his life an advocate for Reform, and he should consider it fair to put that hon. Member's opinions in opposition to his (Colonel Tyrell's), as representing, at least, in an equal degree, those of the county by which they were returned. The friends of this measure were not to be described as favourable to revolution, when they only sought to restore the national institutions to their primitive condition, and to save the country itself from the very evils which the opponents of Reform professed to expect as the consequences of its concession. He had never been fond of what was, in these times, designated agitation, but it was well known that the most respectable yeomanry of Essex had distinctly called on him to rescue their county from the degraded state of its representation, and had subsequently supported him to the extent of 2,000 votes, in consideration of his principles in favour of Reform, Retrenchment, and Non-intervention. No one had ever made more sacrifices than himself when he voted for measures, not men; but he had already relinquished personal considerations, and he should always persevere in meriting, at least, the praise of consistency in rectitude of purpose. If he were asked what, in his opinion, had most contributed to the acknowledged misery of the country, he should say without hesitation, that it was to be attributed to the last Government's not having been sufficiently guided by large and liberal principles of policy. If, however, there was any one point more than another on which the country unanimously agreed, it was, as to the necessity of Reform generally, let them differ on other topics as they might. If the people themselves were not so universally in favour of a Reform in the Legislature, he should be perhaps inclined to question the expediency of this measure, although he would always deny it to be revolutionary; but the multitude of petitions which they had received from all quarters furnished the best moral evidence of the existing state of public opinion. All the petitions which had been presented to the House, though they might differ in some minor points, agreed in one particular—they all prayed for Reform. He said it was a curious fact, that the counties palatine of Chester and Durham had never sent Members to Parliament until the time of Charles 2nd. The hon. Gentleman sat down after going into a detail of the state of the Representation of the country from the time of Edward 1st, to the accession of William 3rd, which could not be heard in the gallery, notwithstanding the hon. Gentleman's entreaty to be listened to patiently on so important a question.

Sir *G. Warrender* disapproved of the proposed Reform Bill, because it was not a measure conferring rights on the people, but withdrawing and confiscating those rights which they already possessed. He should not have objected to see Representatives of Manchester, Birmingham, and Leeds, in that House; and he was sorry that advantage had not been taken of the conviction of the corrupt borough of Grampound, to transfer the franchise to Leeds; but he considered it a gross act of injustice to deprive any body of people of the elective franchise, without any act of delinquency being proved. In that point of view he had looked at the measure for the disfranchisement of the Irish 40*s*. freeholders, and he regarded in the same light the proposal to disfranchise his constituents, the potwallopers of Honiton. He had received communications from such of his constituents as were Radical Reformers, and they informed him, that they could not understand why they were to be deprived of their rights, because the Ministers wished to diminish the numbers of that House. He hoped he should be allowed to make a few observations respecting a country with which he was connected. The learned Lord (the Lord Advocate),—to whose speech the other night he had listened with the greatest pleasure,—had stated, that the requisition for the Edinburgh Reform-meeting was signed by many individuals who had lately become converts to the expediency of granting Reform. He (Sir G. Warrender) felt deep interest, and, consequently, paid great attention to whatever took place in the city of Edinburgh. He admitted that the requisition was signed by the most respectable persons, at the head of whom was the Dean of Faculty, now the Lord Advocate; but he was not aware that any one either attended the meeting, or signed the requisition, who had not always been a consistent advocate of Reform. A very large portion of intelligent and respectable persons did not concur in the petition which had been got up in Edinburgh; and he was sure that three-fourths of the petitioners would not be satisfied with the measure of Reform proposed by the Government. That measure, he was certain, would destroy the power of the landed interest in Scotland. A petition in favour of Reform had been presented from Roxburghshire; but he was anxious that the House should be informed, that the petition did not emanate from the freeholders, who had the right of voting, but from the heritors of the county, who were all desirous of obtaining the elective franchise, which was so important and valuable in Scotland. The Reformers of Scotland were like the Roman reformer Catiline, who was *aliena appetens*, but after what the House had heard respecting the boroughs of Malton and Tavistock, he could not say that the reforming party in England bore out the similitude in being *sui profusus.* A very unjust cry had been raised against the Members for close boroughs, but he declared, that he never gave such independent votes as when he was member for Westbury, and had the right hon. Baronet (Sir R. Peel) for his colleague. He had divided against the right hon. Baronet on every occasion but one, and that was when they both found themselves in a minority. He declared, that if the proposed measure should pass, the boroughs which would be left in the possession of the elective franchise would be subject to Treasury influence. He had some experience in these matters, and he knew that the Representatives of boroughs with a thousand and upwards of voters, were more teased by importunities than Members for close boroughs. He had kept a list of the applications made to him while he represented an open borough, and he found, that if they could have been granted they would have amounted to between 35,000*l.* and 40,000*l.* If Reform was to be the order of the day, he should like to see the people begin by reforming themselves. He had only one other observation to make, and that was, that the measure would throw out a great number of most able and intelligent men, such as the hon. member for Gatton, who had addressed the House that night, and the hon. member for Callington, who was so attentive to the business of the House, and so ready to lend his assistance in reducing expenditure. He had on a former occasion expressed himself against Reform, and had thereby brought down upon him the vengeance of that most powerful and most dangerous engine, the diurnal press; but notwithstanding that, he would still persist in his opinion, because he was convinced he was bound to do so, both by his duty to his country and his King. He would support no cabal, if such existed, but he would oppose the measure fairly and honestly.

Lord *Howick* said, the hon. Member had described the Constitution of Scotland, and passed eulogiums on it, though it was well known, that under that Constitution a freehold qualification could be purchased and sold even as high as 1,000*l.* He had been pleased also to praise the borough of Honiton, but if an inquisition were entered upon, such as that instituted with regard to East Retford, and witnesses were called to the bar, he had little doubt of being able to convince him on his own principles that that borough was not immaculate. That inquiry into East Retford had produced the best effect, because it had exhibited to public view the most unblushing hypocrisy and the most barefaced impudence; and he trusted sincerely that such exhibitions would be put an end to for ever. The cause of the general outcry for Reform had been a continuance of misgovernment for above a whole century past—a fact which, if he were disposed to lend his aid to increase the discontents out of doors, he could most satisfactorily prove by documents which had been laid on their Table. The object the people had in view, doubtless, was to procure a repeal of unjust, unequal, and injurious, imposts and taxes. He felt, however, that no reduction of the gross amount of taxation could be immediately expected,—the greater part of the pressing encumbrances of the public originating in the necessity of providing for the payment of the interest of the national debt, half-pay and superannuation allowances, which had most disgracefully been saddled on the country by Ministers who had forfeited their character by such an arrangement. The faith, however, of the country, was pledged to that arrangement. Herein the petitioners from the county of Essex proved themselves better judges than the hon. Member who in part represented them, for they abstained from the prayer for a reduction of taxation, which was, in fact, impossible to be obtained—that is, it was not possible directly. He professed he admired the plan, because it left no place for future contention, which must have been the case if the Ministers had adopted the plan of leaving half the boroughs, and providing that each left should have but one Representative. This would have placed them and the other reformers, not in a condition of a firm and lasting peace, but in that of a hollow truce. From his earliest years, he had been a friend to Reform; but he should shrink from any plan which should have the effect of totally remodelling the system of our Representation [*great laughter.*]

Hon. Gentlemen might laugh; but he contended, the present plan went no further than to confer just rights, and remove great and particular abuses. If they had abolished the present division into towns and counties, and appointed Representatives for every 100,000 or 200,000 people, that, indeed, would be a complete remodelling of the system. But his noble friend did not propose to make the Representation proportional to the population; he only declared, that where there was no population there should be no Representation; and that where there was a mass of population, the right of election should be extended to them. He wondered that the distinction between the two things did not strike the right hon. member for Aldborough, (Mr. Croker) but that right hon. Member's eyes were only clear in detecting faults. If he understood the hon. Members opposite properly, they were not altogether opposed to Reform; but if they allowed the smallest modicum of Reform, they had no right to terrify the country with the dangers to arise from the changes now proposed; nor could they bring against the Ministers the argument of prescription and of ancient usage. There was no security for them but in the nature of the Reform they adopted. If the Reform was good, the people would be satisfied, but not otherwise. The Reform must be moderate, but it must not be deceptive; for if it was too moderate, changes would be demanded every year, and they would go on year after year acceding to small changes, till the Constitution itself would be sapped and undermined. He wished to remind them of one circumstance, which they seemed not to have thought of, and that was, that the proposal having been made, it was too late to be recalled. In his opinion that proposal was most patriotically made, and every way deserved the adoption of that House. It was impossible now to suppose, that the Reformers would at present be satisfied with anything less than a measure of this kind. He repeated, that less than the present measure they would not be satisfied with. More perhaps they might have; but he appealed to any reasonable man, whether less than this was ever likely to prove a final settlement of this question. If any measure short of this was proposed, he was sure it would not arrest the efforts of reformers. The Opposition could not escape by saying they had not introduced the measure. It was the same as if a vessel should be on fire, and a part of the crew should refuse to assist in putting out the fire, although, if not extinguished, it might catch the most remote parts of the ship, and blow them into the air, because they had not themselves occasioned it. He asserted, that these Reforms were cautiously prepared, and he was proud and happy to see, that as far as the people had had the opportunity of declaring their opinion, they had expressed satisfaction at the principles and provisions of this Bill, and he was sure that this measure, and this measure alone, would produce a final settlement of this important question.

Mr. *W. Peel* could not help asking, when this Debate was to come to a conclusion. He protested against the abominable injustice of this measure. He should be forgetful of the place he now represented, and of that which he had represented for twelve years, if he did not state his indignant remonstrance against this spoliation of rights and privileges. He should revert to what had been stated with regard to the boroughs of Tamworth, and Tavistock, and Calne. He found, by the Population Returns of 1821, that the numbers of the inhabitants of these three boroughs stood in the following manner: The inhabitants of Tavistock amounted to 5,483; of Calne to 4,549; and of Tamworth to 3,572. Now, that Return was, as he should prove, incorrect. The Returns made for the purposes of this question ought to have been Returns of the number of houses, and not of inhabitants, and then they would have stood thus: The number of houses in Tamworth was 747, and in Tavistock 560. How, then, was it possible that in Tavistock there should be 2,000 more inhabitants than in Tamworth? How, then, stood the matter with regard to Calne? The number of houses in Calne was 461, and yet the population was represented as 1,000 more than that of Tamworth. He would prove this still further, by a reference to Returns from the Tax-office, stating the number of assessed houses. In Tamworth the number of assessed houses amounted to 170, while in Calne they amounted only to 134. These were houses rated at 10*l.* a year; so that, whether the noble Lord referred either to population or property, the argument equally turned in favour of Tamworth, which was to be disfranchised, and against Tavistock and Calne, which were to be preserved. He would prove the same thing from the Returns of the number of voters who had voted at the general elections. In the year 1830 the number of voters polled at Tamworth amounted to 322, in Tavistock only to twenty-seven, and in Calne only to eighteen. He asserted, therefore, that the present measure was one of great injustice to Tamworth. This might be his last speech in that House; but if it was, he should not make use of it to express the same feelings that had been expressed by the hon. member for Midhurst. That hon. Member had said, that he was so surprised, his breath was taken away. The measure had not the same effect on him, and why? Because he was satisfied that "the purge" would not pass. Some physicians undertook to kill or cure, but the noble Lord who had just sat down was bolder, for he undertook to kill and cure. The noble Lord spoke to that House like a nurse to a sick child. The nurse told the child that it was the last dose, offered it a bit of sugar, and coaxed the child to take the dose. But in one respect the noble Lord was not like the nurse, for though he told them it was the last dose they should take, he did not give them the accompanying bribe of the lump of sugar. If the purge was taken, he did not think it would operate—others would be administering their nostrums. There would be Dr. Warburton, the hon. member for Bridport, who would offer them a bolus in the shape of the Ballot; and no doubt another hon. Member, Dr. Hume, would give them another dose, in the form of Universal Suffrage and Annual Parliaments. He did not know whether the hon. member for Preston (Mr. Hunt) was in the House or not, but if he was, he was too good-humoured to be offended with what he was about to say. His observation then was, that the noble Lord opposite was mistaken in supposing that this would be the last Reform that was demanded; for he felt sure, that if a reformed Parliament sat, and the present member for Preston was returned, as returned he no doubt would be, that hon. Member would not sit in the House for three months, without saying that the Reform was well enough as far as it went, but it did not go far enough; and he would ask them to let him prescribe, and would advise them a dose of Hunt's matchless composition. He did not mean any disrespect to the hon. Member; he only meant to say, that every one would be prescribing his nostrums to the House. But was it proper that men who had become rich under the Constitution should attempt to pull it down? He thought not; he thought, indeed, that he should be worse than a villain, if he lent a hand to pull down a Constitution under which he had been sheltered and had grown up. There was nothing to compel a Member to vote for this measure, which was at once dangerous and unjust. They had been threatened with a dissolution, if this measure were not carried. He advised the Ministers not to attempt such a remedy; for they might not find themselves as well off as they expected. They were hardly on their legs when this measure was proposed; they were existing only from hour to hour, as it were, on sufferance. If this measure were not carried, God grant that the worst consequence of it might be to leave that mine of gunpowder to overset the next Cabinet; but he feared that that would not be the worst consequence. He called on the men who opposed the Ballot, Universal Suffrage, and Annual Parliaments—he called on those who respected the Church property, who wished to avoid the destruction of all property, to reject this unconstitutional measure.

Mr. *John Russell* said, the hon. Member who had just taken his seat had certainly been under some misapprehension with regard to the returns; for by the returns which he held in his hand, he found there were 710 houses in Tavistock, instead of 560; and in Calne, instead of 461 houses, there were 894. Then the hon. Member had said, that he would look at the number of persons polled at the last general election, and he had told them, that only twenty-seven voters had polled at the last election at Tavistock. Why, it was to redress that very grievance that this measure was introduced. He regretted that the hon. Member should, on this great question, have gone out of his way to make personal attacks. He was sorry, too, that the other night the hon. member for Callington had, in like manner, diverged from his road for a similar purpose. He asked the House, how the Ministers stood? They were pledged to Reform—they were accused of naming some boroughs to be disfranchised, and that their choice was influenced by partiality. Was such a charge even probable—was it probable that they should so far lose sight of their real interests, to gratify a base and unworthy motive? This measure was intended to prevent that monopoly of influence in the Representation, which had long existed; and, for that reason, it should have his cordial support. It was doubly entitled to his praise, because it held out to the poorest the prospect of putting themselves in possession of the greatest of privileges.

Mr. *J. Wood* observed, that the House would not be surprised at his wishing to address a few words to them on this subject. He owed his election to the free electors and the honest population of Preston. They had been told, that that House was an excellent specimen of the advantages of virtual representation; and they had been told, that it was a matter of no consequence whether men were sent in there as nominees of a noble Lord, or as deputies from small or large numbers of people. He thought, however, that that dictum was wrong; but if he had wanted a proof that it was so, he should have been able to find that proof in the speech of the right hon. Baronet delivered a few nights since. He could not avoid making a few remarks upon that speech. The right hon. Baronet had said, that if Parliament were dissolved, he should go to Tamworth again, and apply to the electors of that place for their suffrages, on the ground that he had resisted this Bill, in order not to deprive them of part of their votes. Now he should visit Preston again in a very different manner. His constituents would be much affected by this measure, perhaps no men more so. He had now 6,000 electors, which, by the operation of this Bill, would be gradually reduced to about 1,000; but when he visited them, he should not tell them that he came to claim their suffrages because he had stood up for their individual privileges; but that it was true a large portion of them would be disfranchised, and that his consolation was, that the whole system of representation would be benefitted. He should tell them, that they had done him the honour to return him to that House by universal suffrage; but they must recollect, that the two Members they had sent up from Preston were liable to be oppressed by the nominees of some noble Lords, and that that evil would now be destroyed; for that, though 5,000 of them might be deprived of their privileges, there were 500,000 others who would obtain the right of suffrage, and that, consequently, these rights were more likely to be better guarded than they had been heretofore. It was a matter of triumph to him that no one, even in that House, had ventured to say that no Reform was necessary. On the contrary, the necessity for Reform was admitted; and the question seemed to be, what was the proposition for Reform that the House ought to entertain? In this measure, it appeared to him that the Ministers had nobly redeemed their pledge, and that the measure was one which ought to satisfy the people, and which, he believed, would satisfy them. He had received communications from Leeds, Manchester, Liverpool, Preston, and several other towns in the north of England, and they all hailed the measure with joy. It seemed to him that the Bill was most wise, most effectual, and most substantial, and would give security for the good government of the country. It had been said by the hon. and learned member for Boroughbridge (Sir C. Wetherell), that this measure was a corporation robbery; but the hon. and learned Gentleman was a gratuitous defender of corporations, inasmuch as, so far as was yet seen, those bodies were anxious that the Reform should be carried. London, Lincoln, Chester, and other Corporations, were already preparing petitions to Parliament in favour of the proposition, and their example would soon be followed by others, to the dismay and discomfiture of the friends of corruption. The necessity for the introduction of Reform into corporations, was as obvious as the utility of any other part of the plan. Corporators were but trustees—those trustees, in many cases, wanted change or renewal, and the hon. and learned Member knew that a trust deed was never drawn without a clause to provide for such a contingency. The House had been also told, because the measure admitted so many new electors, that it was necessarily democratical and revolutionary. Those whom it admitted were of the middle class of society; and he begged to refer the House to the authority of Mr. Canning, who, in one of his speeches in Liverpool (which he knew to have been corrected by Mr. Canning himself), at a meeting composed of all ranks, but especially of traders and shop-keepers, spoke of the high value of that class. He said, "As respects that peculiarly valuable part of the population —the middle classes of society—in which the staple interests, as well as the staple good service of the community, more immediately reside, in times like the present, when the higher and the lower ranks of society are, by the contrivances of designing men, placed—I had almost said in hostility, but certainly in watchfulness and jealousy of each other, the higher ranks standing on an eminence which exposes every action and every word of theirs to a scrutiny to a degree which human imperfection can scarcely bear, and the lower classes labouring under the pressure of privations, and taught to ascribe their sufferings to causes which have no connexion with them, and the removal of which would not, in any degree, abate them; the best chance for the safety of the whole plainly resides in that body which is situated between the two distinctions. The higher classes will look with confidence to the middle ranks, to preserve that state of society which they are highly interested in maintaining; and the lower classes will rely upon them, from the habit of friendly intercourse, and the necessity of a mutual co-operation. On the sober judgment and well-regulated conduct of the middle classes—on their attachment to the laws and Constitution of the country,—on their loyalty, and their example of virtuous, firm, and prudent behaviour, I believe, in the present state of society, the hope of the security of the State, in a great measure, rests upon them." Now, he begged to know whether this measure was not recommended on the ground that it would interest the middle classes in the welfare of the State? At present, a majority of the House was returned by about 300 individuals; many of the owners of close boroughs were mere adventurers, who had purchased them on speculation; others belonged to noble Lords, liable to the infirmities of human nature, and who gave away seats as an honourable mode of providing for dependants. A third class was vested in a small handful of individuals, liable to every species of temptation. It was high time to remove these great anomalies, and to give the country that security for good government which had long been wanting. The people had the monster of corruption now at bay; it had received a mortal wound; its frightful yells were heard in the last agonies of expiring existence, and they would soon be drowned in the triumphant shouts of a rejoicing people.

Sir *John Johnstone* said, that to the general principle of this Bill he should give his cordial assent. He viewed with satisfaction a measure so restorative as this. His Majesty's Government had manifested true impartiality, steering a middle course between political antiquaries and political projectors; and he hailed this measure as the harbinger of political peace. History clearly showed, that the constitution of that House was Representative—that it was deputed to administer the property of the nation, and to protect the national interests. The usurpation of kings or nobles had made the Constitution variable; but the acknowledged principle of the formation of that House was, that it should Represent the People. As long, however, as a portion of the Members of that House were returned for places which had no constituency attached to them, the people could not feel that their interests were attended to, and that conviction of security would not be felt by them, which it was necessary that they should feel, to give stability to the Government. The House and the Crown must rely on the people, but it was equally necessary that the people should rely on their Representatives. The present composition of the House also gave to factious men the means of raising a spirit of discontent in the country. He would guard the House against both these results, by rendering it such that it could never be disowned by the people, and that Parliament, instead of following, might lead and give the tone to the public feeling. The class to which this Bill would give the franchise was that class in which (when those tumultuous elections, which were a disgrace to the country, were done away with) we might trust to put an end to those practices in the election of Representatives, by which the arms of freedom were turned against herself, and by which men were returned to that House to make laws, by means of a direct violation of the law. This Bill would make the elected hold that estimation which they ought in the view of those by whom they were returned; and it would cause the lower classes to be actuated by higher feelings, and no longer to look to elections merely as to a means of putting money in their pockets. The proposed limitation of the franchise appeared to him calculated to produce good effects; because, while it included some degree of responsibility, it was so little exclusive, and was so widely extended, that there was no man who might not hope by industry to attain its privileges. There need, in his judgment, be no apprehension that rank and station would not have their due weight in the estimation of the people. If he knew anything of the middle classes—and he might assume to know something of them—the aristocracy had nothing to fear from them. They were attached to the monarchical government, and had a stake in society which made them anxious to preserve social order and the institutions of the State. But the aristocracy must maintain their influence by other means than merely looking to parliamentary patronage. That made them more hated than loved, and those who had given it up would be rewarded by the approbation of the whole country. The people of every part of the world were fast acquiring political knowledge, and if the aristocracy meant to preserve a rank and station in society above other men, it must be by exhibiting higher talents and superior virtue. The other classes they must attach by kindness and good offices, for they could no longer maintain a dominion over them by force. He would support the Bill with all his power, because he thought it would produce a beneficial alteration in the habits and feelings of all classes, and would be the means of turning the ambition of aspiring men into proper and useful channels.

Mr. *North* said, that one of the most extraordinary circumstances attending this important discussion, was the speech which the House had heard in the last hour from the noble Lord opposite (Lord Howick). The noble Lord insulted his victim before he sacrificed it; and that Constitution which was held up, not by Englishmen only, but by foreigners, to admiration, the noble Lord told them was only a corrupt instrument, through the medium of which the country had had inflicted upon it a century of misgovernment. If the noble Lord believed the vessel of state to be rotten in all its parts, and to require such extensive repairs as he had stated, if the noble Lord believed that assembly, which had been characterised by one of his colleagues as the noblest assembly of freemen in the known world, to be the last place where a feeling of shame was to be found—it would be useless for him to argue with that noble Lord the question of necessity for this Reform. If he could be brought to believe that the House of Commons was inefficient for all purposes of beneficence and utility, and useful only for all purposes of mischief and extravagance, then he would say, that the change proposed by this Bill, instead of being too large, was not large enough. He would ask, in the first place, where was the necessity for this immense change? What was the recent miscarriage of the Government of England? What had the House done, that in 1831 it should come to the decision that it was incapable for the purposes for which it was designed, and that it should convict itself of being utterly inefficient to those emergencies of state to which it had formerly been deemed adequate? What were these new emergencies, which had never arisen before, but which had arisen at length in our days? This Constitution had been adequate to the emergency of a disputed succession, had been adequate to the emergency which arose out of the great earthquake of the French Revolution, by which all Governments were shaken, and some were overthrown, and had been adequate to the emergency which followed during our long struggle with Napoleon. But now, after it had triumphed over all these periods of difficulty, but at the same time of honour and glory to the country, it was found that some emergency had arisen, for which the powers of this Constitution were unequal, and for which it was necessary to apply the new machine, which was now growing into maturity, under the construction of the noble Lord. He would, however, do the Ministers the justice to state, that they did not rest the question upon this ground, that this part of the British Constitution was found inadequate for the purpose for which it was designed. Feeling that such an argument would never answer their purposes, they saw the necessity of appealing to one of another description, and they said, that there was some extrinsic violence, to which we were bound to submit without a murmur, some clamour out of doors, some call for Reform, which we ought not and dare not resist. For his own part, he was at a loss to know what that call was. He was not satisfied that there was any such feeling on the subject of Reform as it pleased hon. Gentlemen on the other side of the House to assert. No man would be more ready than himself to obey any steady and deliberate call of the people of England; but he was not to be told that every transient emotion of their minds, every flash and outbreak of their fiery tempers, every partial flowing and ebbing of the popular opinion, was to be considered as its deep, and permanent, and irresistible current. In a free State, where a free Press existed, where all subjects were open to discussion, where any theory might be proposed, and where every system might be vindicated, they must expect many transient gusts of popular feeling; but they must beware, above all things, that they did not mistake them for those steady, deliberate and permanent sentiments of the people which ought not to be disobeyed. If they did commit such a mistake, they would find, when too late, the country ruined by it, and would hear it in its agony upbraiding them with this reproach—"In our wrath we said it—in our anger we maligned it; but we never wished to sacrifice the Constitution transmitted to us by our ancestors." A course had been taken on this question, which, though it might be quite fair in the tactics of Parliament, could not stand the slightest investigation by the eye of reason. That course had been, to assimilate the feeling which was said to exist in this country on the subject of Reform with that which had existed in Ireland on the Catholic claims, and to assert that, because the Government had yielded Catholic Emancipation to the dictates of a proper fear, they must yield this question to the dictates of groundless apprehension. Now, he would ask, was there any and what similarity between the two cases? Catholic emancipation was long the desire of a confederated nation, united together by chords as sensitive as they were strong—namely, by all the ties which oppression generates in the mind of the oppressed. United by the common grievances of a century of oppression, the Catholics of Ireland looked not for any innovation—they looked only for reception into the bosom of the old Constitution, and into a participation of all the privileges enjoyed by their Protestant fellow-subjects. The right hon. Secretary for Ireland had pressed this argument upon the House on a former evening; and had pressed it so far and so keenly as to quote the speech of his illustrious friend, the right hon. Baronet on the floor, respecting the necessity of yielding to popular fear. Now it did appear to him, that the right hon. Secretary for Ireland was the last man in the world to have pressed such an argument, for he had recently had before him in Ireland a different species of excitement, artificial, spurious, temporary, produced by no real grievance, but growing out of the acts of men who wished for nothing so much as agitation and excitement. The right hon. Gentleman having seen that agitation himself, and having exerted himself, very laudably, in opposing and suppressing it, was the last man in the world who ought to have brought forward such an illustration, while there was an analogy against it before him, in the clamour which had been artfully excited for the Repeal of the Union. He then called upon the House to examine into the claims which this new constitution, for such undoubtedly it was, had upon their attention. Before hon. Gentlemen determined to adopt the change of this new constitution, there were two points on which they ought to be satisfied. First of all, they must be satisfied that they understood the old Constitution; and then they must be satisfied that they saw fully the working of the new. The British Constitution was not that species of structure that every eye could understand its beauty. It had been well remarked by the hon. member for Callington, that its misfortune was, that the most ignorant could perceive the apparent faults on its surface, whilst they were unable to comprehend the beautiful nature of its interior parts, and the necessary connexion of its apparent defects with its most excellent and praiseworthy attributes. When the noble Lord proposed to use the knife in cutting off part of it as an excrescence, it was the duty of the House to stop his hand, and to see whether that excrescence had not some function in it necessary to the vitality of the whole structure. He was convinced that these close boroughs were necessary for the ends which they were designed to answer in the British Constitution. The noble Lord seemed to think that he could not establish that point, but he would show the noble Lord that he was mistaken. The noble Lord had said, that every man who had a seat there ought to have a real Representative character. Now he begged leave to say, that the mere quality of being a Representative of the people was not sufficient for the purposes of that House. Whatever might have been the origin of our Constitution, most certain it was, that in the progress of time, as our empire expanded, and our interests became more extensive and complicated, the House of Commons had become an assembly which required a mixture of every different species of talent. That being the case, he said that they must have, by some expedient or other, the means of bringing into that House that multiform knowledge, that diversified experience, that variegated familiarity with all the different and complicated interests of the State, which were necessary to arrive at safe conclusions when any of those different and complicated interests came under discussion. He asked, how could this be done under the proposed exclusion of the close boroughs? It might be very true, that by this new scheme the interests of Birmingham and Manchester would be represented; but how would the East-India interest be represented?—how would the West-India interest be represented?—how would the colonial interests be represented in that House? In destroying those close boroughs, the noble Lord was destroying the means of getting at those lights which were necessary to elucidate the questions in which those great interests were materially concerned. He would take an example on this point from the hon. Member who had spoken so disinterestedly on this subject on a former evening—he meant the hon. member for Midhurst. He had represented a close borough. Had he been found a useless representative in that House? Was it not from that hon. Member that the House had heard that unanswerable speech against the scheme for imposing a tax on the transfer of stock, which had determined the noble Lord, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, to abandon that fatal measure? He should not press the argument much, that these close boroughs furnished means of access into that House to men of great talent and small fortunes. That argument had been met with the assertion, that those great men had such talents, that, under any form of Representation, they must have found their way into that House. But did any man who knew any thing of society believe that such an assertion was founded on fact? He must, indeed, be insensible to the warfare of human life, who did not see that a number of gallant spirits were constantly trodden down and extinguished by it. If these boroughs were suppressed, many great men would inevitably be excluded from this House. By suppressing these boroughs, you will prevent an opportunity from being opened to talent; and by doing that, you will also prevent talent from expanding. The slightest acquaintance with the history of mankind would convince any man of the truth of this assertion. How was it that in Revolutions talent always showed itself? Because opportunity was afforded to it then, which was denied at other times. Why was it that in free States talent was most rife? Because free States nourished the growth of it, by the collision of opinions which freedom generated. Reduce, then, the number of these close boroughs, and you will immediately reduce the amount of talent, not only of this House, but also of the country. There was another advantage in the close boroughs, to which he wished to call the attention of the House. He considered them of vital importance, because they afforded a refuge for the holders of unpopular opinions. If all popular opinions were just, if what pleased the multitude also pleased the wise, there would be no weight in this argument; but he asked the House, whether any Minister could carry on the Government honestly to the people, and faithfully to his Sovereign, for any length of time, without rendering himself occasionally unpopular? If he attempted to be popular at all times, he must furnish the people with cakes which pleased the palate but injured the stomach, instead of providing them with that sustenance which diffused health and strength through the whole body. Whilst upon this subject, he could not help calling the attention of the House to a point, which had been taken for granted by all who had hitherto taken any share in this discussion. Whilst they contended that this new system would not exclude the man of talent, they took it for granted that all populous places would form such just and steady opinions respecting integrity and talent, that no man of integrity and talent would meet with a refusal of their suffrages. Now this was an assumption of the whole question at issue, and was an assumption, too, in the very face of facts. If ever there was an instance in which public men had done all that men could do, to recommend themselves to the grateful consideration of their countrymen, it was in the year 1782, in the country with which he was personally connected. At that time, Mr. Grattan and Mr. Flood, and the illustrious men with whom they acted, had acquired, by great efforts, a free trade, and a free constitution for that country. In the year 1782, they were in the zenith of a just popularity. In April, 1783, they had done nothing to forfeit that popularity, and Parliament was dissolved. He would read a short but interesting extract from Hardy's "Life of Lord Charlemont," to show the manner in which they were treated by the people. The hon. and learned Gentleman then read an extract, of which the following is the substance:—"In April, 1783, the Parliament was dissolved, and a new Parliament was summoned to meet in the ensuing August. Here, then, the people was called upon to act an honest and independent part, in electing other men as their Representatives in the new Parliament. It has been said, that the state of the Representation circumscribed the popular choice in narrow limits; but it was not so closely bound as to prevent it from putting itself forth at all; numerous as the boroughs were, they still were not all the country. The counties and the free towns remained; and yet, certain it is, that not one county, nor one free town or corporation, expressed a feeling of public gratitude, by electing one of those eminent men, who had zealously led them on to the best victory of national freedom. Nay, some independent country gentlemen were thrown out of their seats, for the part they took in vindicating the independence of their country. Mr. Flood, and his illustrious rival, Mr. Grattan, were obliged to wander up and down the country, through this mist of popular oblivion, and to find their way as they could to Parliament. The obscure borough of Charlemont again received Mr. Grattan, but Mr. Flood had great difficulty in finding any seat at all." He must add, that Mr. Hardy subjoined to this extract a sentence, of which the import was, that at that very time a set of demagogues were rushing forward for Parliamentary Reform, and vociferating that the people ought not to elect a single man for their Representative, unless he would pledge himself to obtain a more extensive right of suffrage. Here they had this remarkable instance, not of the people having so much discernment as to find out unknown and untried talent, and transplant it into that House, but of popular places having rejected these tried, and well-known, and illustrious patriots. And how had these illustrious patriots found the means of getting into Parliament? Why they entered Parliament by means of boroughs, which were under the patronage of an enlightened government. But the hon. member for Calne had told them, that this was merely a happy accident, which might belong to the most despotic country in the world. Happy accident! Why the hon. member for Calne might as well tell him that it was accident which made the hand of that clock point to the hour. It was no accident; it was a part of the mechanism of our Constitution. And let him tell the hon. member for Calne, that many men who had been eminent for their talents, who had been admired for their acquirements, and who, moreover, had adorned and advanced the literature of their country, had not met with that happy accident to which the House had been indebted for the display of the hon. Member's eloquence, and without which happy accident the hon. Member might have toiled and laboured for many years yet to come, before he obtained that just distinction which already awaited him Thus, then, he had endeavoured to press, without, he hoped, fatiguing the House, the arguments which appeared to him to support this part of our Representative system—arguments which no practical man would underrate, because their value was understood only by experience. He should, perhaps, have thought it necessary to have dwelt upon the details of the system which the noble Lord had brought forward, but that he felt that those details would be better discussed at another stage of the measure. There was one other point connected with the details of the measure, which, as it had been overlooked by all who had preceded him in the debate, and as it regarded Ireland, he trusted the House would permit him to glance at,—he meant the effect which the measure would have upon the representation of that country. The noble Lord should have borne in mind, that it was now only two years since an alteration had been made in the system of Representation in Ireland. That alteration was made upon principle, and it had for its object the preservation of a fair balance between the two great interests of that country. It was thought, in 1829, when the Roman Catholics were admitted to a participation in the privileges of the Constitution, that it was necessary to guard against their influence becoming so great, as to overturn that balance which was deemed, and justly deemed, essential to the welfare of Ireland. For this reason the 40*s*. freeholders had been disfranchised. But the measure which was then resolved upon, and carried into execution, would be entirely subverted by the proposed plan of Parliamentary Reform; for the consequence of it would be, that in twenty cities, and towns, and boroughs in Ireland, the Protestant interest would be tied hand and foot, and entirely subdued by the Catholics. He spoke this advisedly, and no man who was acquainted with the country would, he was persuaded, venture to deny it. The hon. member for Waterford might, indeed, deny that such a consequence would be pregnant with the mischief which he anticipated from it, but he was quite sure, that even that hon. Member would not deny that the measure would produce the preponderance he had mentioned. He had thought it necessary to point this out to the House and to the Ministers. He could assure the right hon. Gentlemen that he did so in kindness, and in order that, if the measure were pressed, this consequence might be guarded against. With this observation he quitted the details of the subject, and returned to the momentous and important question of the propriety of adopting this great measure; and, in considering this question, he could not conceal from his mind, that one of the most formidable evils connected with it was, that it would not be final. Evil as he considered it to be,—injurious, as he felt certain it was, to the best interests of the country,—still it would have been some consolation to him, though but a poor consolation, to know that it was a final and permanent settlement of the question. But if the measure were to be passed to-morrow, still he could see no moorings or anchorage-ground for the Constitution. He felt that this was only the first of those steps which would lead us day after day in our progress away from our ancient institutions,—that it was the first abyss in the revolutionary hell that was yawning for us. He felt, to use the beautiful and energetic language of Milton, that

"—— in the lowest deep a lower deep
Still threat'ning to devour opens wide."

In a year or two the Government might be embarrassed by the failure of the harvests, by some sudden panic, or by some continental troubles: and at such a time it might be again asserted, that all the grievances, real or imaginary, which could be enumerated, were owing to defects in the Representative system. What would they do when defects were pointed out in the new system—for defects would be pointed out in it, skilful as were the artificers who framed it—and when petitions crowded the Table, asking for a new Reform and for a new Constitution? What would they do when the hon. member for Bridport came down, and, with a budget of grievances, asked for Vote by Ballot; while the hon. member for Middlesex, with a still greater catalogue of grievances in his hand, called upon them to agree to Annual Parliaments and Universal Suffrage? What would become of their new constitution then? How would they protect it? They would then have no ancient prescription to rest upon,—no history to appeal to,—no argument to adduce from long experience of the most beneficial effects. In such a case he could fancy the noble Lord opposite, the member for the University of Cambridge, rising in his place and defending, in one of those classical orations with which the noble Lord so often delighted them, this new and now much-lauded constitution: but he would tell that noble Lord how his eloquence would be answered,—it would be answered in the very language which the noble Lord himself had applied to the revolution in Belgium, and would be told, "It is a mere constitution of yesterday." Had they contemplated our constitution in a large and extensive view,—these arrogant and self-conceited men!—who had given a verdict against institutions which had called forth the admiration of a Somers and a Locke, and to which we were indebted for a century and a half of felicity? It was thus, that the measure would lead to endless changes, and for that reason it was, that he called it revolutionary. Believing it to be a revolutionary measure, he had felt it his duty to give utterance to the sentiments of his heart regarding it. The right hon. Secretary for Ireland had told them that, no change could be properly called revolutionary which had the consent of the three estates of the realm. But he would ask the right hon. Secretary, whether, if the supplies were to be voted for ten years if the Habeas Corpus Act were to be repealed—if the Press were to be annihilated,—all which the three estates were competent to do, whether, he said, the right hon. Secretary would or would not call these measures revolutionary, and especially if these were effected by that of which the noble Lord (the Under Secretary for the Colonies) had spoken to them, namely, some physical and external power acting upon the three estates? But when he saw that this measure would inevitably disturb the balance of the Constitution; destroy the ancient institutions of the country, and make even the King's Crown sit loosely on his head, was he not justified in calling it a revolutionary measure? When they found that the wound which was struck would prove fatal, was their attention to be turned aside from the catastrophe in order to inquire by whose hand it had been inflicted? Did murder change its character and become less than murder because it was suicidal? But he had already detained the House too long, and would trespass no longer upon their attention. He would only say, that if the House were determined to effect a vital and radical change in the Constitution, he entreated them to approach the discussion with temper and with caution,—to recollect that their institutions had grown up with them from age to age, and that those institutions had formed their character and their manners;—that the constitution of their country was like their language, the origin of which it might be difficult to trace, and to refer to Saxon or Danish sources, but which they knew it was much more difficult to improve, and yet more difficult still to reconstruct;—that their institutions had been found, up to the present moment, sufficient for the worship of God, and for the wisdom of man;—that under them had flourished the philosophy of a Bacon and a Locke, the genius of a Shakspeare, and the sublimity of a Milton! and that they had always furnished enough of rational liberty to satisfy the spirit of a Somers, and secure all which the most ardent admirer of social happiness could desire.

Mr. *R. Grant* said, that after the very copious, able, and eloquent disquisition which they had just heard, he should have been very slow to follow, if he did not feel that he could safely answer for himself to this extent,—namely, that he could at least compete with the hon. and learned Member in some of the excellent features of his speech, and that, in the short address with which he was about to trouble the House, he could practise that moderation which was part of the hon. and learned Gentleman's recommendation, but certainly not found in his performance. He would not imitate the example, but follow the exhortation of the hon. and learned Gentleman, and would refrain from retorting upon the hon. and learned Gentleman the epithets "arrogant and self-conceited." He should have thought, that the conduct of the present Ministers, humbly endeavouring to tread in the footsteps of a Pitt and Fox, might have protected them from such epithets as these; but the respect which he entertained for the character of the hon. and learned Gentleman would prevent him from following the hon. and learned Gentleman in such a line of crimination. He must, however, say, that he did lament that notwithstanding their earnest endeavour to avoid all irritating topics, and to induce hon. Members to apply themselves to the discussion of this, the most important measure which had been debated within the walls of that House for a century past, there should have been found some hon. Members who, abandoning that wise and prudent course, had allowed some matters which were altogether of a personal nature to creep into their speeches. He did not regret this on his own account; for the single personal allusion which had been made to him was one which he was so far from finding fault with, that he should not at all object to its being re-introduced as frequently as hon. Gentlemen pleased. He must, however, repeat, that he did most sincerely lament that hon. Gentlemen should think it worth while to introduce any topics of an irritating character into the discussion of this important, this difficult, and, in its consequences, this momentous question. If the House would allow him, he would despatch in one single sentence the allusion which had been made to himself personally. It had been said, that some of them who sat upon that bench, and particularly those who were supposed, but who certainly did not attempt, to represent the late Mr. Canning, were guilty of inconsistency in supporting the present measure. It would certainly be arrogance of the grossest kind in him, and would subject him most deservedly to the epithets which the hon. and learned Gentleman had so bountifully bestowed upon the members of the Government, if he were to aspire to the character of being a representative of Mr. Canning. Allow him to say, that he had never aspired to the reputation or character of being the representative of that great genius, but that he stood there as one of the Representatives of the people, and in that capacity he claimed the right of considering with reason, and without prejudice, and of pronouncing boldly upon any measure which might be submitted to the Legislature. To claim this right, which no one could deny him, and to perform this duty, which if he neglected, he should be answerable for his negligence to his constituents, were of far more importance to him than to save himself from a charge of inconsistency, however unjust that charge might be, and however intemperately that charge might be urged against him. The charge, however, which had been made in his absence, for he had not been present for one or two evenings in consequence of indisposition, he utterly denied to have any foundation in truth, or justice, or good sense. He might, indeed, as other hon. Gentlemen had done, take refuge against this charge in the fact, that he had never opened his lips in that House on the subject of Reform, and that he had very seldom been present, when the question of Reform had been discussed. But he would take no such ground. He confessed, freely and candidly, that his early opinions were very much against it; but these opinions were neither well matured nor well considered, and the events of the last Session of Parliament had called his more serious attention to the subject. The events of the late general election, and particularly at the county elections,—which events, allow him to say, he was filled with astonishment to find hon. Members asserting to be the fruits of some temporary excitement,—had made a deep impression upon him. He might be wrong, but upon these events, and upon the most mature deliberation, he had felt himself called upon to support the present measure; and he felt not the slightest displeasure at the taunt of inconsistency, being perfectly satisfied that no man could be justly called inconsistent who acted consistently with the dictates of his own judgment and his own conscience. But how, let him ask, could it be supposed that they who had seen Mr. Canning when he came into another department—he meant when Mr. Canning was called upon to preside over our foreign policy—assume a ground altogether different from that on which he had taken his stand during all the former period of his life,—when they contemplated the acts of Mr. Canning's foreign policy, and saw the consequences of those acts, and the electrical effects which they produced upon every country in Europe,—how, he repeated, could it be supposed that they who had been witnesses to this conduct on the part of Mr. Canning, in his department, should hesitate, if they were to take Mr. Canning as their example, to act according to their own judgments in their own department, when the circumstances of the time were altered, and when new exigencies required new measures? He would contend that they should adapt themselves to the changes and the circumstances of the times. Could it be that, at this eventful period, opinions in that House alone should remain quiescent and immoveable, while every thing around them was in motion and in change? With regard to the able and eloquent address which they had heard from the hon. and learned Gentleman who had just sat down, he begged to say, that in one respect, and in one respect only, he concurred with that hon. and learned Gentleman. That hon. and learned Gentleman, taking for granted that there was a cry abroad that there was a craving by petition before Parliament for this measure, as was the case in the instance of the Catholic Question,—taking that for granted, which was the fact, the hon. and learned Gentleman argued, that in the instance of Catholic Emancipation, we properly yielded to long-continued demands for the redress of long-continued grievances; but that the excitement on the present occasion was of a transitory and temporary nature,—that it was produced by individuals who had no interest in allaying it, and that there had been no long-continued existence of grievances which called upon us to depart from the olden system. Now he thought that the hon. and learned Member did great injustice to the Members who had advocated Catholic Emancipation, and to that great cause itself, if he argued that that great question had been granted merely because agitation and excitement had existed upon the subject for a number of years. He (Mr. Grant) had for years been an advocate for Catholic Emancipation; but he denied, that in advocating it he argued for it as a mere question of time. He advocated Catholic Emancipation because he considered it a cause founded upon the great principles of justice; and though in that instance, as in the present, he acknowledged that they should attend to the discontents, and give a patient and a willing ear to the petitions of the people, he was the advocate of both measures, because he believed in his conscience that they were both based upon justice. While the hon. and learned Gentleman was so severe upon the right hon. Gentleman, the Secretary for Ireland, for referring to the settlement of the Catholic Question, as a parallel case to the Reform Question, he seemed to forget —that in the speech which he had made on this occasion against Reform, and which had been so loudly and repeatedly cheered by hon. Gentlemen on the opposite side of the House, he had furnished an exact parallel, in the arguments which he now employed, to those which were employed against emancipation, and which were then cheered with equal vociferation by the hon. Gentlemen opposite. Did it not strike the hon. and learned Gentleman, that in the arguments and the language which he now used against Reform, he had furnished an exact *fac simile* for those which had been urged against Catholic emancipation? One would think that he had gone over and ransacked the debates on the Catholic Question,—that he had walked over the "well-fought field," and had taken up the errant shafts, and had thrown them against that shield which had so often repelled them. The hon. Member had given them fine-spun passages about the glories of Cressy and Poictiers, and had spoken of them as if they were the effects of the close-borough system. But there he was also anticipated upon the Catholic Question. It was a standing topic on that question. In every discussion of it we were referred to the deeds recorded in our history; we were referred to the wars we had sustained,—to the triumphs which we had achieved,—to the struggles which we had maintained,—we were referred to all those things, which we were told had made us the "envy and admiration of the world," and it was asked, would we permit aught of innovation upon a Constitution under which the country had witnessed such a career of prosperity and glory? Such absurd arguments were repudiated, as they ought to have been in the case of the Catholic Question; and they ought to act now as they had then—they ought to do justly and righteously, and not to attend to arguments drawn from the armoury of antiquated opinions and exploded prejudices. The most remarkable parallel between the hon. Member's arguments against this question, and those which had been urged against Catholic Emancipation, was this,—the opponents of Reform said to the friends of the measure, "You talk of clamour, and violence, and agitation, but we tell you that you yourselves are the cause of it." That was the cry of the hon. Member on this occasion, but how often had they not been condemned to hear the same argument urged against Emancipation? The standing topic then was, in answer to the advocates of Emancipation,—"You talk of the agitation of the people, but you have no right to talk of it, the causes of it are of your own producing." Let him tell the hon. and learned Gentleman that that was then the favourite argument, and the favourite doctrine with some of his allies on the present occasion. But what was the answer of the right hon. Baronet opposite to this, when, to his immortal honour, he took in hand the settlement of that great question? He said in substance this,—"I ask not whence this discontent proceeds, but I say that it exists, and I recommend you to take this measure for the removal of it." He (Mr. Grant) called upon the House to do the same now,—not to contend against the tempest which could not be thus assuaged, but to pour oil on the troubled waters, and thus to calm the storm. There was another argument employed against Emancipation, which the hon. and learned Gentleman had also called to his aid on this occasion. They had been told, in reference to Emancipation,—"See the consequences of such a measure, behold the expectations which you will raise amongst the Catholics, and which it will be impossible to satisfy,—they will call for an abolition of tithes—for an abolition of taxes—and for a separation from England altogether." Now, that there existed in some quarters extravagant expectations with regard to Reform, he would not deny; but he would repeat, in imitation of what had been so eloquently and ably urged by the right hon. Baronet opposite, in reference to Emancipation, that the only way to defeat unreasonable expectations and claims, was to grant those that were reasonable. They had come to that point; they were called upon to grant what was just and reasonable; and let him tell them, that the best mode to defeat extravagant hopes and expectations was, not to defer any longer the granting that which was due to justice and the people, and that the giving to them that which they ought to have, was the true way to prevent them from seeking that which they ought not to have. But they had heard another argument used on this occasion, with regard to what was termed the extreme cruelty of disfranchising, not individuals but whole classes of persons. The very same argument was used with great force when the hon. member for Staffordshire introduced his bill in 1825, for disfranchising the 40*s.* freeholders of Ireland. Those who opposed that bill, and the right hon. Baronet opposite amongst the number, argued in that way, and the right hon. Baronet said, that he could not consent to proceeding with such a sweeping measure of disfranchisement, and that he could not at all consent to such a disfranchisement, without at least an examination into the causes that called for it. Four years after, the right hon. Baronet commenced a similar Reform, not by adopting but by proposing a measure of similar disfranchisement without any examination whatever. The right hon. Baronet then did his duty in defiance of the taunts which were thrown out against him, and his Majesty's Government proceeded upon the same principle upon the present occasion. The hon. and learned Gentleman opposite had dwelt upon the beautiful mechanism of the close-borough system, and had spoken of it as if it were the real basis of the Representation of the Commons House of Parliament. He wished, however, to ask, what view would any one who looked into our constitutional writers for his guides take of the system of our Representation in the Commons House of Parliament as it ought to exist? Would he not be led to consider it as the full, efficient, and complete Representation of the Commons of England, and not the representation of a part of the country? Our constituent system in the House of Commons was understood, in the sense of our fathers, not to mean universal suffrage, but that representation of the country which was not only effectually but exclusively a popular Representation; and that the Members representing that constituency in the Parliament, should not be the House of Commons merely, but the House of the whole Commons of England. That was what our ancestors understood when they spoke of the Commons of England. The hon. and learned Gentleman had gone to the time of our Henries and Edwards, to find out, as he asserted, that the close-borough system was the essential basis of the representative system; and, reading our Parliamentary history in rather an extraordinary way, he maintained that the close-borough system was a beautiful system, and that without the close boroughs the House of Commons could not exercise its Constitutional functions. The hon. Member, indeed, spoke of the King, Lords, and Commons, as if the two former constituted a portion of the third estate of the realm. The hon. member for Callington had certainly used the same argument, when he admitted that there were influences which had no connexion with the people of the country, which were, on the contrary, opposed to them, but which were and ought to be represented in that House. If that were the case, then they who read the theory of our Constitution in our best writers, must suppose that this House had forfeited that high character which had raised them to such an elevation in the eyes of all foreign nations. He would venture to say, without fear of contradiction, that representation was a positive trust. If that were the case,—and he fancied that the position could not be disputed—then it could not be denied that this House now stood, and had long stood, in what might be truly called a "false position;" and in these days of growing light, intelligence, and education, it would be manifestly impossible for them to maintain themselves in that "false position" much longer. If the theory of our Constitution was right, as it was delivered to us by our best Constitutional writers, then our present practice must be bad; and if the practice was correct, then it falsified the theory. He would refer for that theory to Blackstone, De Lolme, and every writer upon the English Constitution; and if it was possible for him to refer to any treatise of the learned Gentleman opposite upon Constitutional law, he was sure that the learned Gentleman, writing like a lawyer, would propound a similar theory. Why the very forms and proceedings of that House proved that it was in its Constitution mainly, essentially, exclusively, and entirely popular. On the first day of every Parliament they deputed their Speaker to demand from the Crown a full liberty of speech, and that the Crown shall not interfere with their proceedings. On the first day of the Session they passed a resolution that no peer ought to have any influence in that House; and the very forms with regard to election petitions, committees, &c. proved the soundness of the doctrine that that was essentially the House of the people. The care and caution which the other House exercised in respect to interfering with money bills, established that doctrine. This was a theory of the Constitution of the Commons House of Parliament, as well known to the people of England as it was to them. The present state of knowledge—the immense diffusion of education, owing to the establishment of innumerable schools—was such, that the majority of the population of England were fully able to understand the theories of Blackstone and De Lolme on that subject. At a general election, indeed, the Members of that House, Whig as well as Tory, admitted the soundness of that theory to their constituents, and it would not now do to tell them that the practice was one thing and that the theory was another: it would not do to tell them that the theory of Blackstone, and of our best constitutional lawyers, was one of yesterday, and that the practice of which they complained was founded on the wisdom of ages. Their theory and their practice were thus viciously opposed to each other; by the one they were generating evils, for which their theory precluded the only remedy. The happy mean which policy would point out between the *quid ultima libertate* on the one hand, and the *quid ultima servitute* on the other, would by them be lost sight of, leaving them only a choice between the worst consequences of either. Would they imitate the blind obstinacy of the rulers of a neighbouring State in their opposition to the just demand of an intelligent people? Let them recollect that the despicable aid which 500,000 legionaries, and an armed Prætorian band in the heart of the metropolis afforded to those rulers was discarded in this happy country, and that wise and temperate concessions to justice were the best preservatives of social order. And what was it they would oppose? Why nothing more nor less than a measure for uniting in the closest bonds the wealth and intelligence of the people to the Constitution. In the emphatic language of Lord Plunkett on another occasion, let them recollect that "if they separated wealth and intelligence from the state, wealth and intelligence would destroy the State." But perhaps the opponents of Reform would, in the crude spirit of most of their assertions, maintain that the wealth and intelligence would not be united to our existing institutions by the present measure. Well, then, what was the test? Let them look to the last returns made under the property-tax, and they would find that the large mass of the returns were for property under 500*l.*,—the holders of which constitute the great *nidus*, so to speak, of our national intelligence and prosperity. This most important body would be wedded to the maintenance of our institutions by the measure now under discussion, and by doing this we are converting into our most powerful allies, against those innovations and revolutionary evils which our opponents would fain persuade the House would be the consequence of it, those who would be irresistible in effecting the rashest innovations. When they considered, moreover, the hourly increasing knowledge of the middle classes, and their hourly increasing sense of their own rights and importance in the State, they would pause before they would alienate them from all that was wise, and just, and beneficent in the Constitution, in refusing to remedy the gross abuses which time and circumstance had ingrafted on it. He would not say that they would at once declare themselves in hostile array against that House in the event of its rejecting the present concession to their just demands; but they would stand aloof from them,—they would hang upon and impede the chariot-wheels of the Government, till, sooner or later, they would arrest its course, and, as with the Egyptian host of old, all would be overwhelmed and lost in the great flood of anarchy that would rush upon them irresistibly. With reference to the observations of the hon. member for Drogheda, who spoke last, on the circumstance, that Mr. Grattan, and Mr. Flood, and other Irish patriots, who in 1782 effected the commercial independence of their country, and had nevertheless great difficulty afterwards in getting into Parliament, he must say that the hon. Member's acts were quite contrary to his inference. It was true that Mr. Grattan and Mr. Flood found difficulty in obtaining a seat, notwithstanding the patriotic exertions to which Hardy, in his "Life of Charlemont," alludes; but why? simply because the Representation then in force in Ireland was essentially one of close boroughs. Under a better state of things, in which the wealth nd intelligence of the country would have their due weight in the election of Representatives, such illustrious patriots and orators would have had no difficulty in getting returned to Parliament, and were only impeded by the close-borough system which the hon. Member would hold out to admiration as the means of procuring men of talent a seat in that House, and patriot statesmen an asylum in the event of a temporary unpopularity. Another argument —if argument it might be called that argument was none—of the hon. Member, was still more groundless. The hon. Member asked, under the new system, what was to become of the West-India, and the East-India, and other colonial interests, which at present were virtually, though not directly, represented? He would give the hon. member a simple answer, —the representation would remain unaltered. If they looked over the list of the boroughs proposed to be disfranchised, they would find that they were not represented by either East or West-India virtual representatives. Four East-India directors sat in that House for places which the present measure would not affect; and the West-India interest had one member for Buckinghamshire, another for Sandwich, a third for Rochester, a fourth for Cricklade, and a fifth for Dumfries: all of which places would remain untouched by his noble friend's Bill This showed how easily a *quasi* plausible case was destroyed upon accurate inquiry; and how easy, till such inquiry was made, it was to vamp up a specious fallacy as a kind of argument. Before he sat down he could not help expressing his surprise—to use a mild term—at the sneers of the hon. member for Newport, at the middle classes of society in this country. The hon. Member quoted certain expressions contained in Ecclesiasticus, respecting the usefulness of artisans "to be sought for in the public counsels, or placed in the seat of judgment," as a portion of the sacred scripture. But this was—as perhaps the hon. Member was too dignified to learn,—an error. The passage quoted by the hon. Member was a part of the Apocrypha, and, like the argument founded upon it, was spurious and Apocryphal. There were other points which he would, at a future occasion, offer a few observations upon. At present he would only call upon the opponents of the great and most beneficent measure they were discussing, to reflect on the course they were pursuing. The clamour which had been so long raised, and with too much success, against the Catholic Relief Bill, had yielded to the wisdom of experience; showing that human prescience, even in the wisest and the most confidently prophetic of the evils of that legislative measure amongst them was not infallible: so would it be, sooner or later, with respect to the still greater question of Reform. The arguments and assertions now made use of, even to the metaphors, were the same. If he had *Hansard's Debates* in his hands he could, he was sure, quote a number of parallel passages even to the very words and ornaments. He would meet these assertions, therefore, by the great arguments then used. He would say, be just and fear not. Grant the people their rights and rely upon their gratitude; for so far from its following, that a concession of unjust demands must be the consequence of conceding what was just and right, he maintained that by doing that, they strengthened themselves against the encroachments of what was unjust and wrong. By doing so, they would be acquitted in their own consciences, and might, with confidence, leave their fame to their country, and the event to Providence.

Mr. O'Connell moved the further adjournment of the Debate

Lord Stormont objected to the Motion at that early hour.

Lord *Althorp* expressed a wish, that the House would come to some understanding as to the period on which the present discussion should terminate.

Motion agreed to.

MUTINY BILLS.] The Marquis of *Chandos* wished to know from the noble Lord, when he meant to move the second reading of the Reform Bill? It was important that the House should be in possession of his intentions, as it was rumoured that it was meant not to take the second reading till after Easter.

Lord *Althorp* had only to say, in answer to the noble Marquis's question, that Ministers were determined to have, if possible, the discussions on the second reading of the Bill over before Easter. He meant to move the second reading on Monday se'nnight, by which day the Bill would have been about three weeks before the House and the public, so as to admit of a thorough discussion of its provisions; and he trusted they would be found unobjectionable.

Lord *Ebrington* thought it but fair in his noble relative, after the courteous answer which he had received to his question, to state the object he had in view in putting it, and the course he meant to pursue in consequence of the noble Lord's explicit answer.

The Marquis of *Chandos*.—The course I mean to pursue is this,—if the second reading of the Bill be delayed beyond the day specified by the noble Lord opposite, I shall feel it my duty to exercise my right, as a Member of Parliament, and oppose the proceedings of his Majesty's Ministers, either in going into a Committee of Supply, or in opposing the Mutiny Bills.

Sir *James Graham*.—In that case, the noble Marquis shall not long want an opportunity of bringing his menace to the test, for I now, Sir, move the Order of the Day for the third reading of the Mutiny Bill.

An hon. *Member* intimated, that he had had an understanding that evening with the right hon. Secretary at War, that the Army Mutiny Bill should not be read a third time before Thursday or Friday next.

Sir *J. Graham* was not aware of the arrangement just mentioned, and would in consequence postpone the Motion till tomorrow evening, by which time his right hon. friend would be in his place to explain to the hon. Member the conditions of his promise. The right hon. Baronet then moved the third reading of the Marine Mutiny Bill.

Sir *E. Knatchbull* deprecated conversations of the nature that had just taken place.

Sir *J. Graham* could not help saying, that the noble Marquis had taken a course, which might be attended with extreme inconvenience, and even danger, as the Mutiny Act was about to expire. He hoped that there was nothing in his manner beyond what was justified by his public duty, which he intended to pursue with firmness, but without personal allusions to any man.

Mr. *Goulburn* thought, that as the Military Mutiny Bill was postponed, there could be no inconvenience in postponing the Marine Mutiny Bill.

Lord *Althorp* explained, that as the law was about to expire, it was necessary to forward the Bill.

Bill read a third time and passed.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Tuesday, March 8, 1831.

MINUTES.] Bills. The Dublin Asylum Bill read a second time. The Marine Mutiny Bill brought up from the Commons, and read a first time. The Additional Churches Building Bill, committed.

The Earl of MORLEY presented a Petition from the Merchants, Shipowners, and other Members of the Chamber of Commerce, Plymouth, against the alteration of the Timber Duties.

CIVIL LIST.] The Duke of *Buckingham* wished to put a question to the noble Earl opposite, with respect to the state of the Civil List. He appealed merely to the Earl's courtesy, but hoped, that on a subject of so much consequence, the noble Earl would not refuse to give the information which he required. He wished, then, to know how it came that nothing had as yet been done with respect to the Civil List, and whether it was likely that a Bill on the subject would be introduced without much further delay? It was highly expedient that a matter of so much importance should not be left in the disgraceful state in which it stood at present. Although it was not very regular, perhaps, to allude to what was passing in the other House, where the Bill must first be introduced, yet it was notorious that there was a Committee of the House of Commons sitting on the subject, and had been sitting for a considerable time, without making any Report. He was desirous to know whether there was any time fixed for the Report being made, and how soon it would be made?

Earl *Grey* observed, that to an application to his courtesy he should always be ready to reply with equal courtesy. The noble Duke could hardly fail to be aware that it was impossible for him (Earl Grey), as a Member of Parliament, to know more on the subject of what was passing in the other House than the noble Duke did. He regretted that so much delay had taken place, and that the subject had not been settled long ago; but as the matter was in the hands of the House of Commons, it was impossible for him, as a Member of Parliament, to take upon himself positively to give the noble Duke the information which he required. He might, however, venture to express his hope, that it was not likely that the delay would last much longer, and the noble Duke might be assured, that as soon as the Report was made, no time would be lost by his Majesty's Ministers in introducing a Bill on the subject.

The Duke of *Buckingham* said, that he spoke on account of information which he had received, that it was likely that the Report would be presented that evening.

Earl *Grey* had also been informed that it was likely to be presented without much further delay.

The Duke of *Buckingham*: Then it might be expected that the Bill would be brought forward before Easter.

Here the subject dropped.

REFORM PETITION FROM THE CITY OF LONDON.] The *Lord Chancellor* stated that he had in his hand a Petition from the Lord Mayor and Citizens of London, in Common Hall assembled, on the subject of Parliamentary Reform, which at present engrossed the attention of all classes of his Majesty's subjects. The only reason that occurred to him for the honour which had been done to him by being intrusted with the presenting to their Lordships the Petition of this great Corporation was, that he was himself a freeman of that Corporation. The petitioners expressed their strongest approbation of the measure of Reform brought before the other House of Parliament by his Majesty's Ministers, and prayed, that when it came into their Lordships' House, they would give it their most favourable consideration. The noble Lord said, he had another Petition on the same subject to present from the Students-at-Law, and those practising under the Bar in the Four Inns of Court, praying that their Lordships would take the measure into their favourable consideration. The Petition was very numerously signed; and the gentlemen who signed it were generally studious men, and little concerned in the ordinary business of the world.

SCOTCH UNIVERSITIES.] The Earl of *Haddington*, adverting to the circumstance that a plan of Reform was under consideration in the other House, by which some additional Members of Parliament were to be given to Scotland, observed, that it might be well worth while to consider whether it would not be expedient to give the power of returning a Member to Parliament to each of the two principal Scotch Universities. It was known that all the Universities of Scotland had lately been visited by a Royal Commission, to examine into their state and situation, and this might facilitate the means of procuring that information which might be necessary to enable their Lordships to come to a sound conclusion on the question. He did consider it due to these learned bodies to consider whether it might be proper, so far to extend the elective franchise to them. In order to bring before their Lordships the information to which he alluded, he moved that an humble Address be presented to his Majesty, praying that his Majesty would be pleased to cause to be laid on the Table of this House an account of the number of Graduates who had taken the degree of Doctor in Divinity, Law, or Medicine, or the Degree of Master of Arts, in the University of Edinburgh, from the year 1800, to the year 1830, both inclusive; and also a similar return for Glasgow.

The Earl of *Rosebery*, although it was not usual to second motions in that House, was yet anxious to express his cordial approbation of the Motion of his noble friend, and of the object for which it was made. He wished that the right of Representation might be extended to those learned bodies, and he had no doubt that they would receive the boon with gratitude, and exercise it to the advantage of the community at large.

The Bishop of *London* wished, that a distinction should be made between the resident and non-resident graduates.

The Earl of *Haddington* said, that was hardly possible, for the Scotch Students did not reside within the walls of their several Universities and Colleges.

Lord *Tenterden* observed, that it was highly desirable that the distinction should be made, for it often happened that persons in very inferior grades in the profession of medicine, and perhaps in other professions, went to these Northern Universities, and, without any residence or attendance at lectures, or, at least, after a very short residence or attendance, procured diplomas for themselves.

The Earl of *Haddington* was not aware that there would be any difficulty in pointing out the amount of attendance on lectures given by the several persons who graduated during the period mentioned, although it would be impossible to make the distinctions required by the right rev. Prelate.

Lord *Wynford* thought, that the amount of attendance ought, at least, to be distinctly specified.

The Earl of Haddington withdrew his Motion, in order to put it in a different shape.

THE REV. MR. MARTIN DOYLE.] Lord *Clifden* said, that he had a Petition in his hands, to be presented, from the rev. Mr. Martin Doyle, the object of which was, to clear his character from certain imputations which that rev. gentleman understood had been cast upon it in that House. He had some doubts whether this Petition could, in point of form, be received; but the petitioner stated that, he had been for fifteen years parish priest of Donegal, in the county of Carlow, which was within a mile and a half of the residence of Lord Farnham—that in the course of that time he had been a member of an association for preserving the peace of the country—that he had been instrumental in detecting and bringing to justice certain persons who had been great disturbers of the public peace, and had received the thanks of the Protestant Rector of the parish, and Grand Jury of the county of Carlow—that he had been very intimate with Lord Farnham, who was a member of the association to which he alluded, and he expressed his conviction that Lord Farnham was too honourable a man not to bear witness to the truth of his statement; and, finally, he produced four affidavits to show that he had no concern with the disturbances on account of tithes, although he knew that they were a most grievous burthen to the country.

The Duke of *Buckingham* rose to order. This was not a petition, and the noble Lord himself had stated at the outset, that in point of form it could not be received.

Lord *Clifden* contended, that he had a right to read the address of the Grand Jury at least, if not to read the affidavits.

The *Lord Chancellor* was unwilling to interrupt one of their Lordships, and more particularly when he was speaking for a party who stood on his defence. But really they must preserve some order in their proceedings. In the other House they had a Speaker, whose peculiar business it was, to preserve order; but their Lordships' Speaker had no more to do in that respect than any of their Lordships; but, speaking as a Peer, he must observe, that all this proceeded on a breach of their privileges. The petitioner complained of what had passed in that House, although he could not, without a breach of privilege, know what passed there. To be sure their Lordships winked at these things; but if a man came there with a distinct statement of a breach of privilege, they must take notice of it, and therefore the matter had better be left on what his Lordship had already stated, and on what another noble Lord (Farnham) might choose to say.

Lord *Clifden* observed, that he had already pretty well attained his object.

Lord *Farnham* hoped, although this proceeding was not regular, that the House would indulge him with a few words. He had before stated, that he had been well acquainted with Mr. Doyle, and had a good opinion of him. It was perfectly correct that he had been a member of the association for preserving the peace of the country, and had done much for that object. He had been instrumental in bringing to justice a desperate gang of burglars, three of whom had been hanged, and two transported. It was perfectly correct that he had received the thanks of the Grand Jury of the county of Carlow. But at the time when he was on terms of intimacy with Mr. Doyle, he was not concerned in politics, nor engaged in agitation on account of tithes, or any other political object. He confined himself to his parochial duties, except in so far as he was concerned in the preservation of the peace of the country. But in the course of the last two years he had assumed a different character. He had already stated, that he had a high opinion of Mr. Doyle, when he was intimate with him, and very much regretted that he was obliged to change it.

Petition withdrawn.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Tuesday, March 8, 1831.

MINUTES.] Bills. The Mutiny Bill read a third time and passed. The Calico Duties' Repeal Bill went through a Committee. The Post Roads Acts (Ireland) Amendment Bill read a first time.

A new Writ, on the Motion of Mr. S. RICE, was ordered for the City of Chester, in the room of the Hon. Robert Grosvenor, who had vacated his seat, by sitting and voting without taking the Oaths; and a Bill to relieve the Hon. Robert Grosvenor from certain penalties incurred by sitting and voting in the House of Commons, without having conformed to the laws in such case made and provided, was read a second time.

Returns ordered. On the Motion of Mr. Alderman THOMPSON, copies of Despatches from the Governor of Nova Scotia, dated 17th January, 1831, inclosing an Address of the Council and Assembly of Nova Scotia, praying that the discriminating Duties on foreign Timber imported into Great Britain, may not be withdrawn; from the Governor of Lower Canada, dated 8th January, 1831, inclosing a Memorial from certain gentlemen engaged in the

Timber trade in Lower Canada, praying that no alteration be made in the Duties on Timber; also, of a Memorial to the Board of Trade, by the Merchants of Quebec, respecting the Timber Duties:—On the Motion of Lord Viscount MAHON, of the number of Stamps issued for Newspapers, for the year 1830; distinguishing the London from the Provincial Newspapers, and distinguishing the different Newspapers, and the amount of Duty received from each; of the several Sums paid to the different Newspapers, for the year 1830, for Proclamations, Advertisements, and notices of every kind.

MINISTERIAL PLAN OF PARLIAMENTARY REFORM—ADJOURNED DEBATE.— Mr. O'Connell moved, that the Order of the Day for the resumption of the Debate on the Bill to amend the Representation be read.—Read accordingly.

Mr. *O'Connell* then proceeded to address the House.—His object in rising was to give his most decided and most anxious support to this measure. He looked upon it as a measure which deserved support, because it was a large, a liberal, and a wise measure—he would even call it a generous measure; and sure he was, that it would be an effectual measure of Reform. He thought that it had been brought forward wisely; for if the Ministers had offered less, the country would soon have complained that they had not given more; and whoever had attempted to get more for the country, would have made an attempt which would as certainly end in defeat. The measure should have his vote in support of it in that House; and if he possessed any influence elsewhere, all that influence should be exercised in its favour. There were, however, objections to the measure. He was upon conviction a Radical Reformer; and this was not a Radical Reform. He was of opinion, that in every practical mode, universal suffrage should be adopted as a matter of right: he was likewise of opinion, that the duration of Parliaments should be shortened to the time stipulated at the glorious Revolution of 1688; and, above all, he was of opinion that votes should be taken by Ballot. This measure gave none of these three modes of Reform; but it was in other respects so liberal and so extensive, that he was convinced that it would demonstrate one of two things—either that further Reform was not necessary, and that a more extensive suffrage, shorter parliaments, and the Vote by Ballot could be dispensed with; or that it would give all these at a future period, without the slightest disturbance, safely, certainly, and rationally. As a Radical Reformer he accepted this measure heartily. There was another point of view in which he had a right to object to this measure. It would not carry its own principle into effect in Ireland. He thought that Ireland had been badly treated by it. He could not thank the present Administration, or at least that part of it to which the government of Ireland was intrusted, for their conduct towards that country. He thought that the present Administration, to whom he felt deeply grateful for this measure, had not acted well towards Ireland. He thought that it had acted unwisely—he was sure that it had acted arbitrarily, and he was sorry to add arrogantly, and therefore, if he were to take counsel from his passions, or to indulge his prejudices, he should be able to find many objections to this measure. It was, however, too advantageous to be thus cavilled at; and that consideration made him sink all paltry objections to a measure which he believed would be highly advantageous to the whole community. He would proceed to point out the mode in which it would operate in the counties and boroughs of England; and first in the counties. It would leave all the 40*s*. freeholders, and the other persons who now had votes, just where it found them; but it would confer on the copyholders of 10*l*. a year, the elective franchise. Was not that a substantial advantage? Why had they been prevented from enjoying it heretofore? For nothing but a technical reason, known only to lawyers, and intelligible only to them. Why should an individual who held his property as securely and as freely by court-roll as the freeholder held it by his freehold, be prevented from exercising the same privileges on account of his property, as belonged to the freeholder on account of his? The measure did not, however, stop there. Hitherto all persons having what the lawyers called a chattel-interest, or a lease for years, were debarred from voting. Thus it happened, that a man who held a large and extensive property, at his own disposal, for a lease of 999 years, had no vote; whilst another, who held only three acres for an old life, was entitled to vote—that was an absurdity. This measure, therefore, added two numerous and influential classes of proprietors, who were now excluded, to the electoral body; and thus, as it related to the counties of England, it must of necessity be very beneficial. But it would have another effect. Twenty-eight counties were each to have two additional Members, which would increase the sound part of the Representatives. The only objection which had been urged to this portion of the measure came from the Ministerial side of the House. It was grounded on the clause which gave the Privy Council power to divide counties into districts. It had been said, that such power was unconstitutional: but no attempt had been made to prove it so, and he was inclined to treat such an assertion, not as an argument, but as an empty cavil. Besides, such power had already been given to the Privy Council in Ireland, where the counties had been divided into local jurisdictions, and no objection had ever been made to the mode in which the Privy Council had performed this duty. The power, therefore, was not novel. He believed that it would be harmless; but if it should prove otherwise, how easily could that be remedied in a reformed Parliament? In England, therefore, the provisions which this measure would extend to counties would be productive of unmixed good. He rejoiced that they were about to get an increased constituency in all the counties, and that they were about to get an increase of new county Members, who belonged to a class which was the least revolutionary in the world. The next part of the Bill related to the boroughs of England, and here he must say, that he delighted beyond measure in the way in which they had been dealt with. The measure used the pruning-knife to the rotten parts of the Constitution, and used it, too, with a master's hand; it cut out, unsparingly, all the corrupt parts of the Constitution, and left all the sound parts of it intact and inviolate. What was the great reproach against the House of Commons? The existence of nomination boroughs. What was the chief grievance in its Constitution in the eyes of the people? The existence of these boroughs. Was it an idle or imaginary grievance? No such thing. The people complained of them as a real grievance. They were in direct contradiction to the theory of the Constitution—they were an open violation of its first principle, the representative principle. When, therefore, Gentlemen talked to him of this measure conferring a new Constitution upon the country, he was inclined to ask them, whether they knew what its old Constitution was? Was it the old Constitution of England that the mound at Old Sarum, or the park at Gatton, or the niches in the walls of Midhurst should be represented in the House of Commons? What lawyer would dare—yes, he repeated the words advisedly—what lawyer would dare to assert that such was the old Constitution of England? This consideration reminded him of an occurrence which happened some years ago in one of the courts of law in Ireland. At the time of the Union between England and Ireland, certain close boroughs were disfranchised, and, by a precedent by no means to be imitated, compensation was given, not to the voters who lost their suffrages, but to the patron, who arrogated to himself the right of selling them to the highest bidder. The borough of Askeaton was one of the boroughs thus disfranchised, and 13,000*l.* was given by the Parliament to Massey Dawson, as compensation for the loss he had sustained by the disfranchisement of it. Shortly afterwards, his brother, who was the other Member for that borough, claimed half that compensation-money, and, not being able to obtain it by fair means, brought an action in one of the Irish Courts to recover the moiety to which he deemed himself entitled. No sooner had the plaintiff's counsel opened his case, than the learned Judge on the bench told him, that he must be nonsuited, and further added, " Sir, I have a great respect for you personally, but I must tell you, that your client is a most audacious man in having dared to come into Court with such a cause of action as this." And yet it afterwards appeared, from a statement which he heard made in the Court of Chancery, that this very Judge, together with the father of the hon. member for Limerick, were the trustees named in a marriage-settlement, by which it was provided that the nomination to the borough of Tralee should be set aside as a provision for the younger children of sir E. Dennie. And yet this was called the old Constitution.—[An hon. *Member*, " Oh, but that was in Ireland."]—Be it so; still it was a case in point, and one which he had a right to quote on the present occasion, especially as there had been a similar testamentary disposal of property in England by a late nobleman, in favour of his daughter's husband. But he had not done with Ireland yet, he could assure the hon. Gentleman. To return, however, to the nomination boroughs. The constitutional writers, the lawyers the Judges,—all men who could distinguish right from wrong—joined in denouncing this practice. And yet, had they not heard in this discussion, that the Duke of Norfolk, the Duke of Newcastle, the Duke of Bedford, the Marquis of Cleveland, the Marquis of Lansdown, and other great noblemen, were in the daily habit of nominating Members to boroughs, and that they possessed an admirable facility in discovering young gentlemen of talent and ability, who were hovering about Parliament, and yet had no place within it on which they could alight, until they received the olive-branch from such aristocratical patrons? Was not this a direct violation of the principles of the Constitution? What was the first resolution which that House laid down on the opening of Parliament? Before the King's Speech was read,—before the Commons were even summoned to attend in the presence of their King, who deserved better of his subjects than any King who had ever reigned before him,—they passed the following Resolution:—"That it is a high infringement of the liberties and privileges of the Commons of the United Kingdom, for any Lord of Parliament, or other Peer or Prelate—yes, any Prelate, to concern himself in the election of Members to serve for the Commons in Parliament." He arraigned the proprietors of nomination boroughs of an infringement, and a most culpable infringement, of the privileges of Parliament. This resolution of the House passed unanimously: no one ventured to raise his voice against it; and, now that it had passed, if any one were to say that it was not binding, it would be the duty of the Speaker to interfere. By talking, however, about the old Constitution, under which we had made war and peace, Gentlemen were enabled to laugh at this resolution of the House, and to treat it with contempt. True it was, that ours was an old Constitution, and true it was, that they had oftentimes made war and peace while they had been living under it; but what those facts had to do with the matter he could not comprehend, and Gentlemen might, in their eloquence, bear in mind that *post hoc* was not always *propter hoc*. Let the Resolution be rescinded if the House thought fit, and let the House declare that they were not in favour of the rights and the liberties of the people, but against them; only let them not, while the Resolution existed on their Journals, talk about its being revolutionary and unjust to act upon that to which they had unanimously pledged themselves. The hon. member for Callington had, the other night, become quite poetical upon this subject, and in weeping over the untimely fate of his own borough, had called it a violet. Anything argumentative, and sterling, and strong, might reasonably have been expected from the hon. member for Callington, but who could have dreamed of that hon. Member turning poet, and of his having, in his fondness for his constituents, and by the inspiration of his muse, mistaken a rotten borough for a violet? But the Gentlemen on the other side threatened them, told them, that they were guilty of an unjust seizure of franchises, and accused them of robbery. Now these were very grave charges; but let hon. Members give their attention to the subject for a few moments, and inquire who the robbers were. He had never heard of a royal charter, grant, or deed to any nobleman, conferring on that nobleman the right of nominating Members to sit in that House. No; but he had heard of such grants being made to the people. He knew that the people had been robbed of those grants, and he liked this Bill because it laid hold of the spoliators. The seizure was with those who now cried out so lustily "Stop thief." He supposed that no man would be inclined to question the title of the King to his throne; for that would be treason both here and elsewhere; and it would be a crime,—not of so high a degree, but still a crime,—to say that the House of Lords ought to be deprived of its legislative and judicial powers. This was obvious, and every body would readily admit it; but let him ask, whether it was more justifiable to violate the liberties of the people, and to set at nought the privileges of that House? The people well knew who their spoliators were, for they perfectly understood the close-borough system. Some delusion was practised upon the subject in that House, and the matter was mystified there by one Gentleman quoting what another Gentleman had said upon some other occasion, or what some deceased statesman of great name had been reported to have said some years ago: but he would tell the House that the people out of doors were in the habit of talking common sense, and that this was the language which they held to the borough-proprietors:—"You have taken away our rights, you have usurped our franchises, you have robbed us of our property, and, do what you will, you shall disgorge!" Thus, then, he had dealt with what were called nomination boroughs He might, however, be told that although many were swept away, yet that Calne, and Tavistock, and Knaresborough still remained, and that this was unjust. Now he had been intrusted with a petition against the return for Calne, and the petitioner would doubtless have succeeded, and been the sitting Member, but that a Committee of that House decided that Calne was a Corporation, and that there could not, therefore, by any possibility be more than 36 voters there. Now what would be the effect of this Bill with regard to Calne? Why, the effect of it would be this—that Calne would be thrown open, and that the election would no longer be in a close corporation. It had been said, that nevertheless the Members for Calne would not be changed. He did not know how that might be, but he was sure that every Gentleman who had heard or who had read that beautiful display of talent and eloquence which had proceeded from the hon. member for Calne,—that admirable speech, which contained as much ancient law as would have adorned an antiquary, which was strewed with the most beautiful flowers of literature, and which shone with all the ornaments which grace, and elegance, and learning could impart,—he was sure, he said, what all who had heard that speech would agree, that the hon. Member had a claim upon Calne which, now that it was freed from its former evils, it would be impossible to disallow. He defied any one to say, that that claim could be resisted, and what, he would ask, need that hon. Member now care for the influence of the Marquis of Lansdown? By-the-by, this brought to his recollection the speech of the hon. and learned member for Drogheda (Mr. North) last night. They all remembered how that hon. and learned Member, when he sat for a rotten borough, and was on the other side of the House, hardly ever opened his lips, and when he did, spoke scarcely above his breath, and always voted with Ministers; but they had all seen how he threw himself forward now,—how loudly and independently he talked now that he sat on the opposition side of the House, and sat for Drogheda, and was disencumbered of the influence of a patron. Oh! God help those who would creep into that House. They said, that they stooped, and that they were not ashamed to stoop. Out upon this saying! they did not stoop,—they could not stoop,—for they were already bent so low that it was impossible they could bend lower. Let him remind the House how very amusing it must be to the people of Ireland to be told that every House of Commons gravely resolved that no Prelate should interfere in the election of Members of that House. Ardent reformer as he was, he would give up all Reform if he did not prove at that bar that they had among them a Member for a borough, who had been nominated by a right rev. prelate. The Member to whom he alluded was the right hon. the late Chancellor of the Exchequer, the Representative for the borough of Armagh. He did not say that the borough of Armagh was the only one in Ireland in the elections of which a Prelate exercised a controlling influence. That borough was celebrated for miracles, but he believed it had never produced a greater miracle than the conversion of a Chancellor of the Exchequer. Yes, and as soon as the right hon. Gentleman, the nominee of the right rev. Prelate, had been safely returned by the influence of the righ rev. Prelate, then the Orangemen and the Presbyterians, and other inhabitants of the borough, met together, and joined in the work of burning the right hon. Gentleman in effigy. And this was the old and much-lauded Constitution! This was the Constitution which some Gentlemen thought it almost sacrilege to touch. Oh! if the hon. and learned member for Boroughbridge had only been as pathetic as he was comical—if he had been, like Niobe, all tears,—and what an admirable representative of Niobe he would have made!—the House would have been almost washed away in the flood which would have gushed forth at the notion of destroying this venerable old Constitution. But the Bill did not only put an end to the nomination boroughs, it did more, it struck off also those small boroughs of another character and of which no man could speak in a merry mood. Why, the agents of these boroughs had been even at him, who had, however, no connection with England, with all their usual solicitations, and the crowning temptation of an attorney at a small expense. Was not this system also notorious throughout the country? Was it not known to those who professed themselves to be the friends and advocates of religion, and honesty, and good order? He differed from the hon. and learned member for Boroughbridge, but he honoured that hon. and learned Gentleman as a man of the highest integrity, and of the most uncompromising principles; and he appealed to him whether, as a conscientious man—whether, as a responsible creature,—he could defend the system of corruption which carried perjury and bribery among the race of needy and miserable wretches who form the constituency of these boroughs—once in six years certainly, and oftener as accident might create vacancies in their Representation? Was this a system to be advocated? Was it a system, the existence of which could be denied? No one would deny it out of that House, nor would any one in that House dare to dispute the existence of it, or of its vices, except by some circumlocution,—by some crafty insinuation of that which no man would peril his reputation by asserting openly. But were not nomination boroughs sold also? It was notorious that they were, and the price of them was as much inquired about, and as easily ascertained, as the price of the stocks. Was it not said in 1792 that seats in Parliament were sold like stalls in Leadenhall Market? and if it were not said in 1831, was it not undeniable that the practice still continued? The people of England were awaking to the necessity of a reformation of these abuses; they were awaking, not suddenly,—not convulsively.—but quietly, and like a giant refreshed; and they would call aloud for this black sin,—this foul shame,—this high iniquity of the borough system, to be put an end to. But the boroughs were sold,—they all knew this fact; and yet, when they assembled there, they gravely came to an unanimous vote, that if any one should procure himself to be returned to that House by bribery, or by other corrupt practices, the House would proceed to punish such an individual with the utmost severity. And how did they deal with this vote afterwards? Why, they laughed at it, and made a joke of it; but let him tell them, that the people out of doors did not relish such jokes. The present Bill had been objected to by one hon. Gentleman that it would create a fantastic variety of voters; but was there no variety of voters now? Undoubtedly there was: in one place the election was in the Mayor and Aldermen; in another in the Mayor, Aldermen, and Jurats; in another in the Mayor, Aldermen, Jurats, and Freemen; in some places men voted by tenure, in others by scot and lot, and in others Members were returned by potwallopers. Why, there was not more diversity in the shades and colours of the inhabitants of the West Indies than in the present elective franchise of England, The proposed measure reduced it to uniformity and simplicity, by giving votes to all householders of 10*l.*, and it took away none of the present votes. It disfranchised only the non-residents, who had already disfranchised themselves by non-residence. This had been called an anomaly; but why had the Ministers taken this course? It was because they thought that property ought to be spared wherever it was possible, and because they had very wisely made their experiment as narrow as they could consistently with the great object they had in view. The next objection to the measure he found in the ultra-arithmetical speech of the right hon. member for Aldborough (Mr. Croker). That hon. Member had complained, that they gave but one Member to Brighton with its 24,000 inhabitants, while Tavistock was still to return two Members. But the fallacy of the hon. Gentleman—and a complete fallacy it was—consisted in his supposing that this Bill gave any thing to Tavistock, whereas the Bill gave nothing to Tavistock.

Sir *C. Wetherell.*—Yes, it does.

Mr. *O'Connell* thanked the hon. and learned Gentleman for the interruption. The Bill did give something to Tavistock, it threw the borough open, and created 1,000 electors, where there were at present but twenty-four. But the charge of inconsistency and of creating anomalies came with a very bad grace from Gentlemen who opposed the new, and supported the old system. The hon. Gentlemen who contended for the beauty of that system which gave Gatton as many Members as Westminster, Rutland as many as Lancashire, and denied Manchester Members at all, had the imprudence to take a position in the front, and exclaim—"How dare you give less Members to Brighton than to Tavistock?" Should he not be wasting the time of the House if he were to go into those details, by which every one must know that he could prove the present system of Representation to be full of the most fanciful inequalities? The truth was, that the ancient system had been dilapidated and disfigured by those who now pretended to venerate it; and the Government were endeavouring to build up again the old and simple fabric of the Constitution. The Gentlemen on the other side had, in some cases, destroyed the very foundations of that fabric, and left no basis whereon a structure could be raised; but wherever they had left even the ruins of the ancient edifice, the Government had endeavoured to build up again upon such remnants, scanty as they were, which had escaped the lawless hands of the spoliators. The right hon. member for Aldborough had treated them with a disquisition in a tone and accents with which he was certainly familiar enough. A good deal had been said about mob oratory, and he would admit, that if he were acquainted with any style of oratory, it was mob oratory. He did not mean to say that such oratory as he had heard from the right hon. member for Aldborough and the learned member for Boroughbridge, would satisfy the mobs to which he had been accustomed, for the people were good judges of reasoning on subjects that concerned their own interests, and he must say, that the speeches of the right hon. Gentleman and the learned Member were the furthest possible removed from speeches that would satisfy any reasonable men. The right hon. Gentleman began by ridiculing a contradiction between the speech of the noble Lord who had introduced this measure, and the learned Lord who had spoken the other night; but how did he make out the contradiction; why, by misrepresenting the argument of the one, and the quotation of the other. That right hon. Gentleman understood as well as any man the philosophical illustration used by the learned Lord, in which he so happily displayed the gradual growth of wealth, and intellect, and people, making them too mighty for the narrow bounds assigned them at a former period, and shewing how they had cast off their restraints and had assumed their native dignity. The right hon. Gentleman must have been delighted, though he might refuse to be instructed, by that beautiful illustration. The complaint of the right hon. member for Aldborough was, in plain terms, this, namely, that the noble Lord, going back to the time of Edward for an argument, and taking the statute *de tallagio non concedendo*, had not brought along with it also all that rubbish and lumber of antiquity, which the right hon. member for Aldborough delighted in. To leave this subject, however, and to pass on to other parts of the measure, he would only say further upon it, that if rotten boroughs were violets, and if there were a nosegay of them, he would willingly sacrifice them all on the altar of the Constitution. This was, in his opinion, the most valuable part of the Bill. They had next been told, that this Bill was a corporation robbery, and they had had that assertion sounded in every tone except a low tone, and in every key except a minor key. Now, being a lawyer, and having a little of the curiosity which belonged to his profession, he had gone through the list of disfranchised boroughs, with the view of ascertaining how many of them were Corporations. He had found, that out of the sixty only sixteen were Corporations; and the most comical result of his inquiry was, that neither Boroughbridge nor Aldborough were, or ever had been, Corporations. Then, again, they had been told that the Bill was a seizure of franchises and of the rights of the people. Now he should be glad to know if the Gentlemen who held this language meant to assist him in his endeavour to carry the Repeal of the Union; for if they thought that the Legislature had no right to take away franchises, what did they think of 200 boroughs being disfranchised by one single Act of Parliament? Yet this was done at the Union. And were the voters tried and convicted? Oh, no: far from it, the electors of forty of them were so innocent, that it was thought right to give 13,000*l.* a piece of the public money to each of the forty boroughs. It was acknowledged that the people so disfranchised were innocent and guiltless, and he would ask the hon. member for Tamworth, who had called the present Bill atrocious, and the noble Lord who had called it iniquitous, whether they meant to join with him in repairing those acts of greater atrocity and of greater iniquity, which had been committed at the time of the Union? Thus it was that those Gentlemen, who ran against him as though he had two heads to lose, furnished him with arguments in favour of the very views which they stigmatized: but he had better arguments of his own when he chose to use them, and would not borrow in such a quarter. He had said, that he would say a word or two about the borough of Tavistock, and, with the permission of the House, he would do so now. It had been said, that, although this Bill should pass, the borough of Tavistock would remain a close borough still. Now he had the fullest confidence in the character of the noble house of Bedford; but he agreed that the people ought not to be satisfied on such a subject with the character of any one. But had they no other security against Tavistock remaining a close borough? Let him ask hon. Members, what sympathy such a borough—if it should happen to escape—could meet with in a Reformed Parliament? When he first came into that House, there was a question of disfranchising a certain borough, and some opposed the disfranchisement of that particular borough, on the ground that there were many other boroughs equally guilty. On that occasion he had taken the liberty of addressing the House, and of comparing the delinquent borough to a wolf which, separated from the rest of the herd, had fallen into our hands, and he had asked, whether they would allow the one wolf to escape because they could not lay hold of the rest? But what would be the case hereafter, if, when all the other close boroughs were destroyed, Tavistock alone remained? They would have destroyed the whole herd of wolves, with one solitary exception, and the surviving one would be within their clutches. Oh, God help the lonely one in a Reformed Parliament! To pass from the gravity of the lawyer to the merry cheer of the fox-hunter, they would see what a tally ho they should have against poor Tavistock. The wens of the Constitution being removed, the warts would easily be got rid of, and the Bill was a glorious instrument for removing the wens. Such, then, was the nature of the Bill as far as regarded England, and such were the grounds on which, so far, he approved of it. He approved of it also with regard to Scotland. He was not a Scotch lawyer,—perhaps, it would be presumption in him to say that he was a lawyer at all,—but he was not even a Scotch barrister. However, it required neither law, nor spectacles, nor second sight, to perceive that the measure would be productive of very good effects in Scotland, and work a great improvement in the Representation of that country. [An hon. *Member* exclaimed "No, no."] No!—why take Edinburgh as an instance. There were thirty-three constituents in that great city, and this measure would turn the thirty-three into 10,000. Was that no improvement? There never yet existed a Representative of 10,000 constituents who had received as much of the public money for doing nothing as the member for Edinburgh; and he would back one Member for a close Scotch borough for putting more of the public money into his pocket, without doing anything but signing receipts for it, than all the Representatives of 10,000 constituents in the empire. The majority of the voters of Scotland had neither land nor income, and possessed their franchise solely by virtue of a piece of parchment, which had not even the merit of a seal, nor even of a bit of wax. Those Scotch voters had only the advantage of a parchment vote. It was necessary that there should exist in the deed of enfeoffment not the smallest mistake; but let its technical directions be observed, and the possessor of the bit of parchment had a right to vote for the member of a Scotch county. It was a pity that the hon. and learned member for Boroughbridge, who had wept so piteously over charters, and who had held up to their indignation one Nat Lee for having said that a charter was only a piece of parchment with a seal attached to it,—it was a pity that that hon. and learned Member, who had laid so much stress upon the seal of a charter, had not recollected that the Scotch voter did not rise to the dignity of a seal. Happy Englishmen, whose rights were secured with wax: but unjust Englishmen, who, because the Scotch spoke a broader dialect, and lived at a distance, had sentenced the Scotch voters to vote for members of Parliament under an instrument which had no wax to it. The only person who had been chivalrous enough to defend the present state of the elective franchise in Scotland was a noble Lord, the member for Sutherlandshire (Lord F. L. Gower). Now he had ascertained that the voters of Sutherlandshire all held either under the noble Lord or the noble Lord's father, and that they amounted in all to the large number of twenty-four. These voters were, doubtless, as respectable for their independence as for their numbers. The noble Lord, however, had not only given them his own opinion upon this subject, but had, with the wand of a German necromancer, conjured up the ghost of Fletcher of Saltoun, to bear witness how much better off Scotland was than it used to be. But it required no ghost to tell them that Scotland had prospered, and that she did not owe her prosperity to the vices of her representative system; and there could be no conjuring in the noble Lord's necromancy, or Fletcher of Saltoun must lie very close in his grave, if the extension of free institutions to Scotland did not make the old reformer turn in that grave. But the Scots could not have fallen so low,—her Representatives could not be so imbecile, that it was necessary to furnish them with what the French called a *garde-fou*, composed of twenty-four free and independent Sutherland voters. Let the petitions from Scotland answer what the noble Lord had said with regard to the Representation of that country. But the noble Lord said, that Scotland had flourished. This was quite true: she had flourished; and that was owing to her connexion with England, whose free institutions had enabled her to bear up against all the difficulties with which she had had to contend. It was now proposed, that Scotland should participate in those free institutions, and that she should be relieved from that feudal despotism which had hitherto ridden rough-shod over the elective franchise of the Scots. He would only add one word respecting the measures proposed for Scotland, and that was, that he highly approved of the regulations intended on the subject of the tenures. He also expressed his approbation of the conduct of the corporators of Glasgow, who, tired of the despotism with which they were invested over their fellow-citizens, came forward voluntarily to offer the surrender of their corporate privileges. Surely the opening of the broughs could not do injury when those who possessed the privilege asked to have it taken away. He would just add, that the Bill adapted itself to the class of resident land-proprietors in Scotland as it did to the land-owners of England. He now came to speak of the measure with regard to its operation in Ireland: and here he must say at once, that he was sorry to see, that some of that malign influence which it seemed fated should for ever wait upon the destinies of that country had extended even to this measure. But no matter; that should not deter him from giving his support to such a Bill. Let him be believed when he said, that he entertained no ungenerous jealousy at advantages that were conferred upon England and upon Scotland. All he asked was, that Ireland should not be excluded from a share of those advantages. He had always seen in that House, and in the country, the most unbounded benevolence and the most splendid munificence towards the distresses of Ireland; and while he made this just admission, he hoped that he should be pardoned if he said—believing that he said it with truth,—that when the political rights of Ireland were concerned, he had not observed the same liberality of spirit among the gentlemen of England. He recollected when, some few weeks since, a right hon. Gentleman near him had congratulated the Ministers upon the harsh measures which the Government in Ireland had thought proper to pursue; and when the right hon. Gentleman added to this congratulation the assurance, that the Ministers should have his support in such measures. No doubt these congratulations of the right hon. Gentleman came from his heart; no doubt his professions of support were sincere; for the Administration of which that right hon. Gentleman formed a part had issued two proclamations, founded upon the same despotic Act. The amount, therefore, of the right hon. Gentleman's generosity, in offering his support in this matter to his political opponents was, "Defend me, and I'll defend you." They had a proverb in Ireland, about a practice which certain long-eared animals had, of reciprocally allaying cutaneous irritations. That proverb must not be mentioned to "ears polite;" but no doubt hon. Gentlemen had heard it in this country, and would know what he meant when he recommended that the right hon. Gentleman should take that proverb as a motto to the next offer of support which he might publish on this subject. What he claimed for Ireland was, that the same principles should be applied to her as were to be applied to England. By the measure of the noble Lord, the Capital of England would have double the number of its Representatives, getting sixteen instead of eight. The Capital of Scotland was to be proportionally benefitted. But no such boon was intended for the Capital of Ireland. The population of Dublin, however, amounted to considerably more than the fourth of the population of London, and upon that ground he was of opinion that Dublin was fairly entitled to a double Representation. On the principle of giving additional members to English counties, he also claimed additional members for some Irish counties. He had in his possession some details regarding the population of the different counties in Ireland, compared with the population of the counties in England to which it was proposed to give additional Members, and though they consisted of dry and tedious arithmetic, he thought them well worthy of the attention of the House. It appeared from those statistical tables, that out of the twenty-eight counties in England to which it was proposed to give two additional members each, fifteen of them possessed a population less than that of the county of Antrim; nineteen of them less than that of Down; twenty-two of them less than that of Tipperary; and that there was not any one of them, with the exception of Lancashire and Yorkshire, that had any thing like the population of the county of Cork. Leave those two out of consideration, and all the remaining twenty-six were inferior in population to the county of Cork. But he might be told, that the county of Cork had boroughs in it which sent Representatives to that House. He would readily give up all those boroughs, with all their population, and still he could find in Cork a population to the extent of 100,000 greater than that of any of the counties in England, with the exception which he had already mentioned, of Lancashire and Yorkshire, which were to receive two additional members. These were facts which he submitted should be well weighed before this Bill passed into a law. He respectfully demanded, then, another member for Antrim, another for Down, another for Cork, another for Galway, another for Kerry, another for Mayo, and another for Tyrone, for he could show them that every one of them was above the line of 200,000. There were seven or eight counties in Ireland, with a population less than that amount, but those counties that had more than 200,000, he would contend had a right to additional members. They proposed by the present Bill to get rid of sixty-two members; they had therefore so many members in bank—that was, a fund which they could draw upon—and it would be but just and reasonable to give those additional members to the Irish counties which he had named. There was another objection which he had to the details of this Bill as it regarded Ireland. They proposed to give an additional member each to Limerick and Waterford: the proposition was a most proper one, though the interests in those towns were, at present, very well taken care of in that House. But there was Galway, with its vicinage, which had a larger population than one of those towns, and Kilkenny, with its vicinage, which had a larger population than either of them, and which, let him inform the House, before the Union returned four members to Parliament. Now it appeared to him that they should give additional members both to Galway and Kilkenny. In making these observations—in urging these objections—he did not wish to be at all considered as arguing against the Bill. He was determined to vote for that Bill, in its present shape. He did not want to make any bargain or contract as the condition on which he should give his support to this excellent measure: he was ready to give his cordial support to it, even though his suggestions might not be attended to; but he offered them to his Majesty's Government in the spirit of candour and fairness, as suggestions which were worthy of their consideration. He would appeal to their common sense on the subject. He was stated to possess an irregular power or influence in Ireland. If his Majesty's Ministers wished to take that power out of his hands, he would tell them, that the best way for doing so consisted in giving to Ireland the full and entire benefit of the principles of this measure. What were the facts which he had to urge upon their attention? He found upon the list of counties in his hand, Antrim, with a population, taking it in round numbers, of 260,000 inhabitants. In that county, he found that there were disfranchised at one blow by those—not by all of them—but by many of those who now talked of the atrocity and iniquity of the present measure, 6,246 freeholders, almost all of them Protestant freeholders, who had not been even accused of any crime which could justify such a measure against them. He might be told, that it would have been invidious, at the time of the disfranchisement of the 40s. freeholders, to take the franchise from the

Catholics, and to leave it with the Protestant freeholders; but he would put an end to that argument by the statement of a single fact. At the time of the passing of that bill, there were eighty Catholic gentlemen in London, who might be taken as a very just Representation of the Catholics of Ireland. They met at the Thatched House Tavern, and they unanimously agreed to petition against the disfranchisement generally, and also to present another petition to this effect,—"You accuse the Catholic freeholders of being subservient to their Clergy, and you propose to disfranchise them on that account. Be it so. But there is no complaint of the kind against the Protestant freeholders, and we, therefore, the Catholic Nobility, Clergy, Merchants, and Lawyers (for the petition was signed by individuals belonging to all those classes), pray you to leave the Protestant freeholders as they are." They thus gave the Legislature an opportunity to make the distinction which it did not take. The Parliament, on the contrary, passed the Disfranchisement Bill, by which they disfranchised 6,246 Protestant freeholders in the county of Antrim, and reduced the constituency of that county to 700. They disfranchised the 40*s.* freeholders in Galway to the amount of 32,000; in Cavan they disfranchised 5,000; in Dublin 10,000; in Kerry 3,776; and in Tyrone 6,600. They reduced the constituency of Tyrone to 364; that of Carlow to 140; and, by similar reductions in the other Irish counties, they reduced the constituency of Ireland by this Bill, almost to the narrow limits of the constituency of Scotland. That being the case, he thought that there were fair and just grounds now to call for an enlargement of the Representation in Ireland. There was another objection which he had to this Bill, as far as it applied to Ireland. Where there were boroughs, this Bill would not allow the freeholder in a borough to vote at the election of a Member for the county in which that borough town was situated. Now he would tell them, that the effect of that part of the Bill in Ireland would be this,—that it would take the right of voting in counties from the most numerous and best class of voters—the shopkeepers residing in towns, who had grown rich upon the fruits of their industry, and who would not be subservient to the lordly domination of the county aristocrats and landlords. In the great and prosperous town of Belfast, for instance, the right of voting in the county would be taken away from the freeholders resident there; the same would be the case with the inhabitants of Tralee, who would no longer be allowed to vote for the county of Kerry, and the result would be, that the number of freeholders in the different counties in Ireland who would have the right to vote would be exceedingly small. Now that was a part of the Bill which it appeared to him required to be modified. There was also another portion of the measure which he wished to see modified with respect to Ireland. The present measure proposed to throw the right of voting open to two classes in England—the copyholders, and those who held leases for years; and it was also proposed to give the right of voting to those holding leases for years in Scotland. Now why, he would ask, not also throw the franchise open to leaseholders in Ireland? He said, in Ireland especially, where one-third part of the land could only be let for a term of years, being land belonging to the Church. He need not say that he did not want to increase the influence of the Church, but he wanted to give to the leaseholders in Ireland that right to which they were justly entitled. Gentlemen, he trusted, would remember that the Reverend and right Reverend persons to whom those lands belonged, took especial care to have the leases renewed as often as they possibly could, upon the payment of fines, and to procure the highest prices that the tenants could be induced to pay; for this reason the tenants were independent of their landlords; therefore, to give them the elective franchise, was to impart it to a large, intelligent, wealthy, and independent body of men. He really thought, that, upon reflection, every honest and independent Member of that House must arrive at the conclusion, that nothing could have been more unjust than to have disfranchised the Irish 40*s.* freeholders in the manner in which that great act of injustice was committed—that was, by fixing the qualification so high as 10*l.* For his part he was content to divide the difference—he should be content if the highest qualifications were fixed at 6*l.* With such anomalies, then, as he had stated, it was idle to talk about confirming the Legislative Union between this country and Ireland. He admitted, at the same time, that the Bill, even in its present shape, would be of considerable advantage to Ireland, as well as to every other part of the empire. It would open the rotten corrupt boroughs there; it would open seventeen or nineteen of that description; it would open such boroughs as Portarlington, which had been brought into the stock-market, and regularly sold there. Lord Portarlington wanted to borrow 40,000*l.* or 50,000*l.*, at an interest beyond that which was allowed by the law of the land. The sum was lent to him by the late Mr. Ricardo, and Mr. Ricardo accordingly came into that House as the hon. member for Portarlington. That, of course was not usury. He believed that, legally speaking, seats in that House could not be considered of any pecuniary value, but the fact was notorious that the borough-holders got 5,000*l.* for them in the market. He was ready to admit that this measure, as it broke down the borough influence, was a great boon, and he would receive it with gratitude, but the object of the House should be, to command the gratitude of the people. In many boroughs in Ireland this Bill would strike off a majority of the 20*l.* and 50*l.* freeholders. He would select as an instance the borough of Dungarvon. Those who had the right to vote there at present consisted of 40*s.*, 20*l.*, and 50*l.* freeholders. There was another species of franchise in Dungarvon, which was conferred in this way,—namely, that every one having a house worth 5*l.* a-year was entitled to vote. Now by this Bill they would strike off the 50*l.* freeholders and the 20*l.* freeholders, non-resident voters, and 40*s.* voters as they fell in, and also the voters possessing the right from having a house worth 5*l.* a-year, and they gave the right of voting to those who were rated at 10*l.* a-year house rent. By such a measure as that, they would take away two-thirds of the number of voters in this borough, and the same argument would apply to most of the other boroughs in Ireland. These facts shewed that they were working without sufficient knowledge of the state of things in Ireland. Now what he would propose was, to leave the 50*l.* and 20*l.* freeholders in those boroughs as they were at present. [*Here Lord John Russell was understood to intimate across the Table, that such was his intention.*] He did not gather from the noble Lord's statement in the first instance, that such was his intention. But he would ask the noble Lord, would he get rid of the 5*l.* franchise, which, as he had just mentioned, existed in Dungarvon? That was an old and long-established franchise; which had returned his friend, the hon. member for Downpatrick, and he thought that it should be allowed to remain. He (Mr. O'Connell) did not make these objections to the Bill in a cavilling spirit, nor with any desire to oppose the successful progress of this measure. He thought that it was calculated to effect a substantial amelioration and improvement, and though it might have gone to a greater length, perhaps its doing so might have interfered with its success. Looking at it altogether, he considered it a great boon indeed, and he made no objection whatever to the principle of the measure, of which he cordially approved. He repeated, that those remarks were not urged as any matter of cavil; they were merely then put forward at such length, and only with such degree of detail which that stage of the measure called for; but, at a future time, he should enter more minutely into what he conceived to be matter of the very highest importance to the interests of justice and the honour of Parliament; and he hoped that when he did so, the appeal which he intended to make would not prove unavailing. He should not animadvert upon the ingenious arguments which the fancy of the learned member for Drogheda had suggested during a long and laboured harangue in support of the borough system, but he could not avoid remarking, that the hon. Member had, in the course of his speech, resorted to a weapon from the use of which he seemed to shrink. He had with great dexterity shewed the opponents of the Bill where they might find a dagger, though he wished to make it appear that the blow was not made by his hand. That hon. Member said, that one effect of this Bill in Ireland would be, to increase the Catholic popular and political influence, and to extinguish the Protestant influence altogether. Did any one imagine that in the close boroughs, as they at present existed, any inquiry was ever made about religion? Did his (Mr. O'Connell's) excellent friend, Sir E. Denny, care anything about the religion of the First Lord of the Treasury to whom he sold his borough? Or would he have any objection to sell it to him if he should offer the usual price for it? Oh no; the supposition was absurd, and contrary to the fact. But he would ask, was every improvement in Ireland to be met by this cry about religion? How long had not Catholic Emancipation been retarded by such a cry as that which the hon. Member attempted to raise? Were they to go to the people of Ireland, and to tell them that the Protestant religion, which had been made, in the first instance, an argument against their religious liberty, should be now an argument against their civil rights; and would they, in the same breath, tell them that they must continue to pay tithes, and to support the Protestant Church, the existence of which debarred them of the privilege of their fellow-citizens? He was sure that the period was gone by when such an infatuated policy as that could be adopted with success. The present excellent measure would break down a long-cemented monopoly—it would break down a power that had originated with Cromwell and his party in Ireland—it would break down a power by which, under Charles 2nd, the children of the followers of Charles 1st had been trodden upon in that country. The 16th and 17th of Charles 2nd went to establish new rules and regulations, the effect of which was, to throw every borough in Ireland into the hands of close corporations. There was no one, who had the slightest acquaintance with those subjects, who did not perfectly well know that every borough in Ireland was one of the closest and most compact monopolies. Forty of those boroughs had been originally created by King James 1st in one day, and for what purpose did they suppose? Not for the purposes of religion, or the promotion of public liberty, but to secure his designs upon two provinces of Ireland, which he wished to partition out and plunder. With that view, the King's livery-servants were elected for those forty boroughs: twelve burgesses were all they summoned together to return the mere servants of the King for those boroughs; and what was one of the results?—that in the Irish House of Commons an Englishman and a Welshman fought in the Speaker's presence, and it was not ended till the Welshman conquered, and that was venerable antiquity. The present measure was, he repeated, a great boon, and it would do great good, even in the city of Dublin. It would be productive of great benefit to those towns in Ireland that had been long domineered over by close corporations. The measure was, indeed, a healing measure; and although he had pointed out some changes, which he hoped would still be made in it, as far as it affected Ireland, he thought it almost unnecessary to repeat, that to the measure itself he was a most cordial friend, and that he should give it all the support in his power. After these historical details as to the origin of boroughs in Ireland, the hon. and learned Member proceeded as follows: "If I had not great objections to trespassing longer on the House, and did not feel that I had already addressed it at considerable length, I should be disposed to attempt something like a catalogue *raisonné* of the orators who have figured in this Debate in opposition to the Bill. The advocacy of these Gentlemen certainly has not been distinguished by its entire disinterestedness—no very vivid emotions of generosity were exhibited by them. They were not standing up for the destruction of their own property, but for upholding it. The learned Lord (the Lord Advocate) told them, that if the case was in a Court of Law, they would not be admitted as witnesses. I am sure, in stating that, the learned Lord stated what is the law of Scotland, and what I know, as he stated it, to be the law of this country. Instead of following the example set them by a noble Duke and a noble Marquis in the other House, and by two hon. Gentlemen in this, and giving up for the public benefit what they ought never to have held, these hon. Members have rallied round Gatton and Old Sarum—and we are called innovators and robbers because we propose to restore to the people what has been so long and so unjustly withheld from them. The people, however, will return the taunt levelled by them at us. I was sorry to see the hon. member for Oxford (Sir Robert Inglis) amongst the first who opposed this measure. If I know anything of history, or have read it rightly, there was a time when Church and State united for the benefit of the people. I remember to have heard that it was an Archbishop of Canterbury who put his cross as the first signature to Magna Charta, and therefore I regretted to find the hon. Baronet, representing one of the first Protestant Universities in the world, departing from what are called Protestant principles—I mean the principles of general liberty—and opposing a measure, the object of which is, to advance and promote the rights of the people of England. The arguments, if arguments they can be called, which have been used on this occasion against us, have all been founded on what? On Charters. We have been told of Jeffreys, and the lawyers of his day, and of the Charters seized by James 2nd, which caused the Revolution. The charters seized on that occasion, however, were charters giving rights to the people, and purchased by them for their own protection. Under those charters markets were held, and the citizens were free from tolls over different parts of the kingdom, and where those charters extended, the King's toll-gatherer dare not go. James 2nd seized those charters, and was deservedly hurled from his throne by the Revolution; but to defeat the boroughmongers, who have now filched the charters from the people, we need no Revolution—all that is wanted or sought for is a restoration of just rights. But then we have been told, that the boroughs have been made to bring in a number of exceedingly clever men into this House. The right hon. Baronet endeavoured, by going back for a series of years, to make up what I may call a galaxy of boroughmongering glory. He produced the list of great names which the borough system had introduced into the House, beginning with Mr. Dunning, and ending with my Lord Liverpool—God save the mark! Now, I think that if every one of the persons named by the right hon. Baronet had perished before they became statesmen—before they entered this House—and, at all events, before they underwent the filthy baptism of boroughmongering contamination—the country would not have been anything the worse for it. The name of Mr. Canning was amongst them; and, when he was referred to as one of those who had been introduced into Parliament by the borough system, his name was received with cheers. But what did Mr. Canning do? It is true he advocated the Catholic Question; but did not Mr. Canning, to the end of his life, oppose the just rights of the Protestant Dissenters? I do not know upon what principle any man, and particularly a Protestant, could have advocated the Catholic claims, and at the same time opposed the repeal of the laws affecting the Protestant Dissenters. Then the name of Mr. Burke was alluded to—a high Tory name—none higher, none dearer to that class of persons who are opposed to this measure. But what did Mr. Burke do for the country? He did something for himself—he rendered himself rich and comfortable by the course he pursued, and the country, be it recollected, has to pay the pensions granted to him up to this hour. If those who praise him, or who receive the pensions, would give up those pensions, I would much doubt if the country would not be ready to give a receipt in full for the eulogium on his merits. He might have been a great man; but Burke was brought into this House by the boroughmongers, and his greatness and his value were lost to the country. His epitaph was written long before his death:—

> " Here lies our good Edmund, whose genius was such,
> We scarcely can praise it, or blame it, too much;
> Who, born for the universe, narrow'd his mind,
> And to party gave up what was meant for mankind."

That is the natural effect of the borough system, I contend, on any one who is introduced to this House through its influence. But, granting that the borough system has introduced some able and useful men to Parliament, is there some fairy touch which opens that door only to men of talent? Are there no dull, drowsy Members ever returned for boroughs?—Members without talent to join in a Debate, but with sufficient perseverance to be able to attend at the division—Members without any regard for the interests of the country, but with the most devoted regard for their own interests—men who have raised themselves as their country has fallen, and have become great and mighty men, by the spoils of the people. The right hon. Baronet has gone back half a century to find out those stars which he has brought forward, like those lights that go down to the country theatres from the Metropolis. The right hon. Baronet has certainly brought us some of those stars; but he is like the country managers, who bring down *Hamlet* and forget *Polonius* and all the other worthy personages who figure in the drama. He has pointed to the great names, but he forgets to tell us how many there were who left no name. But then we are told that the system works well. Go to your agricultural population, and ask how it works. Go and read by the lights which have lately blazed, and are yet blazing, in your villages and hamlets, how the system works. If you cannot see by that light, go to your gaols, and ask the imprisoned poachers how the system has worked, as exemplified in the operation of the Game-laws. Take a view of the Wilful Trespass Acts, which gave such a dominion to Magistrates, and have caused so much oppression and misery to the people, and say how the system works. Recollect how the power of the boroughmongers in this House has worked. Remember that it is to the exercise of that power we owe the Walcheren expedition, the war with France, and all its consequences. The votes of the nominees of boroughmongers have already been brought to the notice of the House in a manner too decisive to let in any doubt as to the operation of the system. In 1822, a motion was made for retrenchment, and when a division took place, it appeared that the number of Members representing boroughs containing a population of less than 500, who voted against retrenchment, was 19; for retrenchment, of this class, none. Of the Members representing a population of between 500 and 1,000 persons, there voted for retrenchment 12; against it 33. Of the Members representing a population of between 1,000 and 2,000 persons, there voted for retrenchment 17; against it 44; whilst of the Members representing boroughs containing above 5,000 inhabitants, 66 voted for retrenchment, and only 47 against it, showing that precisely as the borough influence prevailed, the numbers of those favourable to retrenchment and economical expenditure diminished. This shows the working of the system. When the Minister stated, and the House voted, that a pound note and a shilling were as good as a guinea, though every man knew, at that time, that he could get a pound note and ten shillings for a guinea, that was another proof how the system worked. The National Debt is stated generally at 820,000,000*l.*; but I have the authority of the hon. member for Middlesex—an authority which will not be disputed in this instance, that the National Debt, if properly counted, amounts to 1,000,000,000*l.* That enormous amount of debt shows how the borough system has worked. But it may be said, that, notwithstanding the Debt, the country has prospered. Why has it prospered? Because it is placed by nature in a mild climate, and has a fertile soil. Because it is indented with numerous sea-ports, and imbedded with mines of salt and coals. Because it has boundless resources in the industry and enterprise of its inhabitants, and in their manufacturing skill; and because its institutions have been generally free, though mixed up with evil. With such advantages, this country ought to be what she has been, and what I trust she will be again—the protectress of liberty all over the world, and the object of the most ardent hate to all despots. The spirit of liberty fills the hearts of the people; its banners should ever wave over us. It is floating now in Poland, and I am satisfied that there is not a British heart that would not throb to hear that, under that banner, its followers had marched to victory. If the despot of Russia, however, should have power, as he has the inclination, to crush his Polish subjects to atoms—if he oblige them to adopt his religious professions, however dissimilar to their own—if he establish the vilest inquisition, and trample upon every thing worthy of the name of liberty, still we owe 1,000,000,000*l.* and we cannot interfere. The working of the system, and that alone, has brought us to this pass. Our troops are as brave as ever, our Officers as gallant as any that ever trod "the embattled plain;" a better and more generous soldiery never existed; but then the country owes 1,000,000,000*l.* The boroughmongers have gained under this system; they got bishoprics, and commissionerships, and offices. They got plenty of the public plunder—but the people have got nothing but a debt of 1,000,000,000*l.* This is the miserable malady produced by the borough system—the enemy you cannot conquer or get rid of, but by calling in the universal people, by their Representatives, to this House, to aid you. Before I sit down, when showing how well the system worked, I intended to whisper one word in your ear, and that one word was Ireland. I will not now, however, press upon this subject. I will not ask how the system has worked in that country,—I will not ask, does famine stalk through the streets? Do the crowded cellars of its cities exhibit anything but abject misery and wretchedness? Does not starvation stare the populace in the face? I only ask of any Gentleman to inquire into the extent of misery and starvation which prevails in Ireland, and, after that, to tell me that the system works well. I call upon you, in the name of the God of charity—an appeal which, when asked for gifts from your own property, you have never rejected—to do an act of justice for Ireland. I call upon you, as you propose to do it for the people of England, also to do it for the people of Ireland; and by so doing you will secure the tranquillity of that country, and find an ample return in the contentment and gratitude of its people.

Mr. *Attwood* congratulated his Majesty's Ministers on so new and so extraordinary an ally, as was the hon. and learned Gentleman who had just sat down. He congratulated the House on the cordiality which subsisted now, for the first time, between the Treasury Bench and the hon. and learned Gentleman. But recently the political differences between the Government and the hon. Gentleman had reached a height both in Ireland and England, which threatened the peace of both countries. He trusted that the strange union they now witnessed was not an evidence that his Majesty's Ministers were now employed in transferring to England that system of agitation, which they had lately endeavoured to suppress in Ireland, by the aid of extraordinary laws. The Ministers however, who had no foundation for their power but what was based upon the troubled waves of discontent, appeared to say to themselves—"We will give to an embarrassed people what will not relieve their embarrassments, and trust to the natural love of change for the popularity of our attempt." One of their arguments was, that the former Administration had lost the confidence of the country. But might not the same clamour be again brought into action?—and what security was there, even after the passing of the present Bill, that another Ministry might not call up an agitation, like the present, to bear upon the remaining bulwarks of the Constitution? It could not be expected that the people would relax on the question of Reform. They were in love with the principle, and would still act on it. That they would be content with this measure could only be expected by those who held the reins of Government, on the strength of the discontent of the people. The late Government had gone out of office on a question of finance, and he, therefore, could not see how that showed that a Reformed Parliament was demanded by those who had voted against them. If this first change were conceded, the people would proceed to demand additional change, and again would be raised the same clamour and excitement, the consequence of which would be, that the remaining bulwarks of the State would disappear. The noble Lord who introduced the measure, said, that it was now impossible to resist the people; and was it then to be expected that they could be more easily resisted when they had obtained increased power? Before they proposed to destroy the present system, they ought to examine fearlessly into what its character was, and the means that they had of guarding against the consequences of alteration. He, therefore, begged to call the attention of the House to the different state of the Representation now to what it was formerly. It was said, that the present Representation did not conform to the disposition of society in this country—that new towns had sprung up into wealth, the population of which was knocking at the doors of Parliament, and which it would not be just to exclude, and that those who possessed the hereditary power of influencing the return of Members to Parliament had encroached on the rights and liberties of the people, by which means a full Representation of the trading and commercial interests of the country was prevented. He did not pretend to belong to the class that possessed the hereditary power of which he had just been speaking; he had sprung from the people; his feelings and sympathies were with them, and in a jealous watchfulness of their rights he would not yield to the noble Mover of the Motion, nor to any member of his Majesty's Government. With feelings such as these he approached the consideration of the important question before them, and, on looking round the House, he could not say that even the commercial and manufacturing classes were inadequately represented. He would defy any man to say, who looked fairly at the composition of that House, that the wealth, the intelligence, and the interests of the middle classes throughout the country were not fully and fairly represented. He would even go so far as to say, that they were now more adequately represented than ever. They had been told, indeed, by the Lord Advocate, that the middle classes had increased, both in number and intelligence; but had not the higher classes also increased in intelligence and numbers. And, therefore, why did not the Corporation interests stand now relatively to the other interests of the country as they did formerly? In his opinion, the commercial interests of the country were more actually represented now than they would be under the Bill of the noble Lord; and to hope that measure would be the final settlement of the question was to hope what could not be. They might destroy the privileges of sixty boroughs, and half extinguish the remainder, without bringing the question nearer to a permanent arrangement than it was before. If would be impossible to believe that other vested rights would be left unattacked, when those privileges were extinguished which had been so long enjoyed. On what ground were these boroughs to be sacrificed? Why because, according to the population returns of 1821, they did not possess 2,000 inhabitants. The Ministers had made population the basis of Representation; but would they undertake to say, after that principle was once established, that any one borough would be safe, so long as there was a town of larger population unrepresented? Yet, once pass this Bill, and such would be the results. The Lord Advocate had also told them, that they ought not to puzzle themselves with the Plantagenets and the Stuarts, but remember the vast mass of knowledge and talent that had been generated within the last five and twenty years. He was not surprised that the learned Lord had fixed upon that period, for that was about the length of time that *The Edinburgh Review* had existed. And since then, so much intellect had been generated, and such large demands of freedom had been made, as called imperatively for great alterations. And what were the great alterations by which Ministers proposed to meet the great demands of the age? They proposed that seven large towns were to send two Members each, and they expected that that would satisfy the demands of the people. Never would that be enough. The greatest clamour had taken place in respect to Newark, Stamford, and such places as those. And were they extinguished? No; instead of extinguishing them, the same principle was to be extended to thirty-four other towns. The owners of property would not change their nature after the Bill was passed, though the House had been told that the Duke of Bedford would not interfere with Tavistock: perhaps it might be thought that he did not interfere with it at present, but it was an evidence to the contrary, that the borough had always sent to Parliament two Members of the House of Bedford. The noble Lord said, he gave the franchise to large towns that they might return commercial men to Parliament. But whence had the real Representation of the commerce of the country emanated? Liverpool sent two Members to Parliament and he believed it had never elected one merchant; but many of her merchants had sat in that House, not for that town, indeed, but for boroughs. Manchester, under this change, was to have two Representatives; but at what time hitherto had not that place really had at least three times two Members, who protected its interests and expressed its wishes? Of them she would now be deprived. Eight Members were to be added to the Metropolis. But would they be merchants? What merchants had Westminster or Southwark ever returned? And with respect to the City of London itself, though he had every respect for the Members who sat for it, yet it could not be denied, that they were not the men who represented its commerce or possessed the confidence of its merchants. Who were these men? The two hon. members for Callington—the member for Bramber—the member for Midhurst—the member for Wendover—and the members for Old Sarum. Those were the men in that House who represented the commercial interests of the metropolis. In this manner the men of Manchester and other places found their way into that House, by a door that was open to them, but would soon be shut, if the present Bill should pass. What they were about to do then was, to give up a practical Representation, and introduce on the country a nominal one—the very thing the Ministry pretended that they were trying to avoid. The reason why men wished to sit in that House, was, for the sake of distinction; and did any one suppose that the wealthy merchants of Manchester would be content with the two Members that that place was to have? No such thing; they had always sat in that House to a much greater extent, and this Bill would be the means of preventing that in future. They were to be shut out by the very door that it was pretended would open the way to them. If, too, the Bill was on principle, how came it that the borough of Tavistock and Manchester were to be placed on the same footing, when, if the fair proportion were taken, Manchester, with its 130,000 people, ought to return twenty Members for the two sent by Tavistock. The noble Lord had said, that it was monstrous that the miserable occupiers of a few miserable houses should return two Members to Parliament. But that was not a correct statement of the case. It was the owners, and not the occupiers of those houses, that returned the Members; and that right had descended to them with their property, as a means of protecting that property itself. The sheep-cotes and houses, and niches alluded too were appendages of great estates in the country, and representing them was a means of protecting property. He would not say that their boroughs were as inviolable as their property or land; but it was a fair question, whether, as their property ran so great a risk, such a Representation was not required to secure it against that risk. He would not go into detail, but ask whether those who, elevated to the pinnacles of society, and exposed to great danger, should not receive proportionate protection. They were not forming a new Constitution; if they were, the question would be open for discussion, whether they would have a Representation based on property or not. But as it was the old Constitution they still professed to keep, it was a principle of that Constitution that Representation should be based on property. He thought, that the noble Lord, in the history of his own family and ancestors, might have learned that property was exposed to all sorts of risks, and that cupidity and profligacy were ever ready to make a snatch at it. To him it appeared, that the right hon. Gentleman opposite and the noble Lord hardly knew what they were about to do. They were destroying the present mixed Representation—a Representation in which all classes of the people were found, and they were about to make the House of Commons a strictly popular assembly. That was, perhaps, according to some new view; but he knew not where, except in the minds of some Reformers, to find such a theory of our Constitution. He knew that in the minds of the Reformers the Constitution was supposed to consist of three co-equal and independent bodies, each of which was a check on the other, and that no measure of the Legislature could pass without the concurrence of all three. No measure would become a law, whether it was for good or for evil; which had not the final concurrence of these three independent bodies. In this theory were the efforts of the reformers directed to carry back the Constitution. But he defied any man to invent a Constitution less capable of being carried into execution, and, if carried into execution, less capable of promoting general welfare; but the answer to the supposition was, that it never was even attempted to be carried so into execution, except by some men bigotted to a theory. The men who had actually carried our Constitution into effect, were not men of that class who were bigotted to a theory. They were not men who were disposed to make a sacrifice of the public happiness, and of the interests of the people to any theory. They were men who were convinced that the people were not made for a theory of Government, but that Government was made for the people; and, according as their interests demanded it, and according to circumstances, these Statesmen made one part of the Constitution yield to another; one part supply the deficiencies of another; one part do that which was necessary to the happiness of the others, and so kept them all moving together in harmony, giving the people protection for their liberty; and for their property, the security of fixed and stable laws. Hereditary power had a natural tendency to fall into the hands of men little capable of using it efficaciously; men generally of feeble talents, and whose energies were lulled to rest because they had nothing to seek. The House of Commons, according to the theory of the noble Lord's measure, was to consist of an elected body, always changing—having no attachment to stability—composed, of necessity, of men the most ambitious—of men the most enterprising—of men of the greatest talents and intelligence to be found in the age and in the country; and that was, in theory, to be the result of the new elections, and this was to be a pure House of Commons. He should be glad to know from the noble Lord, if this would not lead to pure democracy? He should be glad to learn from the noble Lord who had introduced the Bill, where he could find a single example in history—a single instance, having the guarantee of experience, of any purely democratic body, elected by the great mass of the people, deriving its existence from the popular voice—he should be glad to learn where such a body had existed in conjunction with hereditary Monarchy and the Peerage? There were no such examples, except such as taught them a serious lesson. Let them direct their eyes to the new Constitutions formed in neighbouring kingdoms—let them look to the Chamber of Deputies in France, and they would find that the Chamber of Peers never rejected a measure which had been agreed to by the Chamber of Deputies, that the latter body did not immediately question the utility of the other Chamber. Did the House of Commons and the House of Lords differ, the dispute went off quietly; but it was not so in France. In France, the result of the Chamber of Peers rejecting a measure was, that the other Chamber immediately inquired if the Chamber of Peers ought to exist? If such was the result in France, should we not find similar dangers here? These appeared, to him at least, the kind of dangers which we might expect from this untried Bill, which had no experience to sanction it, but which we were warned against by the fruits of a similar expedient in another country. They blinded their eyes to the natural operation which experience had shown to be the result of such a species of Government, and such a species of Constitution, in a neighbouring country; and blinding their eyes to that, they had had no experience whatever to guide them; or rather, might be said to act in defiance of experience. In fact, they were called on to make an experiment in government, such as had never been successful. It appeared to him, that the measure, important as it was, had not been adequately described in the speeches of the hon. and right hon. Members opposite. The noble Lord, indeed, said, that he meant to sacrifice the rotten boroughs, and admitted that they were vested rights, but he also contended that they were not property, but a trust, and because they were a trust, and not property, he meant to give no compensation for them. The noble Lord disfranchised sixty-two boroughs totally, and forty-seven others in part: he did not charge them with any guilt—he did not prove any guilt—but he had formed a theory of Government with which the existence of these boroughs was not compatible, and, therefore, he swept them out of existence. The noble Lord was ready to sacrifice these boroughs, though they had existed as a part of the Constitution, and long been held as an important privilege. He did not know in what school the noble Lord had learned his wisdom, when he talked so fluently of sacrificing any kind of property, or any kind of trust. He should like the noble Lord to distinguish between the different trusts which existed in the community, and tell him in what respect property differed from other trusts. All property was of the nature of a trust, and for that reason he would not sacrifice Old Sarum—on that ground he would protect the boroughs, lest, in destroying them, he should sap the foundation of all property—and on that ground, he would caution the noble Lord, that in sacrificing the rotten boroughs, he might find that he was not giving security to Woburn. The only ground why property should be protected was, that it was for the good of the community, and on the same ground he was prepared to defend all the trusts it was proposed to destroy. To see those trusts destroyed, was for him a ground of serious alarm. He regretted very much that Ministers should have brought forward a measure of that sweeping and destructive kind in these times of agitation, when there was a sort of National Convention sitting throughout the land; when the whole country was agitated; and when it was not improbable, that by setting the example of confiscating trusts, they might lead to a general confiscation of property. Could the noble Lord and his friends allay the discontent by this measure; or could they stop the people when they were once set in motion? He solemnly warned them that they could not, and he would never give his consent to a measure so revolutionary and dangerous. It was not a measure of restoration; for what it was about to create never existed; it was not a measure of conservation; it was not a measure for repairing the structure; it was a measure tearing up the foundations of the Constitution, and laying them anew. He trusted that it would never be sanctioned by that House; he called on that House not to trust the theories of modern times, but to take counsel of the wisdom of our ancestors, and to look at the destruction which had been brought on a neighbouring nation. In conclusion, the hon. Member again solemnly warned the House against the dangers of the measure, and called on them, rather to confide in the wisdom of our ancestors than the theories of the moderns, for that wisdom had established the liberty of the community and the greatness of the nation.

Sir *James Graham* was aware of the

difficulty of addressing the House after five nights' Debate, and he should not then have risen, as he had been led to believe that its termination was about to take place without any division, not thinking it necessary to answer some of the arguments of the right hon. Gentleman opposite, had not the right hon. Gentleman alluded personally to him, and had he not felt unwilling to allow a question of such great magnitude and importance to be disposed of without stating his opinions. In the first place, the present Ministry had not laid themselves open to the charge implied by the language of the right hon. Baronet (Sir Robert Peel) of cowering to taunts from the Opposition side of the House. They had never shrunk from the responsibility of bringing forward the measure, and still less had they ever wished to throw any of the responsibility on, or share any of the honour which he believed would accrue from the measure, with the members of the late Ministry. He might entertain a private opinion as to the policy of the late Ministers respecting that partial Parliamentary Reform, adopted by the House of Commons, as fit and proper in the cases of Penrhyn and East Retford; but conceiving that Reform inadequate, and that the country now needed a searching, substantial Reform, he, for one, could not regret the course that was then finally pursued. But this charge of a disposition to avoid responsibility, came with an ill grace from the right hon. Baronet, who had now abandoned the high ground taken up by the Duke of Wellington, the head of the Administration of which the right hon. Baronet formed a part, and admitting that some Reform was necessary, had not only not proposed any such Reform, but had acted with the noble Duke who denied the utility of all Reform. The Duke of Wellington contended, that it was not the universal wish of the people to effect Reform, and that to suppose so was a vulgar error. The noble Duke also laid it down, that our present system of Representation was so perfect that the wit of man could not conceive anything more so, and that he could not fancy anything more excellent. But the right hon. Baronet had departed from this principle; he had relinquished this high ground, and stated, that to some measure for reforming the representation, not brought in on the responsibility of Ministers, but on that of some other person—on the responsibility of some Member in his individual capacity—that, to such a measure, he would give a reluctant consent. The right hon. Baronet must regret, he thought, that he brought forward such a charge, when he himself could not deny that there was a necessity for Reform, and that there was no difference between them as to principle, but only as to degree. The only discussion could be, whether the step the Ministers had taken was too great; for it being admitted that some Reform was necessary, their measure could only be blamed as too sweeping and extensive. So far from shrinking from responsibility, there was no responsibility connected with the measure which he, as an individual, had not incurred, and which the Cabinet had not taken on themselves. Considering it necessary, they had shrunk, indeed, from the responsibility of delaying the measure one day, or one hour longer than was required to prepare it, and they thought it both unwise and unfair, not to bring the measure under the consideration, at their own risk, with the least possible delay. As far as he was concerned, he could say, both for himself and his colleagues, that they had not lost a single hour in bringing forward the measure. He was anxious to state, that they conceived it was not consistent with their duty to the public to bring forward any shifts, or temporising schemes, or what Mr. Burke emphatically called miserable expedients and half measures; neither had they taken any indirect course, either for encouraging or for averting the honest and just expression of the people's demand for Reform. It was not consistent with the pledges they had given on accepting office, that they should nicely balance the means of redeeming the pledges they had made to the nation, or that they should devise plans barely and legally to redeem those pledges, cheating the people by the name of Reform, but carrying no Reform into execution. Neither did they think that any justification could be found for delay. They had before them the example of Catholic Emancipation—they saw the benefit of early concession—that delaying to concede just claims when resistance was in their power, only led to more extensive claims, and ultimately to the necessity of making large and unwise concessions. It was inherent in the nature of things, that the refusal of just claims led to granting claims that at first no man dreamed of making. The reason, too, was obvious; when justice was denied, men became convinced that the authority which was capable of denying it, was itself an injury, and ought to be abated. On that ground the Ministers had thought it their duty—first, to introduce a measure on their own responsibility—second, to take care that it should be such a measure as would be a redemption of their pledge, and would satisfy the public demand for Reform; and, thirdly, it was their duty to lay that measure before the House with the least possible delay. The Government certainly, and the country, he believed, were of opinion, that the measure was calculated to satisfy all moderate men. There were, he knew, Ultra Tories and Ultra Reformers, who would be satisfied with nothing; but he was convinced that moderate men of all parties would say, that enough was done, and not too much. The measure would, he believed, remove all just ground of complaint, and removing all just ground of complaint was the principal reason why it was proposed by an Administration determined to stand by the Monarchy and support the Government, being convinced that the best means of preserving both unimpaired was to satisfy the people. The measure was not the offspring of innovation, nor did he deem it inconsistent with the institutions of the country. He had something to regret in the asperity with which the right hon. Gentleman had alluded to some circumstances in his political conduct. The right hon. Gentleman had referred to the Resolution he had moved last Session, to have a return of the emoluments of the Privy Council laid before the House. The right hon. Gentleman said, that return was one cause of the great dissatisfaction. He was not disposed to shrink from the responsibility of that motion. His conduct on that occasion was before the House and the country. He charged the Administration with repeatedly making great public professions of economy and retrenchment; and he had charged them with carrying those professions only into execution in the lower grade of the public service, while they left the higher offices untouched; and he wished to have some returns to show the outline of the manner in which they carried retrenchment into effect. His motion was intended to obtain documents, to show the salaries of offices held by members of the Privy Council, in order to make it appear that one of the members of his Majesty's Cabinet held five great offices, and several of them held more than one. His motion was met by an Amendment, by the right hon. member for Armagh, for a return of all salaries above 1,000*l.*, and those extraordinary returns were accordingly laid on the Table which had astonished the country, but for which he was in no manner responsible. The right hon. Gentleman had made an allusion to his salary as First Lord of the Admiralty: he should not have been astonished at that remark, if it had come from the hon. Baronet, lately a Lord of the Admiralty; but it was unworthy of the right hon. Gentleman. The right hon. Gentleman was one of the members of that Committee to which the salaries of the officers of Government had been referred, and it was competent for the right hon. Gentleman to propose to reduce the salary of the First Lord of the Admiralty, and if the right hon. Gentleman gave that advice, and the Committee adopted it, he could only assure the House, that the Ministers would not defend the salary so pertinaciously as the right hon. Gentleman and his friends defended the superannuation of the sons of two Cabinet Ministers. He turned, then, willingly from such topics as these, which he wished it might be understood were not of his seeking; but as they had been adverted to, he could not overlook them. He might have taken no notice of them coming from any body else but the right hon. Gentleman, but coming from him, he felt himself called on to reply to them, because they were intended to cast a slur upon him, and stigmatise him for his conduct. He would then come to the arguments of the right hon. Gentleman, who strongly reprehended the measure, because it severed the lower classes of the country from the franchise which they had exercised, much to the advantage of the country. He would venture to oppose to the assertion of the right hon. Gentleman the broad principle laid down by a Statesman who was deservedly considered as the very highest authority on constitutional law. Mr. Fox asserted, that that was the best system of Representation which secured to a country the largest number of persons whose circumstances were independent; and that system, on the contrary, was the worst, which embraced the largest number of voters, who, from being in dependent circumstances, were incapable of deliberation, and must act as they were commanded. He would not refer to what had been said by the right hon. Baronet, in the Debate in 1829, relative to the 40*s.* freeholders; but he would refer to opinions given by the right hon. Baronet in 1828, in the case of Penryn. The right hon. Baronet then laid down a doctrine, to which he gave his cordial assent. He said—“ I agree that these privileges are not to be treated as the property of the electors. They do involve considerations of public trust, and if they are abused by the majority of the electors, the innocent parties must take the consequence of their association with the guilty.”* He understood the distinction drawn between the present case and that of the violation of a trust; but if there were such a violation in the case of Penryn, there was none in the case of the 40*s.* freeholders. There was no disposition ever to refer to any former misconduct on their part. One hon. Gentleman, indeed, said, that it had been given in evidence before a Committee of that House, that they had been driven up to the hustings like oxen, and did not know for whom they were to vote. But between 1821 and 1829 an election had taken place, which proved, particularly that of Clare, that the 40*s.* freeholders had emancipated themselves from this thraldom, and were capable of exercising a deliberate judgment. The right hon. Gentleman, in the able speech he made on the occasion of disfranchising the 40*s.* freeholders, quoted a passage from Nathaniel Bacon, in which he cordially agreed. Bacon was speaking of the effect of that Statute of Henry 6th, by which the right of election, that before was vested in the whole commonalty, was restricted to the possessors of freeholds of 40*s.* value. Bacon said, as quoted by the right hon. Baronet—“ Thus the manner of election is retained, but the electors are more considerable; for hitherto any man of English blood promiscuously had a right to give or receive a vote, although his residence was over the wide world. Thus the freemen yielded up their liberty of election to the freeholders, possibly not knowing what they did. This change was no less good than great. For, first, those times were no times for any great measure of civility. The preface of the Statute shows, that the meanest held himself as good a man as the greatest in the country, and this tended to parties, tumults, and bloodshed. Secondly, where the multitude prevail, the meaner sort are upon the upper hand, and these (generally ignorant) cannot judge of persons nor times; but being for the most part led by faction or affection, rather than by right understanding, made their elections, and thereby the General Council of the nation, less generous and noble. Thirdly, there is no less equity in the change than policy. For what can be more reasonable than that those men should have their votes in election of the public Council, whose estates are chargeable with the public taxes and assessments? But, above all the rest, this advancing of the freeholders in this manner of election was beneficial to the freemen of England, although, perchance, they considered not thereof; and this will more clearly appear by the consideration of these three particulars. First, it abated the power of the Lords and great men, who held the inferior sort at their discretion, and much of what they had by their vote. Second, it rendered the body of the people more brave for advancing of the freeholder above the freemen, raised the spirit of the meaner sorts to public regard, and with an ambition to aspire to become freeholder. And thus the meaner sort, sifted to the very bran, become less considerable, and more subject to the coercive power, when the freeholder, now advanced in some degree, becomes more careful to maintain correspondence with the laws; and thirdly, by this means the law makes a separation of the inferior clergy and cloistered people from this service, wherein they might serve particular ends much, and Rome more.” In this opinion he agreed, conceiving that to restrict the franchise on this principle was to make the people more free. The only difference between him and the right hon. Baronet, was, that the right hon. Baronet applied the passage to the 40*s.* freeholders, and he applied it to the potwallopers. Applying himself to the question of Charters, he was supported by the authority of Mr. Burke, when he declared an opinion, that charters were procured for a particular purpose; and to uphold the due execution of that purpose, the Government was warranted in preserving them; but when they ceased to fulfil those purposes for which they were intended, then their privileges were forfeited, and it was in the power of the Government to take back the power which it gave. In the reign of James 1st, the Committee of Privileges of that House, of which Selden was a member, in a report to the House, in consequence of some interference, stated, "that the commonalty of this country possess the right of electing Members to this House as heretofore." Yet no one could be ignorant that many statutes had been passed for restraining these privileges as circumstances might have required; although it had been invariably admitted, that the commonalty of this country are to have a voice in the choice of Members to this House, it had always been in the power of the Legislature to limit this right. He should weary the House were he to quote the instances in which Parliament had interfered to regulate charters; but that was not necessary. The question which they had to consider, with reference to them and to the other parts of the measure, was not whether they had the power to make these changes, but whether it was expedient to do so; and he confessed, after the fullest consideration he had been able to give the subject, he was satisfied that the time was come when the wishes of the people, with respect to these, could not longer be resisted. He now proceeded to the other branch of the subject—the nature and extent of the power exercised by the Peers and men of property in the return of Members to that House, and the insignificance of the places through which these returns were generally made. In a question of that kind, touching so nearly the composition of the House, it would not, perhaps, be very agreeable to the Members if he alluded too closely to the rotten boroughs which exercised such an undue influence; and it might, perhaps, be sufficient to state, that he found there were, under the present system twenty-eight English boroughs returning fifty-six Members to that House, although the population of those places did not in any case amount to 1,000 persons; and forty-eight boroughs returning ninety-seven Members, although the population of each was not in any instance above 100 persons. In nine of them the number of voters was less than ten; in twenty-seven the number of voters was above ten and under twenty-five: and these boroughs sent to Parliament a large proportion of Representatives. 115 boroughs returned members to that House at the present moment, although the number of voters in no instance was above 200. From the arguments of the right hon. Gentleman, the member for Boroughbridge, and some other Members, it would seem to be their opinion, that every rich Peer was almost entitled, as a matter of right, to have a Representative in that House. This might be very congenial to their feelings, but it was not very agreeable to the people, nor did it suit well with the conceptions of a House of Commons representing the people. Now, what was really the case, with reference to these boroughs? He found that 142 Peers and Commoners returned 173 Members as their own nomination; and that sixteen Peers return seventy-six Members to that House—being about, on an average, five members for each Peer. This was a state of things which, he contended, must be altered, and these were the evils to which the Reform was to be applied. The hon. member for Callington (Mr. Baring), in his other objections to the plan, had intimated his fear, that merchants and bankers, and gentlemen connected with trade, would not possess, under the new system, those facilities for entering Parliament which they had at present. Now what was the case at this moment? He found that the members for Tewkesbury and for Maidstone, one of the Members for Liverpool, [An hon. *Member.* He is a lawyer.] He was intimately connected with a mercantile house, and was returned through its influence. Then there were the members for Worcester, and Chichester, and Newcastle, and Cork, and the two members for Bristol—all these, and many others he could name, were populous places, open to the influence of the commercial interest, and to men in whom they reposed confidence purely on account of their high character and reputation for knowledge and integrity, and altogether independent of any influence of rank or overwhelming property. He had, therefore, a right to contend, that many gentlemen connected with the banking and mercantile system owed their seats in that House, not to close-borough Representation, but to the open practice of general election. The question, in truth, between the Government and their opponents, at the present moment, was, whether the Members of that House should continue to be the Representatives of constituents—the people—or whether they were to continue to be, as at present, the Representatives merely of their own property, or the patron who grants them the nomination? Members returned in that manner could not truly represent the interests of the people. He repeated, they could not. They might, and probably did, do their duty to a certain extent, from a sense of private honour, but they had no immediate and pressing sense of duty, such as that which must be felt by those who were reponsible for their conduct, to a large and respectable body of constituents. They might, he repeated, be influenced in their conduct by a high sense of honour, but he feared very much that they frequently acted on that sense of honour more in regard to their patrons than to the people. He believed that nothing could be imagined more servile or more obedient than was the feeling frequently entertained by those who were seated for close boroughs towards the patrons who had placed them in Parliament. The right hon. member for Aldborough (Mr. Croker) had commented on the expression of his noble friend (Lord Tavistock), when he said that the Duke of Bedford would never again use his interest to influence the returns for the borough of Tavistock. Now, his noble friend did not say that the Duke of Bedford would not exercise his legitimate influence with his tenantry, but that he would never again be able to control the Representation in the same manner as he did now, when there were only twenty-seven voters. The great misfortune of the present borough system was, that it mattered little whether property was possessed by a good or a bad man, by the best or the worst of landlords; the influence in returning Members for the borough where property prevailed was just the same in either case; but by the reformed system, character would begin to be necessary, residence would be necessary, and men of property, denuded of that undue power which they possessed at present, would be compelled to rely more on the exercise of those qualities which would by rendering service entitle them to the favour of the people. The hon. member for Callington (Mr. Baring) had commented much on the nature of the line drawn by the noble Lord (J. Russell) for the disfranchisement of the borough, and he had asked who drew that line. He (Sir. J. Graham) had no hesitation in saying at once, that his Majesty's Ministers drew the line; and he would say further, that if they could, in such a matter, be obnoxious to the suspicions which were insinuated with respect to the disfranchisement of a peculiar class of boroughs, that Ministers were not only unfit to hold their stations, but even unfit, as men of honour, to hold a station in the society of gentlemen. He should surprise the House if he read the list of boroughs which must have been interfered with if Ministers had drawn the line so as to affect Knaresborough, Tavistock, and Calne. The line was, therefore, drawn at 2,000 inhabitants, and he would presently show very good grounds for placing it there. Before, however, he proceeded to that point, he begged leave to remark, that the doctrine of deciding Representation with reference to population was not a new one. They had the authority of Mr. Pitt for such a course, both at the time when he made his proposition with respect to Reform in 1785, and subsequently, when he carried into effect the Union with Ireland. In introducing his measure of Reform, in 1785, Mr. Pitt is reported to have used the following expressions: "Gentlemen had undoubtedly read, that of the boroughs which used formerly to send Members to Parliament, seventy-two had been disfranchised; that was to say, that the Crown had ceased to summon them at general elections to return burgesses to the House of Commons. After the Restoration, thirty-six of these boroughs petitioned Parliament to be restored to the exercise of their ancient franchise; their prayer was granted, and to this hour they enjoy it; but the other thirty-six, not having presented any petition on the subject, had not received their lost franchise. Upon this he would be bold to say, that, considering the restoration of the former, and the continued deprivation of the latter, the spirit of the Constitution had been grossly violated, if it was true (but which he denied) that the extension to one set of boroughs of the franchise, and the resumption of it from others, was a violation of the Constitution. For if the numbers could not originally have been constitutionally increased, so they could not constitutionally have been diminished. But having been once diminished, to restore them might by some be said to make an innovation; and if the Parliament had any authority to restore the franchise, the principle of restoration ought to have been extended to the seventy-two boroughs, and not confined to one-half of them. Here, then, it appeared manifest that the whole was governed by a principle which militated directly against the modern doctrine, that to do what had been constantly done for ages, by the wisest of our ancestors, was to innovate upon the Constitution. In these earlier periods, such was the nature of Representation, that as one borough decayed and another rose, the one was abolished and the other was invested with the right. The alterations were not made by principle; they did not arise from any fixed rule laid down, and invariably pursued; but they were founded in that notion which gave the discretionary power to the Crown, viz. that the principal places, and not the decayed boroughs, should be called upon to exercise the right of election"* These were the opinions of Mr. Pitt; and all the regulations with respect to the distribution of the parishes in Ireland were regulated on the principle, that population and importance were to confer the right of returning Members. Passing now to the question of the propriety of the rule adopted with respect to population, he admitted at once that the census of 1821 was defective; but it was the best that they possessed, and even its errors were favourable to the extension of the franchise. It was contended, however, that Calne, Tavistock, and Knaresborough, should have been disfranchised; but if they had determined to abandon the line that they drew, with respect to 4,000 inhabitants, they must have disfranchised a vast number of independent boroughs, against some of which no complaint could be made. If they had disfranchised Calne, eleven other boroughs must also have been sacrificed, because their population was inferior to that burgh. These were Malton, Harwich, Newport (in the Isle of Wight), Andover, Grantham, Devizes, Hertford, St. Alban's, Bridgenorth, Pomfret, and Dartmouth. If they had disfranchised Knaresborough, they must also have sacrificed Ripon, Horsham, Chichester, Peterborough, Christ Church, Tewkesbury, Barnstaple, Shrewsbury, Abingdon, Winchester, Stamford, and Ludlow. These made twenty-three to be sacrificed for Calne and Knaresborough; and, adding them, they must, if they had not laid down a rule, have disfranchised twenty-five boroughs of a smaller population than Tavistock. Already the Ministers were condemned for the extent of their disfranchisement, and yet their opponents censured them for not making it of still greater extent. The principle of the Ministers was, to go as near as possible to cut off all the proprietary boroughs. Wherever, indeed, they attempted to draw a line, he was sure they would have been open to objections of the same description. They were obliged to fix a standard. They had taken the minimum, and he believed they had done so with the minimum of loss and difficulty in effecting the change. The right hon. member for Aldborough (Mr. Croker) had spoken of the effect produced by the fixing the standard of franchise at 10*l.*, and referred to the Tax Returns to prove that the calculations of the Government were ill-founded. Now he, too, had referred to these Returns, and he found, that in the whole sixty boroughs to be disfranchised, there were only 1,471 houses rated at 10*l.* a-year, while in the town of Sheffield, unrepresented in that House, there were 1,556 houses rated at 10*l.*; so that Sheffield had more houses of that value than the whole of the sixty boroughs. In forty-seven of the smaller boroughs, with a population of between 2,000 and 4,000, the houses rated at 10*l.* were 6,323, while in the parish of Mary-la-bonne, which is not represented, he found 10,421 houses rented above that sum; being nearly one-third more than the forty-seven boroughs. The hon. member for Boroughbridge had charged the Government with endeavouring to carry the question by agitation; but he believed the original cause of that agitation was to be found, not in the Government, but by the refusal to give Birmingham any share of the Representation which she claimed from the justice of that House. He was bound to say, that he conceded Reform, not on account of any excitement which was abroad, but at the same time he could not overlook those considerations of safety which must present themselves to every rational mind; nor could he forget, that needlessly protracted resistance always ends, in such cases, in humiliating concession. He did not, therefore, overlook the agitation of the public mind, but he was not overborne by it; and he was willing to give Reform frankly and freely, because he was convinced of its justice as much as of its necessity. It was said, that the cry for Reform was the old story, and that, if not attended to, it would exhaust itself. But what said the right hon. Baronet opposite (Sir R. Peel) on that subject, when the same objection was urged with respect to the Catholic Relief bill? He then said, "perhaps I shall be told, as I was on a former occasion, in forcible, though familiar language, that this is the old story—that all this has been so for the last twenty years—and that, therefore, there is no reason for a change. Why, Sir, this is the very reason for the change. It is because the evil is not casual and temporary, but permanent and inveterate—it is because the detail of misery and of outrage is nothing but 'the old story,' that I am contented to run the hazards of a change.*" The hon. member for Callington said, however, that if they waited a little while, and made a few concessions, they might go on for some time longer; but was it not better, he would ask, to change at once and safely that which all admitted should be changed, and which they also admitted could not much longer be preserved. He well remembered, during the late war, to have seen a British frigate undergoing a process which was common in the Navy. Her keel was damaged, and it was thought expedient to examine it. No dry dock being at hand, it was found necessary to heave her down. Her sails were unbent, her yards unslung, her streamers were lowered, her thunder was silenced, her masts were struck, and she lay a vast hulk on the water—no inauspicious emblem, he was afraid, of what Britain would be, stripped of her glories. By the aid of mechanical power a pulley, attached to a lever, was brought to bear upon her, and she lay balancing on the water, nearly on her beam ends. Her experienced Commander did not disdain to superintend the operation. Desirous to bring her somewhat nearer the surface, and thinking he might safely order another turn of the capstan, he gave the word; when the vessel heeled, filled, and for ever disappeared. Now let the House understand his application. The right hon. member for Aldborough had said, that when the waters subsided, the public vessel would right herself. He apprehended, that when the waters of bitterness and strife had risen to a certain height, when the tide of discontent was full, a slight wave, raised by a passing gust, might, at a moment when it was least expected, overwhelm and swamp the vessel of State. Adverting to the threat thrown out last night by a noble Marquis, that unless Government adopted the course which was conformable to the noble Marquis's opinion, he would take the means which the forms of Parliament allowed him of stopping the supplies, and disbanding the army; he (Sir James Graham) expressed his conviction, that the right hon. Gentleman opposite would not concur with the noble Marquis in that line of conduct. The right hon. Gentleman, in speaking of the condition of Ireland, had admitted that, in his opinion, civil war would be a less evil than the Repeal of the Union; but he had added something as "darkly shadowing forth" some evil which he was sure would arise if the measure were carried. He had, however, never read in history though he did not pretend to be so well versed in it as the right hon. Baronet, that the Monarchy had been endangered by binding the affections of the people to the Monarch; but, on the contrary, that the Throne of England had never been in danger save when it attempted to overthrow the rights, or invade the just liberties of the people. They should never forget the memorable expression of Charles the 2nd, when he ascended the Throne of his ancestors, after years of exile, and suffering, and distress. In his first address to the people his words were, "My first consideration will always be, what will the Parliament wish." These were his words, which had been preserved by Lord Clarendon, who probably advised him to use them, and who had survived the civil war, and witnessed its effects, and who was surely as attached to the privileges and prerogatives of the Crown as man could be. This Statesman, also, in his advice to his Prince, said, "Keep well with your Parliaments, and suffer not your mind to be carried away by any whimsies, introduced from foreign countries. They are utterly inapplicable here; but keep close to the interests of the nation, and the King of England will always be the happiest Sovereign of the world." And what were the whimsies of foreign despots, alluded to by Lord Clarendon. Attempting to put

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* Hansard's Parliamentary Debates, Vol. xviii, p. 1142, New Series.

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* See Hansard's Parliamentary History, vol. xxv, pp. 437, 438.

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* See Hansard's Parliamentary Debates, vol. xx, New Series, pp. 733.

down by force the opinions of the bulk of the people. There were but two modes of dealing with public opinion—either concession, or the suppression of it by force. Concession, if it were possible, he would always counsel. Force was a fearful alternative, which, when public opinion was once decidedly expressed, was inconsistent with the real interests of the nation, and incompatible with the safety of the Crown; it was adverse to the wishes of all who had the interests of the Crown and the people at heart, and incapable of rendering a King of England what Clarendon described—namely, the happiest of Sovereigns. One word as to himself. He had been asked if this measure would be a panacea for the ills of the people of England; and he did not pretend it would be so; but if the people were allowed freely to choose for themselves, they would know that every thing possible to relieve them was done, and they would, in consequence be more tranquil, for there was no liberty so safe as that which was based on the intelligence of the people. But it was said, that this was an imperfect measure. He admitted that it was capable of improvement. At that time it was not the details, but the principle, that was under discussion, let the house only admit the last, and the first might be easily arranged and improved. To secure the safety of the Monarch, and to prevent the people from taking up dangerous doctrines, were the grounds upon which he had given his advice for the introduction of the present measure, and the reasons why he asked the Parliament to give it a hearty support.

Sir *R. Peel* rose to explain. He was sure the House would not be surprised at his wishing to make an explanation, and he should, therefore, claim their indulgence. The right hon. Baronet opposite had charged him with introducing personal asperity into this Debate, and he hoped he might fairly say, that he never was accustomed to give occasion to such a charge. The question, however, was, who had been the aggressor; and that which the right hon. Baronet alluded to had been spoken in reply to his noble friend (Lord Palmerston) who had introduced the crimination of the last Ministry. The right hon. Gentleman had also said, that he (Sir R. Peel) was now acting as the advocate of pot-wallopers. What he had said was, that if there were no alternative between the 10*l.* franchise and the pot-wallopers, he would prefer the 10*l.* but that if they found the people were entitled to this right of voting, he doubted the policy of disfranchising them, and thus cutting off the link between the lowest order and other ranks of society. He could not see any reason why he had been thus referred to, nor was it possible that he could be a party to any attempt to obstruct the Government. His introduction of the subject of Ireland was in allusion to the danger of massacre, which had been talked of. He asked why he should not be left to form his own opinion as to the amount of danger, as well as right hon. Members upon the subject of Reform, as was done with respect to the proposal of the noble member for Woodstock last year, and as the members of the Government themselves had acted upon this principle with respect to the Repeal of the Union, upon which as great a clamour had been raised as was now raised for Parliamentary Reform; in this sense only had he referred to Ireland.

Mr. *Lefroy* rose amidst much confusion in the House, which called for repeated interference on the part of the Speaker, and rendered it difficult to hear the hon. and learned Gentleman. He was understood to say, that he would confine himself to the consideration of the principle of the measure; but, before going to the principle, he should make a remark on an observation that had fallen from the right hon. Baronet (Sir J. Graham), as he should be sorry that any statement made by the right hon. Baronet should go before the public in an ambiguous shape. The right hon. Baronet had alleged as one reason why he and his colleagues brought forward the measure, that they had done so to redeem a pledge given by them to their Sovereign. It might be inferred from that, if it were correct, that our gracious Sovereign had been metamorphosed into a citizen King, and that he had addressed the Gentlemen opposite thus, " My good citizen Ministers, prepare a new measure of Reform of a great and striking nature ; " to which Ministers replied, " Yes citizen King, we will bring forward a measure more great, more sweeping, and more certain than ever was heard of before."— He had however, heard a declaration in another place, which rescued our gracious Sovereign from this imputation, as the measure was declared to have emanated from Ministers, and so far it was right. The franchises the House had to deal with were a trust, but he would not discuss that question, except to say, that the powers by which the House dealt with them was also a public trust. The test by which the measure was to be tried, was, whether it was inconsistent with the Constitution, and whether it should not on that account be viewed with severe and scrutinising jealousy. The constitution of that House was, that it should consist of Knights, Citizens, and Burgesses; and the House could not justify the severance of one from the other. Every one knew that the origin of these franchises was either from charters, prescriptive, or burgage tenures. So far as they originated by charter, they came from the constitutional prerogative of the Crown, which no one disputed. It was understood that there were already adequate means in the law to put down that corruption which it was the object of the present Bill to remedy. Why then should not abuses be removed without disturbing the whole Representative system, which, instead of making this merely a disfranchisement of boroughs, rendered it a dismemberment of the House. If one branch of the Representation were taken away only, might not another, and another branch of the Legislature, and perhaps all, by an ursurpation similar to that now attempted, be destroyed? There could hardly exist a doubt in any man's mind who was acquainted with the subject, that the dangers which were to be apprehended from the surrender of so many corporate rights to popular entreaty, or rather, to make a Ministerial experiment at allaying excitement in the country, would be of a much more aggravated nature than any that could reasonably be apprehended from withholding a concession, not in point of fact, insisted on by the generality of the petitions for Reform.

Sir *Joseph Yorke* assured the Speaker and the House, that he felt the best proof he could give them of his gratitude for any attention they might confer on him would consist in addressing them in as few words as possible, after this lengthened discussion, notwithstanding the very great importance of the subject before the House. He could not refrain from stating his objections to some particulars of the plan of Reform chosen by the present Ministry; least of all, could he reconcile himself to give, on such an occasion, a silent vote, or refrain to attempt, by his humble efforts, to assist the cause of those who had sent him to that House as their Representative, when an attack so vital was meditated on their dearest privileges. A man must have no small force of nerves to induce him to rise and address the House, after hearing from the hon. and learned member for Waterford that he came there representing seven millions of stout, able-bodied Irishmen; and from the hon. and learned member for Boroughbridge, who assumed the character the other night of the Representative of sixty bodies of parchment voters; or after having heard the able speech of the hon. Baronet, his legitimate commander-in-chief; or, though last, not the least or shortest, the speech just spoken by the hon. and learned Member, who came all the way from Ireland to deliver it. Under all these discouraging circumstances he acknowledged he felt considerable apprehension in rising to address the collected Representatives of the people of England. But they had been told by some very discourteous Gentleman that they were not the Representatives of the English people. Such a reflection on them was the more unjust, because, in the preamble of the Bill of Rights, William the 3rd had pronounced them a full and fair Representation of the people. In the second place, he confessed that he felt that, after having enjoyed in that House a seat for nearly forty years past, a considerable degree of regret, though not of absolute despair, at the prospect of being deprived of it by this measure. He, however, was no friend to the practice of suicide, and it would be quite against his creed to cut his parliamentary throat in the way proposed. He, notwithstanding, believed his hon. friends opposite, if they would allow him to use that epithet, were men who were zealous in a cause which they thought would be beneficial to the nation, and hoped by it to arrive at the haven of prosperity, whither they were bound, at least in their own opinions and calculations. But he hoped they would hesitate ere they allowed themselves to be cajoled out of their consent to an act depriving so many unoffending boroughs of privileges to them dear and valuable. There was a class in which many worthy Members were, he feared, confounded, which appeared to have come in for a harvest of odium, denominated the borough Representation;

they had been reviled as the borough-mongers, and the sources of the corruption in that House. An impulse had been given to this measure from an expression in the Speech from the Throne; and, more than all these, by the active powers of the Press of this country of late, though, for five or six years before, it had comparatively rarely recurred to the topic of Reform. It was singular to see a Constitution which had been formed by a Whig Administration, under William the 3rd, likely to be taken to pieces, and reconstructed, by a Whig Administration under King William the 4th. It was certainly a consummation to be avoided, that five or six powerful Peers should be enabled to make head against the Government of the day by uniting together their Representative interest in the Commons House. That undoubtedly was neither fit nor proper. Were they, therefore, prepared to say, that sixty boroughs having committed no other offence than that of wanting an enlarged population, should be deprived at once of their franchise? and this heavy calamity was to fall on them because of their paucity of numbers, or their not happening to fall within the line of march of the noble military Paymaster and his qualifications of 10,000, or 4,000, or 2,000, souls resident in the places hitherto enjoying the franchise. Had the noble Lord only given them but nine months' warning, as the hon. member for Wareham stated, that hon. Gentleman and others would have taken care, as far as was in their power, that their respective boroughs should not be deficient in the necessary proportion of population. Indeed, despite of the Malthusian principles now in fashion, he himself, and the gallant Colonel, his worthy Colleague in that Representation would freely have undertaken to do the utmost in their poor power to have increased the population there to the ideal standard of fitness, had they received notice in time. He confessed there were appearances connected with this scheme which seemed to savour of partiality to particular places and to particular interests; for instance, with reference to Tavistock, towards which it was too much suspected there had been a little leaning. Though several great towns had been mentioned as deserving an increased share, or altogether a new allotment, in the scale of Representation, amongst which he certainly thought Devonport ought to be classed, with its population of nearly 40,000 souls, yet he saw no reason for so wide a departure from the Constitution as that proposed by Ministers with respect to the boroughs to be disfranchised. The hon. member for Preston had, on a former night, fallen foul of what he termed the too prevailing fashion in debate to call in the aid of technical phrases, taken from naval life, to assist in the elucidation of their sentiments, and denounced it as bilge-water. He wished to assure that hon. Member, that that was not an unknown language, or, like the old Saxon language, buried in deep obscurity; but that it latterly had been pretty general in very decent society, perhaps in the very best, since we had had a naval King. For instance, nothing could be more sailor-like than the phrase "thrown overboard;" yet they heard often, and were amused at hearing, of such an hon. Member's speech or argument being "thrown altogether overboard;" and, under such circumstances, nothing could be more completely technical than the phrase Davy Jones's locker, yet that was frequently heard in the very best society. A noble Lord had talked very learnedly and nautically upon the dry-rot in the Constitution the other night, but if the vessel of the State, whenever she was supposed to be unsound, were to be pulled to pieces by unskilful hands, and made so strong and heavy that she would neither sail nor steer, but lay on the water like a haystack, what was the use of such waste of time and labour? Where was the use of remodelling the bark of the Constitution, if after all, she would neither stay nor veer or if, in making her strong, you made her so full in the bows, and with such a clumsy run-aft, that she would not go through the water, could not be steered, and would be sure to run ashore the first trip she went to sea. The allusion made by the right hon. the First Lord of the Admiralty to the practice of heaving down a ship, might, perhaps, be denominated bilge-water by the hon. member for Preston, but he had not perceived that it stunk in the nose of the House, though he must acknowledge that, in his mode of handling the metaphor, the right hon. Baronet was not only in very great danger of upsetting the vessel of the State he was busy in repairing, but nearly capsized his own argument. On the whole, it was not surprising to find that the right hon. Baronet, who had the advantage of being at the head of a Board of Admiralty, all navy men, with a Secretary, also a naval Officer, should have hazarded his newly-acquired cargo of nautical knowlege, and shoved off his little boat on the sea of debate. In calculating on the experiment mentioned by that right hon. Baronet, and bringing the vessel of the State so close to the water's edge, and to ruin, by a pull more at the fall, as he said, by the advice of an experienced commander, he begged to remind him it was exactly in this way, about fifty years ago, that, by a pull at the fall too much, an inexperienced commander had occasioned the loss of the Royal George, and pulled her over into the deep, with every soul on board, at Spithead, where all went to the bottom; and this should be a warning to them, lest they should, in the present day, by the one pull more at the fall, upset the good ship William the Fourth. The course they were steering was certainly an experimental one, and on that account alone, if on no other, dangerous. The Bill might go to a second reading; but if it did, he hoped every true-hearted man embarked in the cause would by another pull, as the sailors said, "by way of coming up," right the ship. If they did so the project would be formed, he hoped, so effectively, that there would be little of it left that was objectionable. As for himself, he must confess he felt it would be his duty to oppose the measure, which he regarded as unjust.

Mr. *Bethell* said, the hon. member for Boroughbridge had called upon all Members having a large constituency, to come forward, and express their opinion. He assented fully to the justice of that call, but he was exhorted by a more powerful voice; namely, that of the numerous petitions from the county he had the honour to represent. He asserted—and he appealed to his noble Colleague to confirm the assertion—that the spirit from which these petitions emanated had prevailed throughout the country long before the events in which it was supposed to have originated. If he might venture to state that to which, in his opinion, the feeling was owing, he would say that it was raised by the voice of the House, when it refused to transfer the franchise of East Retford to Birmingham. The people then were assured there was no hope when they saw that Ministers risked their very being rather than concede this point to the wishes of the people. Could it be wondered at, then, that a strong feeling existed in the country? He contended, that as the same wealth, intelligence, population, and deep attention to the debates in Parliament did not exist at the time of the Revolution as at present, the parallel which had been drawn between the two periods did not hold good. At the time of the Revolution the people, and even the gentry, were much more ignorant than now, and were, for the most part, hostile to the establishment and the settlement of the kingdom then made. He could not, however, be blind or deaf to what was passing around him; and he saw the feeling was not confined to the lower classes, but extended to the middle orders. He found that the desire for Parliamentary Reform was increasing among the whole of those who formed the middle classes of society, than whom no body of men existed guided by greater purity of intention, or possessed of more intelligence to direct their actions. Under these circumstances he was prepared to support an effective enlargement of the right of suffrage, for he did fully believe that some remedy was required for our system, the Members returned under which, he was sorry to say, had now lost the confidence of the country. However anxious they might be to promote its welfare—however willing they might be to sit there, engaged in heavy and protracted debates, with a view to ascertain what was best for the interests of the country, he much regretted to say, that whatever they did was not accompanied with that degree of confidence which could alone enable them to turn their deliberations to the public advantage. He felt, therefore, that some Reform was necessary; but although he was ready to go some length in Reform, he must say, that this measure ought to have been produced before them with more caution than had been displayed. He could not but think, that in a society possessed of such vast interests the matter should have been treated with more caution. He could not but see, he could not but feel, that however ill this system might have worked for the public welfare, still, when great and untried changes were to be introduced, it might happen, that consequences would follow which the most clear-sighted man was not able to imagine. He admitted most willingly, that in many instances too great a portion of influence was exerted by certain persons possessing the power of nominating Members of that House. When seats were in the hands of four or five owners, these persons might, on a nice-balanced question, act so as to produce most unfavourable results—they might embarrass the Government, and promote objects that tended to advance their private ambition. He repeated, therefore, that he was willing to apply the pruning-knife, and to apply it with freedom, but he wished not to use the axe. He did not fear, if this measure were carried, that the danger which so many had alluded to would arrive—namely, that the members of great and noble families would not find their way into that House. He knew his countrymen too well to believe that they would act on such a principle as that they would not be anxious to introduce into that House men of rank, who adorned their rank by the possession of talents, by high character, and by industry: and with respect to men in humbler ranks of life, who had raised themselves by their industry, he believed that they would be able, through their acquaintance with gentlemen of property, and through the circumstance of their living in the neighbourhood of great towns, to find their way into that House. But he listened with a willing ear to know whether this measure would have the effect of securing an entrance to those gentlemen whose labours, most important in themselves, had been prolonged through the greatest part of their lives—whose knowledge was, therefore, not so great on some particular questions, but who still possessed knowledge most valuable to be introduced into that House. He wished to know how such men, who might have a good character for knowledge and integrity in the town in which they resided, but who had not the means of making that character known elsewhere—he wished to know how such men were to get into that House? They were, besides, men of that character who would naturally shrink from the contest of popular elections, but whose knowledge was of the utmost consequence to that House in considering the great and extended commercial relations for which England was distinguished. He was not to be convinced that this measure, if carried in its present form, could be beneficial in every respect. He was not sure that the Government itself might not be controlled, and that the freedom of his Majesty's choice of Ministers would be materially diminished. This was a measure that, if passed at all, should be passed as a permanent measure—as a measure not only for the sunshine, but for the storm and the tempest. A recent instance of what, he feared, would be the effect of this measure, must be fresh in their memory. A measure of a most beneficial kind had been introduced and carried, and after it had been carried, a Minister of the Crown had not been able to present himself at a populous place as a candidate. A right hon. Baronet, who had adorned Oxford by his ability in his youth, and who had supported it in his manhood by his acts, was not able to come in for that place; and, but for these boroughs, that House would have been deprived of the presence of an important officer of the Government. This seemed to him a serious objection. He was ready and willing to join in any plan that would cut down those parts of the system that were infamous and odious in themselves, and obnoxious to the public. He did not hold that the resumption of a trust originally granted by the Crown for the benefit of the Crown and people, if not properly used, was not to be resorted to. On the contrary, he thought that the public had a right to rescind such a trust, and that its resumption was no act of robbery or spoliation, and ought not to have been branded with those names. Under these circumstances, he was prepared to vote for the Bill in all its stages till it should come into the Committee. It could then undergo such modifications as would render it powerless for evil, and powerful only for good. He should deeply regret if, after that, he should not be able to vote for it; but whatever regret he might feel, he wished to do his duty, and should do it, and afterwards he should face his constituents with this assurance, and if they said he had not acted according to their opinion, and that his and theirs did not agree on this subject, they might dismiss him from their service; but though he lost the honour of representing them, he should not forfeit their respect.

Mr. *Praed* said, that he should not have risen at this late hour of the sixth night of a very protracted discussion, if it were not for this consideration—that although men who had been long Members of that House—men who had gained public confidence by their talents, and retained it by their integrity—men whose opinions were shown on this now hackneyed subject might remain silent, without any danger of misconstruction or misinterpretation, yet it was not unnatural that a young man, who had no such character to look back to, should be desirous to explain to the House his views of the question more clearly than could be done by a silent vote. He did not much fear the probability of involving himself in generalities, for in that he should only follow the example of the First Lord of the Admiralty, for he, beyond all others, had dealt in generalities, with which that House was familiar; or, if it were not so, they might have been recalled to the recollections of its Members by the Public Press of that morning. He should not endeavour to follow that right hon. Baronet, or any other Member, from topic to topic, but discuss briefly the general principles involved in the measure. The question now before the House was one on which not only the destinies of this country depended, but by which those of all Europe would be affected. The question of Parliamentary Reform differed from any other question which could be brought before that House in this, that whatever error of principle might be introduced would perpetuate itself, and would defy after revision. So long as the enacting body continued the same, it could revoke its own acts, if necessary, but when a new body of Representation was formed to correct the evils, it must revoke the very act from which it derived its existence. The short observations which he had been able to make of the proceedings of that House since he had had the honour of a seat within its walls, confirmed the opinion which he had already conceived from what he had read of its Debates, and he had no hesitation in declaring his belief, that there never was a Representative body which contained within itself so large a proportion of the property and intelligence of the community which it represented. There were certainly anomalies in the present system of Representation so palpable that they could not be defended. It was such a manifest absurdity that Leeds should have no Members to watch over its manufacturing interests, and that Old Sarum should, as the noble Lord said, have two Members to die in its one ditch, that it was a question with him whether any man of ordinary observation must not have been at some period of his life, to a certain extent, a Parliamentary Reformer. It was only a close observation of the result of those anomalies that induced them to be content with the theoretical defects, in consideration of the practical results which, somehow or other, flowed from the system. This was acknowledged to be the great difficulty by the honorable Gentlemen opposite. They found themselves at a loss to answer the objection that presented itself, as to how, under a system which was denounced as so corrupt, so great a portion of the latent rank and opulence of the country found a place in that House. The hon. and learned member for Calne had spoken of lucky accidents, and had said, that if we took 100 of the tallest men, some might prove men of talent. He (Mr. Praed) would say, that if this system had gone on for a long series of years, and the same effects had regularly and uniformly arisen, he should be disposed to remain as we were. He would stand by a system, the results of which were good, though brought about by a seeming accident. The hon. Member had also said, that, under a despotic government, we frequently saw the people happy. Then he would say, that he would not change that despotic government, producing such effects for this constitutional government. A system might be good, not only as regarded its own merits, but in so far as it was bound up with the habits, the feelings, and the circumstances of the people, and if it were so, it could not be safely exchanged for another system, even though it should be proved to be a better one. It might be perceived from what he had said, that he was not very favourable to the plan of Reform proposed by his Majesty's Ministers; and his objections to it were so strong that he despaired of seeing it so remodelled as to enable him to give it his support. His first objection to the general principles of the Bill was, that it introduced an enormous number of monstrous anomalies, and when anomalies were introduced in a measure which professed to correct anomalies, all ground of justification or defence was taken away. Whilst it was said that Members were to be returned by population, and that votes were to be governed by property, it was clear that there would be many instances of capital towns in a county, containing houses the inhabitants of which were rated at the proper rate, but the population of which might be infinitely inferior to that of a town where the houses were worse, and the voters, consequently, fewer. This anomaly would create great discontent. It was an anomaly by which the basis of Representation was narrowed. Suppose, for instance, a voter of Buckingham were to ask why that town should be deprived of its privileges, and the franchise given to another town, where, although the population was larger, the voters would be fewer, it would not be enough to say to him, "It is true this is an anomaly, but you must submit to it." At present men had been educated under the prevailing system, and they knew what they had to expect while they possessed the rights to which they had hitherto considered themselves entitled. With respect to chartered rights, a great and paramount necessity was the only ground for tearing off the seal of a charter; but none had been shown. If it were granted that it was desirable to have Representatives for Manchester and Birmingham, where were they to find seats for the Representatives of the West-India interests and the East-India interests. The hon. and learned Gentleman, the Judge Advocate, (Mr. R. Grant) had said, that those seats were not to be altered at all. What, then, was the member for Buckinghamshire to represent the West-India interests, and the member for Dumfries to represent the East-India interests? This might be virtual representation, but it appeared to him, that the member for Buckinghamshire ought to represent Buckinghamshire, and the member for Dumfries ought to represent Dumfries. He should certainly oppose all Reform which went to a remodelling of that House; and his apprehensions on that subject were much greater than the First Lord of the Admiralty seemed to entertain. He saw, that for a long series of years, attempts had been made, and more successfully made than the friends of the Constitution could have wished, to diminish the respect in which the House of Peers ought, for all beneficial purposes to the State, to be held. He knew that the Sovereign of this country had once been endowed with a *veto*. He knew what had become of that *veto*,—that it had become obsolete; and he looked with serious apprehension to this Bill, as tending to make the House of Peers obsolete. There was an admirable form of reasoning used some years back, he believed by the noble Lord on the Woolsack, who said, that it was only by an amalgamation of the House of Peers with that House, and by the influence of the Peers in that House (an influence which he openly avowed), that the House of Peers held its station in the country. He was almost afraid to say, that he believed this to be the case, and he dreaded the present measure on that account. He apprehended that Reform would be carried beyond that House to the threshold of another, and the House of Commons would become surreptitiously supreme in this country. He did not object to the removal of such grievances as could be proved to exist. Such cases had been frequently alluded to in the course of this Debate, and particularly the case of East Retford. The noble Lord, the member for Arundel, had asked, where those who wished for a moderate Reform were on the discussion relative to the disfranchisement of East Retford? He would ask the noble Lord, where were the people then? At present the Table of the House was loaded with their petitions; then they demanded neither the particular Reform then agitated, nor general Reform. The noble member for Winchilsea had said, that one advantage had been produced by this measure, that the country would never again be mocked by the open and undisguised hypocrisy which had been exhibited in these discussions for disfranchisement. He was led by this still to look forward to times when some noble Lord (he believed not the noble Lord opposite) would stand up in the place from which he had spoken, and say, that the country would never again be shocked by such hypocrisy as had been displayed on the discussion of the measure of 1831. He believed that this would not be a final measure. Although the Judge-Advocate said that it was sweeping and extensive enough to satisfy all moderate men, yet he looked forward to times when a bill would be brought in as much beyond what was sweeping enough to satisfy all moderate men as this measure was beyond that state of the Constitution which satisfied the High Tories. Need he remind the hon. member for Waterford of the words of Edmund Burke—a man who had a clearer insight into the merits of the British Constitution than perhaps any other individual upon record? The peculiar beauty of our Constitution was, that this House was slower to make changes than the body of the people at large. Yet it still changed with the people, though not at the same time. It was well it did not change at the same time; for, if so, they would have, with the forms of a representative Government, all the evils of a democracy. It was a well-known fact, that all great changes were made in obedience to, and not in contradiction to, the will of the people, except one great measure, which he was not then called upon to discuss. No petitions for Reform had been presented to the House for four or five years together, and the present excitement was of very recent date. It could not be denied, that the House had proceeded to legislate on the expediency of transferring the franchise from East Retford to Birmingham, at a period when no strong feeling existed on the subject of Reform. He sincerely believed, that if the feeling of the people were attended to as it should have been, a moderate plan of Reform might be effected, step by step, without a measure which should pull down about our ears the whole fabric of the Constitution. There was one most objectionable principle in this proposition; it went to destroy entirely sixty-two seats in this House. They were told, that at present the proportion of Members was too numerous; but he asked, how it possibly could be thought so, considering the varied, extensive, and complicated nature of the business which the House had to transact in so great an empire as this? He maintained, that the proportion of Members was not by any means too numerous. He trusted that his Majesty's Ministers would see the necessity of materially altering and revising the measure. He, himself, could suggest to them certain improvements, which might be adopted with advantage. There were, for instance, certain towns to which the franchise should be transferred, as well as to those already particularised. Moreover, many boroughs which had their franchise taken away, ought to have the right of representation restored to them. He did not see why there should not be a Member for Jamaica, and for the borough of Barbadoes or Grenada. He would ask, if the measure was to be of so popular and extensive a character, why did they not increase the Representation in the higher and more enlightened classes? Why did they not, he should like to ask the noble Lord, the member for the University of Cambridge, allow double numbers to the two Universities? Such an arrangement would, he could assure him, be calculated to allay the well-founded apprehensions of his ecclesiastical constituents. It had been said, that the Bill was but a just concession of the demands of the people, whose excitement it would thus abate. Entertaining, as he did, the most perfect respect for the feeling of the people, he should still like to know whether, in the present instance, that feeling was permanent or ephemeral? Looking at the several petitions which had been presented on the subject of Reform, he found that they were not for the noble Lord's Bill, whatever else they might be for. Some of them were for Vote by Ballot, and others were for dealing with the property of the Church, in order to satisfy the public creditor. They, therefore, would not be satisfied by it. Neither would Mr. Bentham and his numerous disciples; nor would that large class, of whom the hon. member for Preston might be considered the Representative. All, it was true, openly approved of it. But why did they? Because they considered it the first step towards further changes. The decided impression on his mind was, that, in the event of the Bill being passed into a law, there would be as many petitions laid on the Table of that House for further Reform, as there were now in favour of the Bill. The language used was this, "Accept this Bill that you may get more; put this into your pocket, for it will supply you with funds to prosecute your future claims: this will enable you to shake off the 'old man of the mountain.'" But then, it was said by the advocates of the measure, that it was received with open arms. He contended, that such was not the fact. When he looked to the triumphant anticipation which was indulged of a more extended measure, he thought that persons must be blind and deaf if they shut their eyes and ears to the actual circumstances of the case. He utterly denied that these petitions had come from men, to whose opinions, as contra-distinguished from their wishes, the House ought to defer. [*The hon. Member was here frequently interrupted by calls of "Question."*] He begged pardon of the House; he felt he was trespassing on its indulgence, but he would be brief. He did not mean to deny that some of the petitioners who had approached that House on the subject of Reform were respectable and intelligent individuals; but he would maintain, that, take them as a body, they were not those persons to whose opinions he would refer on a great legislative measure. He should have preferred more of the intelligence and wealth of the community as a guide of their decisions. The distress which had for some time past prevailed in the country had been greatly instrumental in producing those petitions; but the reviving industry which was now observable in various quarters, would do much towards alleviating that distress. He entirely acquitted his Majesty's Ministers of the charge of having lent their aid towards producing popular excitement on the subject of Reform. He could not for a moment conceive such an idea, either of the noble Lord or of his noble and right hon. Colleagues;

> " —— as soon believe, with kind Sir Roger,
> That old Moll White took wing, with cat and broomstick,
> And raised the last night's thunder,"

as that the right hon. Gentlemen opposite had raised the present excitement. But what he did believe was this—that the excitement for Reform, or the facilities for creating such excitement, had arisen from the passing of the Catholic Relief Bill. If the Constitution were to be put down by the means so eloquently stated by the hon. member for Callington—namely, by the substitution of new and frail materials for the solid and substantial parts that were to be taken away, by ruining the influence of the Aristocracy, by sullying the influence of the Crown, and endangering the existence of the Hierarchy, then he, for one, would leave the hon. member for Higham Ferrars to weep over the obsequies of rational liberty. But he could not bring himself to anticipate so disastrous an event; and he, and others who concurred with him on the subject, would do their utmost to throw out this Bill. Of this fact he was quite certain—that the gentlemen of England would never regret having done their duty to themselves and their country.

The Debate was then adjourned till the following day.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Wednesday, March 9, 1831.

MINUTES.] Bills. The Suits in Common Law Courts Expenses Bill, Fraudulent Debtors' Bill, and the Bankruptcy Court Bill, went through a Committee. The Marine Mutiny Bill read a second time. The Army Mutiny Bill, and the Bill for exempting the Honourable ROBERT GROSVENOR from certain pains and penalties to which he had subjected himself, for sitting and voting in the House of Commons, without having taken the Oaths, read a first time.

The Earl of RADNOR presented a Petition from the Parish of Manningham, in favour of Parliamentary Reform.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Wednesday, March 9, 1831.

MINUTES.] Reports from the Committees on the Dover and Stockbridge Elections were presented, deciding that the sitting Members were duly elected.

Bills. Mr. GROSVENOR'S Relief Bill was committed, read a third time, and passed. The Bankrupt Act Amendment Bill, the Census (Ireland) Bill, read a third time and passed.

Returns ordered. On the Motion of Sir HENRY PARNELL, of the amount of Stock transferred from England to Ireland, and from Ireland to England, in the five years preceding the year 1831; distinguishing the amount transferred in each year, and the different kinds of Stock.

Petitions presented. In favour of the Ministerial plan of Reform, by Mr. LAW HODGES, from Hythe, Folkstone, Gravesend, and Milton:—By Mr. BENETT, from the Householders of Devizes:—By the ATTORNEY GENERAL, from the Corporation of Nottingham, and from the Students and Members of the Inns of Courts, practising below the Bar. By Mr. HUNT, from Stradbally, for a Repeal of the Union. For the Repeal of the Coal Duties, by Lord G. LENNOX, from Chichester:—By Mr. ADEANE, from Cambridge. By Colonel SIBTHORP, from Louth, Esk, and Ludborough, against the Register of Deeds Bill; and against the Tax on Steam-Boats, from the Owners of Steam Vessels trading between Lincoln and Boston. By Mr. W. PATTEN, for the Repeal of the Duties on Calicoes, from Lancaster and Garstang. By Sir HENRY PARNELL, from Carlow, against the Kildare-street Society; from Galway, for a protecting Duty on foreign Kelp; from Cotton Spinners of Balbriggan, against any additional Duty on Raw Cotton. For an Extension of the Galway Franchise, from the Chamber of Commerce of Galway; and from several places in Ireland, for the Abolition of Slavery.

PRINTING PETITIONS.] Mr. *Hughes Hughes* presented a Petition from the Females of Ryde, against the continuance of Negro Slavery. The hon. Member warmly eulogized the females of Ryde, who, while they themselves were in the enjoyment of freedom, deeply sympathised with the females of the West Indies in their unhappy bondage. Having brought up the petition, the hon. Member moved that it be printed.

Mr. *S. Rice* objected to the Motion, on the ground of expense, and on the general understanding that petitions on this subject should not be printed.

Mr. *Littleton* observed, that no petitions of that description had been printed since February.

Mr. *Hughes* insisted upon the fitness of having the petition printed.

Mr. *W. Duncombe* said, that petitions for Reform were printed, and why should not petitions against slavery be printed? He did not know why one rule should be followed for the former, and another for the latter.

Mr. *Nicholson Calvert* said, it was a question of economy, and seeing no use in printing all these petitions, he should oppose the Motion.

Mr. *Evans* observed, that the same remark would apply to most of the petitions on Reform; they were generally worded alike.

Sir *John Newport* said, that the expense of printing petitions was enormous, and though he did not wish to divide the House on the subject, particularly as he had observed some acrimonious feeling growing out of it, yet he hoped the petition would not be printed.

Mr. *Hart Davis* remarked, that if the wishes of the petitioners were carried into effect, the children, for whom they appeared to feel so much, must all inevitably perish.

The *Speaker* observed, that there was no rule against printing the petition, but there certainly was an understanding that no petitions on slavery should be printed.

The House then divided: For printing the petition 16; Against it 47—Majority 31.

Petitions for Reform.] Mr. *Phillpotts*, on presenting a Petition from Gloucester, in favour of the Reform Bill, said, he rose with great pleasure to present the petition, which was numerously and respectably signed by the Inhabitants of Gloucester and its vicinity in favour of the Bill moved for by the noble Lord the Paymaster of the Forces, for the Reform of the Representation of the Commons. The petitioners expressed their conviction that this measure would be attended with the most salutary effects, as affording a full, free, and efficient Reform in the Representation of the People. The hon. Gentleman added, that he cordially agreed with the petitioners, and trusted that in a very short time the country would have the satisfaction of seeing this most important Bill placed as a legislative enactment on the Records of Parliament. He congratulated the country on the feelings so universally evinced in favour of the measure, from which he anticipated the most salutary effects. In the city of Gloucester, he said, one general sentiment prevailed—party feeling was absorbed in the anxiety to promote this most salutary object; and though some hon. Members had suggested that the measure proposed would be deemed an interference with the rights of Corporations, he assured the House, that the Corporation of Gloucester were not only most favourable to the measure, but had petitioned for an extension of the elective franchise, even before the noble Lord had opened the plan proposed. He again expressed his full approbation of the measure, and his anxious wish that it would soon receive the sanction of Parliament.—The petition to be printed.

Mr. *Hunt* presented a Petition for Annual Parliaments, Universal Suffrage, and Vote by Ballot, from Stockport. The hon. Member said, that it had been agreed to at a meeting held before the measure of the noble Lord had been brought in. Since it had been introduced, another meeting had been held, at which the new plan of Reform had been universally approved of, and received with the utmost thankfulness. The public feeling on the subject was greatly excited—the country seemed absolutely running wild. In the parish of Christchurch also, a meeting had formerly been held for Radical Reform, but to-day, at a similar meeting, it had been agreed that the plan of Ministers ought to meet with universal support. The hon. Member also presented a Petition, with the same prayer, from the Parish of Lambeth. These individuals also had formerly prayed for Radical Reform; but yesterday they had again met, and passed Resolutions, that they were perfectly satisfied with the measure before the House, accepting it gratefully and cheerfully, trusting to the magnanimity of the House hereafter to give them the protection of the Vote by Ballot.

Mr. *Benett* presented a Petition from the Inhabitants of Calne. The whole Corporation had signed the petition, which expressed the delight with which the petitioners hailed the measure which his Majesty's Ministers had proposed to the House, and which they, the petitioners, looked upon as affording the only effectual means by which the country could be saved from anarchy and confusion. Mr. Benett added, that the noble Marquis who had been so often alluded to in the course of the Debate, as the patron of that borough, was as willing as any man in the House or in the country that it should be thrown open.

Lord *George Lennox* presented a similar Petition from the Town of Chichester, signed by the whole of the Corporation, and by 400 other Inhabitants. The petitioners expressed their gratitude to the Administration for having nobly redeemed the pledges which they had given upon accepting office; and they hoped that the Ministers would firmly persevere in carrying their measure into effect, and not disappoint the reasonable expectations of the country, by yielding to the opponents of Reform. The noble Lord stated, that the petition had been but a few hours exposed for signature.

Mr. *Kemp* supported the petition, and said, that he had recently presented a petition from his constituents in the town of Lewes, in which they declared, that no Reform would be satisfactory unless it comprehended an extension of the franchise, a short duration of Parliaments, and voting by Ballot at Elections. But he had that morning received a communication from them, with a request that he would take an opportunity of making it known to the House, that they were grateful to the Ministry for the measure of Reform which they had proposed, and with which they believed that the country was unanimously satisfied.

Mr. *John Smith* supported the petition, and bore testimony to the respectability of the signatures. He was confident that the whole of the inhabitants of Sussex were in favour of the measure, and he believed that in a few days the Table of the House would be covered with petitions expressing that opinion.

Petition to be printed.

Captain *Bouverie* presented a Petition from the City of Salisbury, praying the House that the Bill brought forward by his Majesty's Ministers, for reforming the Representation might be passed into a law. The petition was signed not only by those inhabitants of Salisbury who would be directly benefitted by the measure, but also by a majority of the Corporation.

Mr. *Benett* supported the petition.

Mr. *Hunt* said, that he had known the place almost from his birth, and thought the corporation of Salisbury very like other corporations. He never knew an instance in which it had refused, somehow or other, to return some member of a noble family that resided near it. He did not, however, mean to say, that this was by corrupt influence; and he was glad to see that the corporation was coming to, and, with other corporations, approved of the plan of his Majesty's Ministers.

Colonel *Trench* complained of the tone of menace which pervaded, not only the Salisbury and other petitions, but also the speeches delivered both in the House and at public meetings, by the advocates of the noble Lord's measure. He did not know whether the tone of this petition were taken from the speeches of his Majesty's Ministers, or those of the hon. Gentleman who had just spoken; but it fully justified what had been said respecting intimidation. He would take that opportunity of quoting some passages of speeches, spoken within a few days, bearing directly upon the privileges of this House. It was not his intention to found any motion upon the remarks he was about to make; but they would shew the House the spirit in which this subject was discussed. At a meeting in a city parish, a Mr. Hill, a lawyer, said, "There is in the House of Commons an audacious opposition, formed of those who forget every consideration but that of their own interest—of those who resist all Reform, till it comes in the shape of revolution." Mr. Tooke, a solicitor, afterwards said, "He, for one, had no hesitation in saying, that the enemies of it were those men, against whom the voice of that meeting, and, if necessary, their arms should be raised." Within this half hour he had ascertained the accuracy of the reports from which he quoted. Here was another passage from Mr. Hill's speech. Speaking of the oligarchy, he said—"We might depend upon it, that no arguments addressed to their experience, no undeniable facts, no claims upon them as gentlemen—as men of rank and fortune—nothing that was placed before them as Christians and members of a civil community, would have any effect upon them, or make them give up that power which they had so long and shamefully exercised over the people." These were expressions sufficient to justify the opinion, that the Gentlemen who were anxious to carry this measure employed means for that purpose which ought to inspire every Englishman with determination to resist their menaces, and decide the question on reason and conviction alone. He was sorry that the noble Lord (Althorp), for whose talents and integrity he entertained a great respect, was so far misled, as, in his first step in office, to sanction a procession positively against the law. If he did not know him too well, he should have imagined that his object was, to cast a slur on those who had gone before him, as persons unwilling to permit the exhibition of the sentiments of the people of the metropolis. He meant, however, in spite of threats, honestly to do his duty, and he hoped that other Gentlemen would not be bullied out of their proper political course.

Mr. *Littleton* deprecated the use of menacing language, especially by the supporters of the Ministers' Reform Bill, because any violence on their part furnished the opponents of the measure with a plausible topic upon which to declaim against Reform. On the part of his constituents, he was also bound to protest against the insulting language which had been used towards the advocates of the plan of Reform which had been submitted to the House. He denied that his constituents, in petitioning in favour of that measure, entertained revolutionary designs. He thought that Gentlemen opposite ought to be more measured in their own language before they took others to task for want of moderation.

Sir *G. Clerk* disclaimed any intention on the part of those who had applied the term revolutionary to the Bill proposed by the Administration, to offend or insult any class of the hon. Gentleman's constituents, or any other petitioners. But they who, with him, opposed the measure, believed that, whatever might be the opinion of its advocates, it tended to revolution. He would beg leave to remind the hon. member for Staffordshire of one of the last speeches of Mr. Huskisson, whose authority he was sure would have some weight with him, which would convince him, that the proposed measure was one, not of repair and restoration, but of total alteration.

Mr. *Beaumont* denied, that the measure proposed to the House by his Majesty's Ministers had any tendency to revolution, —that is, to the removal of any one of the three branches of the Legislature. Notwithstanding all that he had heard on the subject, he still believed, that it could no more be urged, that if they reformed the House of Commons this year, they would be called on next year to abolish the House of Lords, than that a man would next year pull down his neighbour's house, because he this year repaired his own. Far from agreeing with the hon. Baronet, that there was danger of revolution in extending the franchise amongst the middle classes, he was of opinion, that the only means of preventing revolution was, to unite the middle orders to the higher, so as to resist the more effectually the encroachments of the lower.

Mr. *Kennedy* said, that he had, within the last few days, received a communication from Scotland, which enabled him to state, that the opinions of the people of that country were by no means so opposed or so indifferent to Reform, as in that House they had been represented to be. He could assert, that the people of Scotland were unanimous in favour of the proposed Reform. He was sure, therefore, the opposition to it in that House would have no other effect than to lead to such an expression of the opinions of the people as would carry conviction to the minds of those who doubted their wish respecting that wise, just, and effectual measure.

Mr. *Littleton* said, that as the hon. Baronet opposite (Sir G. Clerk) had referred him to the opinion of the late Mr. Huskisson, he was very happy to have that opportunity of stating, that in the last conversation which he had the honour to hold with that lamented Statesman, he had admitted, that the time had come when Reform could no longer be delayed; at least, as regarded the Representation of Scotland. He was sure that some of Mr. Huskisson's more intimate political friends could testify that such were the opinions which that wise and experienced Statesman held for sometime, and that, if he had lived, he would now, most probably, be found supporting his Majesty's Government in the measure which they had introduced. At the same time, he felt bound to protest against the quotation of the opinions of deceased Statesmen to influence the judgment of the House.

Sir *Charles Wetherell* was not so intimate with the late Mr. Huskisson as the hon. Member who had just sat down. He only knew Mr. Huskisson's opinion on the subject of Parliamentary Reform from his speeches in that House. An hon. and gallant Admiral (Sir Joseph Yorke) had talked of capsizing the Constitution, and all he should say, with respect to Mr. Huskisson, was, that unless he wished to capsize all the speeches and all the principles of his life, had he lived, he must have opposed the measure now before the House. The noble Lord, the Secretary for Foreign Affairs, had speculated upon the possibility of Mr. Canning also apostatizing from himself, and becoming an immoderate Reformer. Mr. Canning might have become so, but it was only by eating up every word he had ever spoken, and contradicting all his own acts. The political friends of Mr. Canning and Mr. Huskisson were at liberty to solve the problem as they pleased. He would solve it as he pleased; and he never would consent to do such an injustice to the memory of those Statesmen as to suppose that they would apostatize from themselves and from their principles.

Sir *George Clerk* did not doubt that Mr. Huskisson might have been a friend to moderate Reform; but notwithstanding what had been said by the hon. member for Staffordshire, comparing Mr. Huskisson to "a helmsman," he could never believe that that right hon. Gentleman would support the injudicious officers and unskilful crew, who, like the hon. Members opposite, were preparing, by way of stopping a leak, to swamp the vessel.

Mr. *Long Wellesley* did not think it discreditable to any Statesman, or any other public man, to change his views on particular questions as circumstances altered. There was a passage in one of Mr. Pitt's speeches to this effect:—"The person who is a slave for fifty years to the same opinion, must be a slave to the most idle vanity." He (Mr. Long Wellesley) did not hesitate to avow that he was a proselyte to the cause of Reform, in consequence of the altered state of circumstances.

Mr. Alderman *Waithman* did not think it was of any consequence what opinion Mr. Canning or Mr. Huskisson would probably have formed on this measure. It was a measure of necessity, called for by circumstances, and recommended by the concurrent voice of the public in its favour. The inhabitants of the City of London were nearly unanimous in support of the measure, and many persons who had always been his decided opponents, because he was a Reformer, had now signed a petition in favour of the proposed measure, which he should shortly have the honour to present to the House. He was too humble an individual to think his own opinion of much consequence, but, as so many of the Members for the close boroughs had been heard against the measure, those who represented large cities and counties ought to raise their voices in its favour.

Petition to be printed.

MINISTERIAL PLAN OF PARLIAMENTARY REFORM—ADJOURNED DEBATE.] Mr. Spencer Perceval moved the Order of the Day for resuming the Adjourned Debate on Lord John Russell's Motion, "for leave to bring in a Bill to amend the Representation of England and Wales."

Lord *Althorp* did not rise to interrupt the Debate, but merely to suggest to the House whether it would not be better, even if the House sat somewhat later than it had done for some nights past, to try and dispose of this Question without any further adjournment. Those who had been long acquainted with the House were aware that it was not usual, on the occasion of an important debate, to adjourn at so early an hour as the House had uniformly done during the debate on this Question.

Mr. *Goulburn* did not differ from the noble Lord in thinking that it would be more convenient that the discussion should conclude to-night, if it were practicable; he only rose for the purpose of remarking that he thought it more convenient to the House, and more satisfactory as regarded the discussion, on so important an occasion, to adjourn the Debate from day to day, as had been done, than that the House should continue to sit until five or six o'clock in the morning.

Mr. *Perceval* then rose. He had pledged himself some days ago to offer his most decided opposition to this Bill, and to that resolution he adhered. He had endeavoured to catch the Speaker's eye on many occasions during the discussion; and if he had not succeeded last night, he should still have persevered, for he could never have suffered the Bill to be brought in without expressing his sentiments on it. He opposed the Bill, because he was confident, that the moment it passed, a death-blow would be inflicted on the Monarchy. He had not a wavering or shadow of doubt on the subject, and, therefore, he had no power of mind or body which he should not devote to check the progress of the Bill. He agreed, however, with every one who had given an opinion on the subject, that, as the Bill had been brought forward by Ministers, leave should be given to bring it in without a division. It should be brought on the Table, that they who knew its purpose and tendency might have an opportunity of disabusing the public mind, so as effectually to counteract and oppose so pernicious a measure. He felt that, in rising on this occasion, he was liable to peculiar prejudice. He did not believe any Member supposed that he would stand up and say the thing he did not mean, or, that he opposed the Bill upon any other ground than a sincere conviction that it was likely to be most injurious. But perforce, as it were, there must be a prejudice felt towards him as the son of a Tory Minister, feeling some personal interest in the Question, and burthened, as it might be supposed, with habitual and hereditary prejudices. He had the misfortune, too, as far as this Question was concerned, to labour under other prejudices. He was the holder of a sinecure place and the member for a close Corporation. At the hazard of offending against the good taste of the House, by speaking of himself, he should not hesitate to endeavour to remove these prejudices from the minds of those who heard him. As soon as he was of a fit age he was anxious to obtain a seat in that House, and could have found little difficulty in obtaining that seat through the influence of some attached friends of his father, then in power; but there were so many, and such various ties connecting him with the then existing Government, that he shrunk from the idea of strengthening those ties by coming in under its patronage. He therefore took the means then in his power, and came into that House in a way which enabled him to speak and vote without consulting the wishes of any one. He took his seat in 1819, and his first act was to resist a measure proposed by the Ministers, who united on that occasion with the Opposition to do an act which he (Mr. Perceval) considered discreditable, but to which he should not then allude further. The second time he spoke in that House was also to resist a measure proposed by Ministers, and perhaps he should have more of the confidence of the hon. member for Preston (Mr. Hunt), when he stated, that the measure he had so opposed, as a permanent law, was the passing of one of the Six Acts—that which went to prevent the holding of public meetings. He mentioned these circumstances to prove that he had no other view, in his conduct in that House, than to discharge his duty honestly and conscientiously. Even in his Tory nursery, he had learned to respect the liberty of the people, as well as the rights of the Crown; and he would be as ready to resist any measure, trenching on the rights of the people as any measure trenching on the prerogatives of the Crown. So little had he made up his mind on the subject of Reform in the year 1819, that when a motion was brought forward on the subject, he left the House to avoid dividing. He stated these facts to show that he was not influenced by fixed and blind prejudices, but that he tried to do his duty conscientiously. They were told by the supporters of the Bill, that it was for their ancient rights the people were petitioning, and that it was not in the power of the House of Commons to refuse them. But he would say, that it was in its power to refuse anything which they thought would be injurious to the country. If the House of Commons had not got that power, who had? Not got the power! He said the House had the power, and those who asserted the contrary, asserted a gross constitutional falsehood. The Lord Advocate of Scotland had said the other night too, that those whose seats were affected by the measure were incapacitated from voting. That too he would deny. Both propositions were constitutional falsehoods, which he would defy any man to defend by argument. He gave the lie to both assertions; he repeated that lie in the face of the Commons of England, and he would not shrink, on such a great, such an august occasion, from using the strongest words the language supplied. A right hon. Gentleman (the Secretary for Ireland) had found fault with the use of the word "revolutionary," but the word was fully justified when threats were the only arguments resorted to in support of the measure. The right hon. Gentleman was likewise rather severe on those silly folks, who, caught by such a vehement word, whenever it was uttered, backed it by rounds of cheers. Alluding to these our cheers, the hon. member for Preston, not then in his place, talked of the horrible yells of the Monster of Corruption in this its death agony. He joined in those cheers as heartily as any other individual in the House. He was amongst the loudest of those barking mouths who encircled the waist of this foul and filthy Monster, attacked in her loathsome den. He was one of the loudest barkers—one of the loudest of these yelping curs that encircled her; and he then came to meet the attack of the right hon.

Gentleman—for he was ready to justify the expressions he cheered, and the cheers he gave. He should be ashamed of himself if he could sit in that House, joining with silly and childish vehemence in such cheers, unless he was able to rise and give a reason, in the face of the House, for his conduct. He would take the definition laid down by the right hon. Gentleman of the word "revolution." The right hon. Gentleman said, that a Revolution was a change brought about either by a force foreign to the legally-constituted authorities, or such a change as went to subvert the great leading features of the Constitution in any one of its great component parts—the King, the Lords, or the Commons. The intervention of foreign force itself constitutes a revolution, the word "revolutionary" might be applied with the greatest justice to that which it was attempted to carry by a threat of force; but such a threat was the chief argument employed in this question. He supposed hon. Gentlemen would admit, that if a mob were out of doors, pelting the Members as they entered the House, and threatening their lives, that a bill, passed by a regular vote of Parliament under such circumstances, would be revolutionary. The present case was only removed two stages from that; for if this measure were carried, it would be under the pressure of the threats of hon. Members—of the threats of the Press—and of their false and violent representations of the state of the public mind. The threats of the noble Lords and right hon. Gentlemen opposite, and the threats of the Press were the means employed in its favour; and if it should be carried, it would be carried under the fear of such threats. He knew that there were many men in that House who disapproved of the measure, and yet would support it under the influence of those threats. Let the House read the speech of Colonel Evans, that had already been adverted to, in which he threatened them with 10,000 men ready to march to London. He would advise the House also to look at what the papers said on the first day the measure was made known to the public, that they might be aware of the principles inculcated by that corrupt and profligate thing, the daily Press—the vile daily Press of England. But the fact was, that they were the slaves of that Press, and he knew men who agreed with him, who in their hearts hated the Bill, who did not hesitate in private society to say so, but who, being the slaves of the Press, dared not utter any such opinion in public. When he stated this, he did not stop to make distinctions. Those who did not deserve the stigma would be the first to thank him for having applied it where it was due. He was glad that an opportunity was afforded him of using this language, which he wished that some person of greater importance than himself had used long ago. He knew, however, that he was one of the blind bigots who could see nothing, who could not judge of what was going forward in the country, and who were unfit to give any opinion. In the *Morning Chronicle*, however, a Paper conducted with great talent, and using those talents with great consistency to a single end, an article had appeared on the 26th of October last year, with reference to an expression used by Earl Grey, "that he would stand or fall with his order," which he thought might open the eyes of those who had any doubts as to the mischievous influence of the Press. That Article was one of the instances that would show the prevailing sentiments of the Press of England; for in it the writer stated, that if England had a House of Commons based on the suffrages of the people, the House of Peers could not exist. But he would read the passage. In the *Morning Chronicle* of the 26th of October, it was said, "This is true; the order of Lord Grey is, unquestionably, the main stay of the English Constitution—the English Constitution, as it is, gives the property of the House of Commons to the House of Lords; the whole hinges on the property of the boroughs being chiefly in the House of Lords. This was clearly and explicitly stated by Mr. Burke, in his letter to the Duke of Portland:—'They (the new Whigs) know that the House of Lords is supported only by its connexions with the Crown, and with the House of Commons; and that, without this double connexion, the Lords could not exist a single year.' Were there a Representation of the people based on a plan which should identify the electors in interest with the people, we do not hesitate to say, the House of Peers could not exist." And in a weekly paper, called the *Ballot*, which was conducted by a person who had gained notoriety by the contest he had been lately engaged in by setting up to be the Coroner of Middlesex, it was stated, that if the increase of the people's power and the depriving of the Peers of their privileges were to take place, what more could be to the credit of an enlightened nation. And this latter was one of the new lights—one of the march-of-intellect papers—which, in another passage, too, said, that Reform would not be worth having unless it brought along with it a repeal of the law of primogeniture. He would ask hon. Gentlemen, when they thought of the permanence with which our ancient institutions had endured, under the favour of Providence, how much of that was owing to the tenderness—to the superstitious tenderness, if they would—for vested rights? They could know no constitutional rights but through the laws of the country; and yet, it had been contended, that the people demanded rights—rights which, if ceded, must take away from the legal rights of others. This, he must confess, was the most revolutionary doctrine he had ever heard held; because the basis of all society was, that individual men surrendered all their natural rights into the hands of those appointed to receive them, and, having so surrendered them to the constituted authorities of the land, those authorities became the superiors and the judges of the rights, the conduct, the liberty of persons, and the speech of all. The Lord Advocate, whom he was sorry not to see in his place, had, on a previous evening, made a speech, to which he had listened with painful attention—painful, because he thought that it would be difficult to answer it. He would tell the House why he said that it would be difficult to answer it. It was, because the learned Lord had dealt so much in generals, that it was scarcely possible to characterize any particular feature of his speech. The learned Lord, however, had at length wandered out of his generalities, and remarked, that from the time of the Stuarts this country was in the advance of all Europe in liberty, and that it was so still. Why, if that was the case, could there be stronger testimony brought of the advantages that had arisen from the King, Lords, and Commons, as at present constituted? Could there be a stronger testimony of the elasticity of the system that had adapted itself through so long a course of years to all the increasing demands of society, without any injurious effect to any one particular portion? Could there be a stronger evidence of its excellence, than that it had been laid smack-smooth by rebellion—a rebellion which, by the way, commenced by the House of Commons in attempting to grasp all power in their own hands, and which brought the temple and throne down to the ground. That it was framed in wisdom, and that its roots were deep sunk in the hearts of the whole nation, was evident, because, after a few short years, it rose up again, with little material alteration; its grand component parts of King, Lords, and Commons, remaining the same! The powers of electing and voting standing as at present, on the laws and charters now in existence. What had happened to it since? Why, it had stood another revolution, in which the head of the Government was changed; and the line of succession altered; yet so firmly was the Constitution built, that when that took place, not one pillar of the building was removed. What a testimony was not this in favour of our institutions. And yet, now, Parliament was to be called upon by the wretched insanity of his Majesty's Ministers to knock this admirable Constitution to pieces, and cast it to the winds of Heaven. He did not intend to combat at length the learned Lord's speech, for he thought he had been happily answered by the right hon. Gentleman, the late Secretary for the Admiralty (Mr. Croker) from the pages of *The Edinburgh Review*, but he could not resist reading another refutation from the same source. Speaking of the exercise of the veto against a measure carried by a zealous and nearly unanimous House of Commons, purely popular, the reviewer said, "No thinking man can contemplate, without dismay, the probable consequences of such a resistance: it is needless to say that the House of Lords would oppose a still feebler barrier to such a measure of popular legislation." This, according to *The Edinburgh Review*, must be the judgment of every thinking man; and the learned Lord could not but have felt how completely, from the pages of that work, his argument was destroyed the other night by the right hon. Gentleman. Perhaps—

> "That eagle's fate and his were one,
> Who on the shaft that made him die
> Espied a feather of his own
> Wherewith he wont to soar so high."

One of the first things that made him

doubt or hesitate on the subject of Parliamentary Reform, was the speech of Mr. Wyndham. That distinguished man commenced by stating, that hon. Members who had preceded him had neither pointed out the grievance nor established the remedy. His words were, speaking of the mover of the proposition, "He has not proved enough to encourage us to go on with him a single step. He ought first to have made out his grievance, and then to have proposed his remedy. When the House is put in possession of both, it will be the time to judge how far the first is ascertained, and the second proportionate. But the hon. Gentleman has only asserted that the representation is inadequate, without any attempt whatever to prove the fact." He had followed the view taken by Mr. Wyndham, and searching through the speeches of Parliamentary reformers, was struck with this view in all their arguments. The great fault he had to find with the reformers was, that they begged the whole question. In the first place, they began by stating that there were rotten boroughs: now that certainly was an undeniable fact; but then they went on to say, that those rotten boroughs were a grievance to the whole country: now this was what he called begging the whole question; and it was remarkable enough, that never had one tittle of evidence been adduced in support of that supposition. There was one remarkable point in the speech of the hon. member for Calne (Mr. Macauley), which he could not forbear noticing. That hon. Gentleman had said, that if he were to take a foreigner through England, and was asked by him to point out the greatest grievance that existed, he would take him to the parish of Mary-la-bonne, and after bidding him to notice the streets, the squares, the houses, the wealth, the comfort, and the luxury of that parish, he would tell him—"here lies the greatest grievance of all England, for this place has no Representatives." But if the hon. Member allowed the wealth, the comfort, and the luxury of that populous district, how did he prove that it was aggrieved by having no Representatives to look after its interests? But besides this the real fact was, that Mary-la-bonne, though not actually, was virtually better represented, than, perhaps, any other district in the whole kingdom; for he should be glad to hear the place mentioned wherein so many Members of Parliament resided, and voters for other places throughout the country, as in that very parish. Certainly, if the learned Gentleman had shewn his young stranger Tothill-fields, where most of the inhabitants have votes, and return Members, he would not have preferred their Member-returning happiness to the grievance-oppressed, but well-doing environs of Mary-la-bonne. But suppose the young stranger should take the English lawyer at his word, and, with pity for the Marylabonnians, and having heard the Attorney-General say, that in this Bill—this senseless, ruinous Bill, the greatest act of folly ever committed by any Minister—suppose he had heard the Attorney General state, that in this Bill we should be only treading in the steps of our ancestors when they gave Members to Chester, and should go home, and draw up a Bill for the hon. member for Calne to bring in, and remedy the great grievance he had pointed out; he would naturally think, that since it was treading in the footsteps of our ancestors, in granting Members to Chester, nothing could be better, if he wanted a preamble to his Bill for granting Members to Mary-la-bonne, than to take that of the Act which was to be his precedent. He would begin, therefore, by saying which was the preamble to the bill for conferring Representatives on Chester, "Whereas the said parish of Mary-la-bonne is and hath been always exempt, excluded, and separated out and from the high Court of Parliament, to have any Knights and Burgesses within the said Court; by reason whereof the said inhabitants have hitherto sustained manifold disherisons, losses, and damages, as well in their lands, goods, and bodies, as in the good, evil, and public governance and maintenance of the common-wealth of their said parish; and that they had been touched and grieved by Statutes made in the high Court of Parliament, &c.;" and then he would proceed to enact some remedy for the manifold evils suffered by Mary-la-bonne for want of Representatives. They suffered no evil, and to say, therefore, that this was the great grievance of England, appeared to him to be childish and contemptible nonsense. Among those with whom he mixed in society he had frequently heard it said — the rotten boroughs could not be defended by any

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* Hansard's Parl. Hist. vol. xxviii, p. 465.

reason, and therefore, as this is such an enlightened age, the rotten boroughs must be given up. He had heard this said both by the timid friends of the present system, and by its vigorous enemies. Now he had always had an answer for that remark, though those who had urged what he had just stated would never stay to listen to it. His answer was this:—The rotten boroughs constituted a great and valuable part of a whole, which, by the confession of all men, had produced the greatest benefits to the country; and if, therefore, the whole had done this, why were they to get rid of a portion which had been of great and valuable assistance to the general system? Perhaps he might be able to illustrate this to the House. He would suppose that two learned medical men—one educated at the London University, whom he would call Dr. Newlight? and the other only a poor bigot (as the Gentlemen on the other side would most likely call him); he would suppose, that these two learned men came together for the purpose of holding a consultation on the human eye. "Oh (says Dr. Newlight), have you observed the dreadful anomaly that there is in it?"—"No (says the poor bigot), I don't even know what you mean by an anomaly." "Why, a contradiction, to be sure (says Dr. Newlight)."—"Well, but what is this contradiction (says the poor bigot)?"—"Why (cries Dr. Newlight), don't you observe the picture that there is in the back of the eye? And don't you see that it is topsy-turvy? That is what I call an anomaly."—"But (says the poor bigot), let us see whether that topsy-turviness is not most useful and essential."—"What do I care (says the man educated at the London University), whether it is useful or not? I tell you that it is an anomaly, and I will have it plucked out." They all knew very well that objects were thus represented, topsy-turvy, on the back of the eye, and that circumstance was explained by the laws of refraction? but no person had yet been able to assign a satisfactory reason why, when we use our eyes, every object appears in its natural and proper place. Dr. Newlight would, however, take out the eye, because he could not account for the phenomenon; and, in the same manner, the enemies of boroughs would annihilate them, because they were ignorant of the system of which they formed a part. The reason, then, that he would retain those rotten boroughs as they now existed, was, because they were only a part of a great whole, and they should not be removed, lest that might endanger the safety of that whole. With respect to the reason for these rotten boroughs, he could give one. Besides being parts of one general beneficial whole, the existence of those boroughs furnished a solution to that very curious problem, the extreme expansibility of our Constitution, by which it was enabled to adapt itself to the circumstances of the times, and the interests of society. All the interests in society were represented in money, the general representative of value: and as these boroughs could be obtained for money, all interests became by these means represented in society. They all found access to Parliament, through that money they all possessed; and so every interest, however it might grow and expand, found access to Parliament, and was represented there. There were also the nomination boroughs, and he could find a reason for them. He knew from experience that if a man wanted to be above the entreaties of friends, and resolved in spite of them to do his duty, there were no better means than to be returned to Parliament with his vote pledged to a certain line of measures. Suppose he sat for a Whig borough, he voted with the Whigs. He was bound to a certain line of conduct, which prevented awkwardness. A large constituency had an influence over a man, and was as likely to warp him from the fair line of his duty as being returned for a nomination borough. The peril of being warped by a patron was not so great as the peril of being warped by a mob. He admitted that it was a grievance, that Manchester, Birmingham, Leeds, and other great towns, each of which had a large peculiar interest of its own, and contained a great number of men engaged in the same pursuits, were not represented. That evil he admitted, and that he should be ready to cure. There was another evil belonging to the present system—that of bribery, which the present Bill did not touch, and would not cure. He admitted that it was a moral evil and moral evil never could be cured by violent or extravagant measures—

"Naturam expelles furcâ tamen usque recurret;"

but still it was a point that deserved

serious consideration. He had many other objections to state to the measure of Ministers. It was a departure from all the principles which had been laid down by the highest authorities on the subject of political changes. It was a saying of Lord Bacon's, that changes ought not to be made till time demanded them, and then ought to be made as time itself made changes —gradually and imperceptibly. Reform should be gentle. But this Bill was not gentle—the measure was not gradual—it was not at all like the changes effected by time. Another maxim was, that the necessity of Reform should bring about change, not the desire of change, Reform. The cry that was raised for Reform meant only change, for no two men agreed as to what sort of reform was necessary. This cry for Reform, therefore, was only the desire of change. As he understood the Bill, it would give a greater proportion of Representation than at present to the North, and diminish the Representation in the South. If that would be its effect, he considered that dangerous and mischievous. The whole arguments, the complete arguments, in favour of the Bill, were all applications to the fears of Parliament. He would remind the Parliament, however, of the honourable conduct of the late Secretary of War (Mr. C. W. Wynn) and of the hon. member for Milborne Port (Mr. Sturges Bourne) and would warn the Members that there was a more honourable path than submission. The State was divided into two parties, and he regretted that the Tories had not strengthened their hands by nourishing the attachment of the people. There was a great conflict about to begin in Britain; there was, in fact, a conflict of principles now going on similar to that which ushered forward the downfall of Roman liberty. He believed, however, so long as the Constitution was kept whole and untouched, it would be able to resist, and he should not fear the result of such a conflict. If the conflict came, and if the Constitution were unsuccessful—and he believed there was great danger—if the Constitution should fall, it would be sacrificed by those who gave their vote under the influence of base and servile fear. If there were but three honest and bold men in that House—men fearing God, and, therefore, not fearing man, and not having the fear of the Press before their eyes, and who would bring that Press before the House for the gross and daily violation of its privileges, of which that Press was continually guilty;—who would so conduct themselves, having the fear of God before their eyes, and fearing not men—if there were three such bold men in the House, he should not fear for the result. Such men would be sufficient to themselves; and if the House was now bullied by the Press, it was because they were cowards before it. He would not say more, than that he had passed many sleepless nights thinking of these things, and he was humbly thankful that God had permitted him to do so much. He had done his duty, and was satisfied.

Mr. *D. W. Harvey* said, that he rose to address the House under very inauspicious circumstances; for, in consequence of the extreme length to which the debate had extended, the subject had become so exhausted, that it was almost impossible for any man, whatever might be the endowment of his mind, or the extent of his resources, to arrest the attention of the House while he delivered his opinions, except by throwing himself on its indulgence. He, however, was only anxious to address the House for a very few minutes, and, contrary to the proceeding of those who declared that they would not trespass long on the time of the House, and yet had spoken at very great length, he certainly meant to be as brief as possible. He felt that it was a peculiarly difficult task to state his opinions after the very extraordinary speech of the hon. Gentleman, who, though many years his junior, had the fiat, anticipatory of the future services which he would do his country, already sealed on his conduct, by being, even now, a very considerable recipient of the public money. [*"Hear, hear," from the Opposition.*] He well understood those cheers, which, he supposed, came from Gentlemen who were, or who wished to be, similarly situated. What, he would ask, was it that had created the universal feeling throughout the country, which impelled all ranks of the people to call on that House for Reform?—what was it but the presentation of those returns which had been recently laid on their Table? If anything more than another disgusted the people of England, it was the testimonies which had been given of the perversion of the means, and of the mismanagement of the resources, of the nation. And yet, with this fact before their eyes, Gentlemen affected to view the applications which were pouring into the House from all quarters, as the result of revolutionary feelings, stirred up and fomented by the agency of a seditious Press. That those who prospered under the present system should take a prominent and lively interest in preserving it, and in opposing all Reform, was not surprising; but, whatever might be the fate of those political culprits, it never could be said that they had not received a fair hearing at the bar of that House. They had risen after each other in eager and rapid succession, and they had advanced every argument in support of their case which perverted ingenuity could devise. When they stated that the origin and design of this Bill was to revolutionize the country, and to destroy its constitution, he must take leave to say, that if Gentlemen looked for arguments which were calculated to produce revolutionary feelings, and to stir this country up to resistance, they were only to be found in the speeches of those who opposed the measure. With all that high and enthusiastic religious feeling, of which the hon. Member was the depository—the meek depository—what language of reproach, what terms of reprobation, had he not used in speaking of this measure? He, however, would meet the hon. Member, and all those hon. Gentlemen who had spoken so severely of this Bill,—he would meet them with language as bold as their own, and say, "this is a revolutionary measure." He repeated—it was a revolutionary measure—a glorious revolutionary measure. What was its object and drift, but to bring back the Constitution of this country to its original design—to place things in the situation in which they originally stood, and from which they had been too long removed? If the opponents of this measure could even show, that in past times the people of this country had nothing to do with the representation, or if, as the hon. Member seemed to think, the affairs of this country could be better regulated by a House of Commons, altogether appointed by some other means than through the people, either of these positions afforded a fit and proper reason for carrying a measure that would rescue the people of this country from so ignominious a bondage. The time was come, when that House could no longer stand against the growing influence of intelligence, which must in the end prevail. When they were told that the people were urged on by feelings of a revolutionary character, he must observe, that if such were the fact, those feelings were excited by the resistance which was set up against their just claims. The speech of the hon. Member who had just sat down was, in its closing part, an excitement to resistance. The hon. Member had said, that if the Constitution were to be battled for, he would go forth with the banner of Providence in his hand,—surrounded, no doubt, by a goodly array of the Representatives of rotten boroughs, and a numerous levy of other traffickers in corruption (who were doubtless a most extensive body),—and he would exhort them, in his own peculiar style, as to the revolutionary and ruinous tendency of this measure. It was such declarations as that made by the hon. Member which excited the indignation of the people. Hence arose that manly feeling which breathed throughout the country—which showed itself, not in ignoble violence, but in generous, firm, and proper remonstrance. Could they, in such a state of things, be so blind to consequences, as to fold their arms, and take their stand on the Constitution as it now was? What were the arguments of the hon. Gentlemen opposite—all of whom, it should be observed, with the exception of the hon. member for York (Mr. Bethell), who made some qualified observations on the measure, were called into the field to defend the present hideous system in consequence of the peculiar situation in which they were placed with respect to it. They argued that the abuse should be continued, because it had existed so long. Not less than 170 Members were now returned by about the same number of persons, and they were anxious to perpetuate this abuse. They declared, that if the system were altered, the House of Commons would be a bear-garden in debate, because sufficient intelligence could not be found in the great mass of the people to select proper representatives. They declared, that men of genius and learning, reared in our Universities and public schools, would never be able to enter that House, if the proposed alteration took place. According to their argument, it was only through the portal of corruption that genius and talent could hope to enter that House. Now he would contend, that if the effect of this Bill would be to exclude from Parliament every Member who owed his seat to a rotten borough, or to nomination, the affairs of the country would move on with at least as much and even with more propriety than at present. It was a libel to suppose that the people had not sufficient sagacity to examine into, and to decide upon, the character, feelings, and merits of those who might become candidates to represent them. A recent occurrence falsified the assertion. Let them call to mind the greatest man of this nation,—he would almost say the greatest man of any age,—he who appeared to be destined by Providence to rescue his country from the overwhelming evil of corrupt, tardy, and perverted law; by what means, he demanded, had that great man a short time since been placed in that House?—was it not by the sagacious selection of the people? Those who were remarkable for learning, who were distinguished for mathematical and classical accomplishments (which, after all, were not such important acquirements as common sense in directing the affairs of mankind) would not be excluded from Parliament by this measure. It would be a source of consolation to them to learn, that this Bill afforded ample room for their admission. The Bill, which was drawn up in a most statesman-like spirit, recognised those great interests which the hon. Gentlemen opposite seemed so anxious to preserve. It certainly wiped away from the political chart sixty rotten boroughs, but it left forty-seven Members for forty-seven other towns less tainted by corruption. Though he admired, and would advocate that measure, still he must reserve to himself the right of examining its details hereafter. Nothing, however, should induce him to contend against any one iota of its provisions, if, by taking such a course, he was in the slightest degree likely to hazard the great principle. Hon. Members, in expressing their deep regret that so many boroughs, almost without constituents, should be cut off, seemed not to look with sufficient attention to the other side of the case, and that there would still remain forty-seven boroughs with one Member each; and that these boroughs, too, would remain under circumstances which must be acceptable to those who advocated the narrow principles of many hon. Members opposite. Hon. Members who were such strenuous champions of select numbers as to feel highly offended at the risk of coming in contact with popular elements, in their way into that House, and who sought to avoid the active expression of popular opinion in their return, would doubtless turn with pleasure to those boroughs where the voices of a comparatively small number were still to be allowed to prevail. He would beg to recommend to the notice of those high-minded individuals, those select parties of voters, those little bands of philosophers, who would still come into play as electors under the operation of the noble Lord's Bill. On looking at the returns made of the number of householders rated at 10*l.*, who, if he understood the Bill of the noble Lord correctly, would in the course of time be the only persons qualified to vote, it appeared that in only one of the forty-seven places which were to have one Member each, would the number of voters exceed 206. There was only one which would have as high as 207 voters; but many of them would have as small and select a body of voters as most of the hon. Members opposite could covet; for example, in Bewdley there would be only twenty-one; in Downton nine; (he was to be understood, of course, as alluding to what the state of those boroughs would be when the Bill came into full operation in those places, and when those who now voted as freemen should have dropped off); Liskeard would have ninety-five; Lyme Regis, 135; Marlow, 180; Sudbury, 108; Shaftesbury, 75; and Westbury, that pattern of pure and incorruptible boroughs, only fourteen. These choice constituencies would preserve the principle of aristocratic influence for which so many hon. Members opposite still contended. He did not find fault with this limitation: it would produce so much good in other respects, that this part of the Bill would be found no injury to the general principle. The hon. Member then adverted to what had been stated on a former evening by the hon. member for Essex (Colonel Tyrell), who, quoting a paper (the *Essex Standard*,) in which what fell from him (Mr. Harvey) had been grossly misrepresented, accused him of advocating doctrines altogether revolutionary. He had been accused of advocating at the late Essex Meeting—at which, by the way, the hon. Member (Colonel Tyrell) was not present, though it was a meeting of the county, convened by the High Sheriff, —the doctrine of Universal Suffrage, Annual Parliaments, and Vote by Ballot—and also of having advocated a Republican form of Government. These imputations were founded on the gross misrepresentations of what he said, as contained in the Paper alluded to,—a Paper which had been described in the letter of a friend to him as containing on that occasion such a tissue of falsehood as was unexampled in the Press. Now, in another Paper which he had seen, and which contained a fair account of what he said at that meeting, it appeared, that so far from having advocated a Republic, or the doctrine of Universal Suffrage, Annual Parliaments, and Vote by Ballot, he had alluded to them only as tending to the establishment of a Republic. He had never advocated those doctrines, and on that occasion he deprecated them as tending to a Republican form of Government. He held, that such an extension of mere democratic influence as these would create was incompatible with such a form of Government as we possessed, and that, if they were adopted, they must end in the subversion of the throne and the aristocracy, and the establishment of a Republic. This he urged at the meeting, not in favour of, but against those doctrines which he had been represented as supporting. He did not say that the people might not think a republic the best form of government, but he himself did not think so; if he did, he would have avowed it openly and manfully. But his firm belief was, that the people of this country, unless goaded into madness by resistance to their just claims, would never prefer any other form of Government than that under which they now lived, as far as regarded the distinct power and influence of King, Lords, and Commons. There never was a country, the habits of whose people less fitted them for an attachment to a Republican form of Government than this. There might, no doubt, be some few philosophers, who, retired from the actual business of the world, thought that the simplicity of a Republican form of Government would be most conducive to the happiness of the people, but the great mass of the nation thought otherwise, and the greatest Statesmen and ablest writers agreed in the opinion, that though parts of our system of Government might be corrupt, the system, if freed from that corruption, was the best which could be devised for the people of this country. Let any man—the greatest admirer of an arbitrary and despotic form of Government—read Blackstone, and he would there see, that the power of the three estates of King, Lords, and Commons, were distinctly defined, and that any one of them could not press upon the privileges of the other, without impairing that balance which ought to be kept up between them. Some hon. Members, however, seemed to be of opinion that it was essential to the Constitution of the House of Commons, that it should possess within itself a large portion of Aristocratic influence. On this subject he had heard remarks, that, if they had been uttered out of doors, or conveyed through the public press, the utterer or publisher of them would have been consigned to the tender mercies of the Attorney General—if the mercies of the present Attorney General were like those of some of his predecessors. The hon. member for Boroughbridge, (Mr. Attwood) in his erratic address, and the hon. member for Dublin, in his unintelligible speech, had both avowed doctrines of this stamp; and they went further, and contended that if the tide of popular feeling were once to flow into that House, such would be its destructive influence, that in ten years, to use the language of the hon. member for Oxford, the throne and aristocracy would be swept away. A greater libel than this could not be pronounced on the people of this country; but the hon. member for Boroughbridge supported his opinion by another statement, which was not less a libel on the Aristocracy; his argument was this,—that such was the dullness,—such the mental lassitude of the peerage,—so little had they kept pace with the intellectual improvement of the other classes of the community, that the force of education, the predominancy of moral virtue the dangerous improvement of the public mind in those other classes, would, when admitted to a fair share of influence in the Representation of the people in that House, bear down and overwhelm the other orders of the State, unless it was contrived to infuse into the House the morbid influence of some dull Peers, which would act as an essential clog to popular improvement. This, he repeated, was equally a libel on the aristocracy and on the people. He did not desire to go out of his way to praise the hereditary counsellors of the Crown (though no one held them in higher respect than he did in their appropriate station) but he must say, that it would be a most unwarrantable attack on them to assert that they had not kept pace as a body with the rest of the nation in the great march of mental improvement. He need not go beyond that House for an illustration of this argument. There were amongst its Members many between whom and a peerage there was only one step, and who were already in possession of high hereditary rank, large fortunes, and names which had long been distinguished in the proudest annals of the country, yet who were not more distinguished by their claims to those honours and possessions, than by those great talents and acquirements which fitted them for the highest offices in the State. It was, then, he repeated, a gross libel on the people and on the aristocracy, to say that the admission of the enlightened and intelligent classes of the community to a fair share in the Representation in that House would have the effect of destroying the peerage in ten years, or in any time. The people acknowledged the great utility of the influence of the other orders of the State, when duly exercised, and the more the people were admitted to their just share of influence, the more widely would the basis of those of the other branches be extended. But suppose for a moment that the public feeling should become changed on this subject, would it be possible to dam up its expression by an Act of Parliament? Would it be possible to check it by any legislative measure? The hon. member for St. Germain's had asked who could answer for the changes which such a measure as this might bring about? He answered, no person could. Who could dive into futurity and anticipate what was to happen in ages hence? No person could. When it was found difficult, if not generally impossible, to anticipate the events of a quarter of a century, they should not trouble themselves about possible results in more distant periods; but, as practical men, they should act according to the best of their judgments in that way which was most fitted to the circumstances of the times in which they lived, and leave the result to those who should come after them who, there was reason to hope, would find their strength equal to their day; and let the House not be deterred from seizing a present practical good by its possible effect at a period to which no human foresight could extend. Let not the House be deterred from adopting the plan so ably brought forward by the noble Lord, from the fears of those who looked upon it as one of unmeasured, unmitigated evil. Never was any measure submitted to Parliament looked upon by those who opposed it, as one of such unmingled, unmeasured evil. It was not admitted to have any one redeeming quality. This was one reason why he thought it ought to be supported. For none opposed it but those who had a direct interest in upholding the places which it was proposed to subvert. Every hon. Member, but the member for York, had described the measure as one of unmixed evil. He would ask did any hon. Member opposite admit that any improvement could be made in our system of Representation; if he did, he must concede the principle of this Bill. The hon. Member, who would deprive Marylebone of the luxury of being represented, by contrasting its affluent condition with the poverty of Tothill-fields, which had a voice in the choice of Members, had admitted that some of the large towns should be admitted to a share in the Representation. But how was this to be effected excepting by taking the franchise from decayed towns with few inhabitants? Nothing, indeed, surprised him more than the hostility with which some hon. Members regarded this measure; for not a single individual had spoken on the subject who did not admit that some improvement was necessary in the state of the Representation. If, then, they admitted, that improvement was desirable, they admitted the whole principle of the Bill, and the only question remaining was, as to the character of the remedy, and the degree in which it was to be applied. If, then, it was admitted that Birmingham was entitled to be represented, how, he would ask, was that good to be effected, unless through a course somewhat resembling that which was now proposed with respect to the rotten boroughs? It was said, however, that the holders of these boroughs should have compensation. He had no doubt of their willingness to accept compensation; and if Ministers had declared themselves open to proposals, and had erected a box at the Treasury to receive them, he was quite sure, that they would have had offers of twenty or thirty such boroughs upon terms very moderate. The objections of the noble Lord (Darlington), whose course in that House was so opposite to the patriotic disposition which distinguished his noble relative in the other House (the Marquis of Cleveland), were confined to the fact of a refusal of compensation to the owners of borough property. He had, indeed, heard the hon. member for Corfe Castle press, in a low voice, that point on the attention of his noble friend at the time he was speaking; and he had no doubt, that if such a measure had been proposed at first by the Government, many of the keen calculations, much of the constitutional apprehension, and balance-striking arguments of hon. Gentlemen opposite would have been spared. He was satisfied, indeed, that the fears for the fate of the aristocracy, and the dread of the popular power, would have yielded at once in hon. Members' minds to the weighty arguments of some thousand pounds sterling as the price of their boroughs and their patriotism. He was, however, no enemy to compensation; but as the Solicitor General, whom he saw near him, could tell them, when a calculation of the value of property was to be taken under such circumstances, they always took into account the *usufruct*. Now, supposing an hon. Gentleman about to receive 50,000*l*., or whatever else it was worth, as compensation for the loss of Corfe Castle, he should like to know at what sum they would estimate the enjoyment of the office of Cursitor Baron preceded by a Commissionership of Bankrupts which the hon. Member's son or brother had obtained solely from the possession of that borough. [*Cries of* "*no, no!*"] Did hon. Members say "No?" How, then, he would ask, could they account for the possession of such places in any other manner? There were other appointments connected with other boroughs which could be explained in no other manner than by the influence of those possessions. The manner in which hon. Members shouted their cheers on this question showed how much they had practised in that mode of testifying their support, when they sat on the Ministerial side. This was the kind of support for which so much Ministerial patronage had long been lavished. The public had seen the long list of pensions, and the kind of persons to whom they had been granted. There were in that list the names of females, whose services or claims could only be discovered by their connexion with borough influence. A borough proprietor goes to the Treasury, and making his application for patronage—he urges not that he has any great personal pretensions, or that he could bring much talent to bear in support of Government, but that he has five or six Members in Parliament, who would vote at his will, just as the Minister shall accede to his application. Let the value of borough patronage be estimated in this way, and he should not object to the principle of compensation; for if the value of patronage shared by borough proprietors and their dependents were fairly taken, the public would have to receive, and not to pay money in the settlement of the account. It was this foul traffic which had made the country so unanimous in favour of putting an end to this system of corruption. This it was which induced so many of those boroughs which would be affected by the Bill to declare their cordial concurrence in it. In this respect they showed a disinterestedness which had not, except in very few instances, been witnessed in that House. For his own constituents, he had their authority to state, that though they naturally desired to transmit to their children those muniments which would remind them of what their ancestors had done for them, they willingly gave them up for that which they believed would tend to the public good. It would be idle to go through other instances of this kind, for the whole people of England were for the measure. It was said by those who opposed Catholic Emancipation, that the people should be appealed to. If a dissolution of Parliament should be resorted to, the result would not be for an instant doubtful; and if the country were not unanimous, they deserved to be without Reform. On the occasion of the meeting in Essex, to which he had referred, he told the people, that with a reformed Parliament, they would not have disgraced themselves by coming to the hustings and giving their votes for a reformer and for a gentleman opposed to Reform. He said this without any feeling of personal disrespect to the hon. Member (Colonel Tyrell), whom he honoured for the candid and manly manner in which he had expressed his opinions. He would not take up the time of the House by any further remarks. It was said by that hon. Member, that a premium might be given to those who could produce any new idea on the subject. He could not boast of any new idea on it, but he felt it necessary to state what were his opinions. It was probable that the hon. Member who threw out the suggestion might himself have but a small chance in the competition for new ideas on this subject; yet he was certain, that if premiums had been given for them, the hon. and learned member for Waterford might claim the gold medal in that respect, for his speech was one of, if not, the ablest on the question, and one which deserved the serious consideration of the House; and when he heard the hon. and learned member for Boroughbridge ask what was meant by the cheers from the Ministerial side, for one whom Government had felt it necessary to bring within the operation of the law, he (Mr. Harvey) understood the meaning of the sneer: but it did not lead him to undervalue the importance of that speech, and of the means which it suggested of drawing more closely the ties of interest and affection between the two countries. The hon. and learned member for Boroughbridge need not be alarmed at his chance of obtaining a seat in the House under the new Bill; for if any of the districts into which the Metropolis was to be divided should include that part of Smithfield in which the fair was held, the hon. and learned Member stood a fair chance of coming in for a large share of popular applause. He might without difficulty get Mr. Grimaldi to propose him, and some equally facetious fun-loving character to second the nomination, and he might rely on being a very popular candidate amongst the frequenters of that place. In conclusion, the hon. Member expressed a hope that the House would give its support to a measure fraught with so many benefits to the country. It would be to the eternal credit of Ministers, that in the hour of danger, when other countries were shaken by internal discord, they had effected a bloodless revolution by constitutional means, which would place the whole of the valuable institutions of the country on a wise, firm, and lasting basis.

Mr. *Goulburn*, after stating the reasons which had induced him to postpone so long addressing the House on this important question, said, that before he entered upon it, he wished to make a few remarks on what had fallen from the hon. member for Colchester. That hon. Gentleman had made an attack on all those who held opinions different from his own. He attacked them, not for the weakness of their arguments, for with them he did not grapple; not for any particular expressions which they had used, for with them the hon. Gentleman did not quarrel; but he attacked them, either because they represented boroughs which, in his opinion, ought to be difranchised, or because they were in possession of sinecure offices which he thought they ought not to hold. Now, if any man, either in the House or out of it, who held an office of that description, ought to be exempt from any observation upon the subject, or ought to be considered entirely free from the slightest stain with reference to it, it was undoubtedly his hon. friend, the member for Newport. He confidently appealed to all the hon. Gentlemen who sat near the hon. member for Colchester, whether the possession of the office held by his right hon. friend, the member for Newport so far from casting any imputation upon him, was not a subject of exultation and glory to his hon. friend, as being the reward which a grateful country conferred on a father, eminent for his services to the State, and who, in the discharge of his public duty, fell a victim—not metaphorically, but literally fell a victim—on the threshold of that House to the honesty and zeal of his efforts? He (Mr. Goulburn) was old enough to remember that melancholy day. He had now present in his mind the feeling which pervaded the whole House on the occasion. There was not then in the House any man anxious to point out the fact that the man so murdered was a Statesman, and held an office under the Crown, but men of all parties, both those who supported, and those who opposed the measures of his Majesty's Government, were anxious to mark their sense of the services of an individual who had shown himself superior to all corrupt motives, and who, throughout the whole term of his administration of public affairs, had not provided for a single member of his family, or, except in one instance, had appropriated to himself any permanent office. Parliament marked their sense of that right honorable Gentleman's eminent merits, by settling, on the recommendation of the Crown, a pension of 2,000*l.* on his son. If his hon. friend, the member for Newport, had continued to enjoy that pension, what honourable man could have thrown the slightest imputation upon him for doing so? It so happened, however, that some time afterwards when the office of a Teller of the Exchequer became vacant, his Majesty's Government, with a view to a public saving, withdrew the pension which Parliament had bestowed on his hon.

friend, and appointed him to that office. But, because Government thought fit to perform this act of economy, was his hon. friend to be flouted and taunted with being a pensioner of the Crown? He did not envy the feelings which had induced the hon. member for Colchester to make the observations in which he had indulged. The sentiments of the hon. Member might have their effect elsewhere; but in that House, either as it was at present constituted, or even as it would be constituted if the Bill of the noble Lord were to be carried into a law, imputations on a son, for enjoying a public reward in consideration of his father's public services, he was sure would never be listened to with favour, or even toleration. He hoped the House would pardon him for having trespassed upon them so long on this point, in consideration of the friendship which had always subsisted between him and the hon. member for Newport; and still more in consideration of the protection which he had experienced from that hon. Gentleman's excellent and lamented father, on his entrance into public life. The hon. member for Colchester had thrown out the imputation that the opposition to the measure now proposed by his Majesty's Government for the most part proceeded from the Representatives of places which that measure sought to disfranchise. The hon. Member attributed that opposition to improper motives. He did not pretend to judge of the motives of others, but if he were a member of one of those boroughs which the Bill proposed to disfranchise he should certainly not think that he was performing an unworthy task if he were to defend the rights and privileges of the electors who returned him, and who claimed to retain those rights and privileges. Nor should he be afraid to compare his motives with those of the hon. member for Colchester. The hon. Member allowed, that the proposed measure would have the effect of greatly reducing in number the electors of Colchester. Whereas, at the last election, nearly 1,500 individuals voted for that borough, the number, in the event of the adoption of the noble Lord's Bill, would be reduced to 600. The hon. Member would therefore be returned by a more select, and, perhaps, to him, a more agreeable body. There had been one or two topics introduced into that Debate, not immediately connected with the subject before the House, on which he wished to make some preliminary observations. The first of those topics had been introduced on the first evening of the discussion, by an hon. and learned Gentleman, who rose to overthrow the law of his hon. and learned friend near him, but who sat down without adverting to it. The hon. and learned Gentleman, alluding to the duty which the noble Lord the Chancellor of the Exchequer had proposed to levy on the transfer of Stock, contended that it was no violation of any existing law, and that it was, in principle, similar to the reduction of the interest on the Four per Cents. It was important to correct this error, that it might not be urged on any future occasion in justification of a violation of every principle of public faith and national honour. The correction was to be found in the Acts by which the terms of the loans were fixed; and in which it was expressly declared, that the holders of the Stock granted for those loans should be free from the imposition of any tax on their respective shares, "any future Act of Parliament notwithstanding." The hon. and learned Gentleman could not himself use stronger or more conclusive language. The next observation on which he wished to say a few words was made by his noble friend the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs. His noble friend took great credit to his Majesty's Government for acting without reference to patronage. Now his noble friend and he had been long in office together, and he was sure his noble friend would not say that the patronage of the Crown had been perverted at that time. Having disposed of these preliminary observations, he would proceed to the question immediately before the House. He was admonished, by the length of the Debate which had already taken place, to confine his remarks within narrow bounds. He would not enter into the details of the Bill, for it was disadvantageous to discuss the particulars of any measure simply on the statement of those particulars by any hon. Member. If, therefore, he consented to the introduction of the Bill, it was only that he might thoroughly understand the details of it before he consigned it to the oblivion which it merited. It had been said to the opponents of the measure, that they opposed the right of Parliament to deal with the elective franchise of individuals in boroughs. He disclaimed being one of those who denied the right and power of Parliament to deal with such a subject. Parliament was omnipotent. It had power to deal with the private estates of individuals. It had still more strongly the power to deal with the elective franchise. But the difference between the supporters and the opponents of the measure was this: the latter said, "You must make out a case of absolute necessity, with reference to the public safety; otherwise your interference will be an act of moral injustice, and will subject you to just reprobation." The hon. member for Midhurst, and another hon. Member had volunteered to relinquish the elective franchise of their constituents; but it was not so with others; for instance, with his hon. and learned friend the member for Boroughbridge, who remonstrated against the abolition of the rights of his constituents without previous inquiry. If large towns at present unrepresented, were to have Representatives, let them be transferred from the boroughs where the electors were disposed to surrender their votes, and not from the boroughs where they were not so disposed. It was stated by Waller, that James the 1st being at dinner where, among other company, there sat at dinner two Bishops, Neele and Andrews, proposed aloud this question—whether he might not take his subjects' money when he needed it, without all this formality of Parliament? Neele replied, "God forbid you should not; for you are the breath of our nostrils." Andrews declined answering, and said, he was not skilled in Parliamentary cases; but, upon the King's urging him, and saying he would admit of no evasion, the Bishop replied, very pleasantly, "Why, then, I think your Majesty may lawfully take my brother Neele's money; for he offers it." So he would say to Parliament, "You may take the borough of Midhurst, for the hon. member for that borough offers it." The objections to the proposed plan of Reform had been stated over and over again, and he would not repeat them. He objected to change that which he knew to be good, for the purpose of adopting something which he was merely told might be better. It was strange that all the advocates of the noble Lord's Bill admitted, that the results of the present constitution of the House had been the increase of wealth and the progress of intelligence in the country. They all spoke of the glory of that which they proposed to abolish; they all adored the victim which they desired to immolate; and, having done all this, they turned round, and said, "Let us reconstruct the House, in the hope that we may make it better." They had been told by the hon. member for Waterford, that the country was prosperous and happy in spite of the misconstruction of the House; that the benefits we had been enjoying for a course of years were in spite of our misconduct. He (Mr. Goulburn) had been taught to believe, that the prosperity of the country was a proof of our good institutions: but he was now told that it was no such thing, for that those institutions were valueless. He was considerably disappointed in the speech of the noble Lord who brought forward the proposition. In proposing to reconstruct the House of Commons, he forgot to state how it was intended, after the change, that the Government of the country should be conducted. He would not repeat the arguments which had been urged to show that the rotten boroughs had been the means of procuring the admission within those walls of many men who had been the most distinguished for their general talents, and for the ability which they had subsequently shown in the direction of the civil affairs, and of the complicated concerns of this great country. The fact was not disputed, and he would not weary the House by any repetition of statement on the subject. But they had not been told how the Government of the country was to be conducted after the proposed change. It had been said, that they ought to argue the question only with reference to the written forms of the Constitution. That was a narrow view of the case. The Constitution, like the Law of England, was not founded on theory alone; but also on the practice that had been growing up for years. If there was one right possessed by the Crown more sacred than another, it was the right of appointing its own Ministers. Undoubtedly the Crown might appoint as Ministers individuals who were not entitled to sit in either House of Parliament; but, practically, it was found expedient that the Ministers of the Crown should sit, some in one House, some in the other, for the purpose of explaining and defending the measures of Government. Now the very boroughs which it was proposed to disfranchise were most frequently the medium by which members of his Majesty's Government obtained seats in that

House. He might appeal to every Administration, he might appeal to the present Administration, whether, without the aid of those boroughs, it would not frequently be impracticable to seat members of the Government in the House of Commons, whom it was most essential to the public services should be there? What he wished to ask the noble member for Tavistock, therefore, was, how, after the proposed Bill was passed, Ministers would obtain admission into that House? He had been told, in conversation, that nothing could be more easy than to provide that Ministers, as Ministers, should have seats in that House. He did not know if the proposers of the plan had any such ulterior object in view. He did not know whether, in the reconstruction of the House of Commons, they meant to introduce this new principle. He did not know whether they intended to give to the Crown the power of appointing to seats in that House as well as to seats in the Cabinet. If that was really their view, it ought to have been stated; if it was not their view, the possible exclusion of the Ministers of the Crown from Parliament was a strong ground of objection to the noble Lord's Motion. It should be recollected, that it was frequently the duty of his Majesty's Ministers to propose measures to which the people at large were averse. But two short years had elapsed since his right hon. friend, who was not at present in his place, did that to which an hon. Baronet opposite said Members of that House were not prone; he resigned the trust which his constituents reposed in him, because, in the discharge of his public duty, he was compelled to oppose their wishes. If, however, there had been no borough by which his right hon. friend had been enabled to resume his seat in that House, his Majesty's Government would have been deprived of the organ necessary for the explanation and defence of their measures; and especially for carrying through a proposition, the success of which the hon. Gentlemen opposite would not deny was essential to the peace and security of the realm. He wished to know how the noble Lord proposed to avoid such a dilemma? If this Bill were carried into effect, it would occasionally occur, that ex-Ministers would be shut out of the House—men who were most formidable in opposition, in consequence of their familiarity with business. This, perhaps, might be considered a recommendation of the measure. Happy would it be for a Chancellor of the Exchequer to come down to the House with a clumsy Budget, and find no man on the Opposition benches conversant with Treasury figures to examine and confound him; and happier still would it be for a First Lord of the Admiralty who had an estimate to propose, and was anxious to impugn the conduct of his predecessors in office, to be enabled to do so when they were not present to defend themselves. He approved of the noble Lord's scheme so far as it was directed to the diminution of the expense at elections; but he contended, this object could be attained without a reconstruction of the House. Bills, for instance, might be brought in to that effect; and he had no doubt they would receive the cordial support of a great majority of that House. But the plan of the noble Lord, he maintained, would directly tend to increase the expense of elections, by making all boroughs similar to those now having from 300 to 600 voters, which were notoriously the most expensive and corrupt. He was of opinion that none of the objections urged against the 10*l.* rate by the opponents of the measure had been answered by its advocates; and he denied the position of the Lord Advocate, that there was of necessity anything permanent in that species of property which was to confer the right of voting, since there was no limit fixed for the possession of a house at this low rent. He likewise objected to the measure, because it deprived the lower classes of their right of returning Representatives to Parliament. He could not, he said, contemplate the possibility of the measure being carried. He was well convinced there was sufficient sense in the country and sufficient firmness in the House to reject it. But if he could contemplate its being carried, he must conceive a House of Commons, representing not the good sense of the people of England, but their temporary passions and prejudices—possessing, as once before, inordinate power, and ready to abolish the hereditary branch of the Legislature, and overthrow the Monarchy. In conclusion he stated, that when the time came, he would give the measure his most earnest and determined opposition; being convinced that there was sufficient wisdom in the country and firmness in the House of Commons to reject it.

Mr. *Lennard* did not desire to overthrow the Monarchy or to abolish the Peerage, but to destroy that corrupt borough-mongering system which was the destruction of the rights of both, and thus restore the British Constitution to its ancient purity. He said he could confirm what had fallen from the hon. member for Colchester respecting the feeling towards Reform which prevailed in the county with which he was connected. He had understood the hon. member for Essex to have stated, that the feeling in favour of Reform was not strong there; in proof of which, he adduced the fact, that no pledge respecting his vote upon the question had been demanded of him on the hustings. He could not deny that this might be the case; but most certain it was, that the friends of the hon. Member (those who supported him) were impressed with the opinion that he was an advocate for Reform; for every wall in the county was inscribed with "Tyrell and Reform." To the belief that his hon. friend was a reformer, he was indebted for his election. He remembered, too, that his hon. friend stated, at the Annual Tory Meeting held in that county, that he was a friend to Reform, that and the declaration gave extreme satisfaction to the assembly. The measure which they were then discussing was called a revolutionary measure; but it was rather a Bill for the restoration of rights. If leaseholders and copyholders similar to those at present had existed formerly, there could be no doubt that they would have had the right of voting. If large towns, such as those now unrepresented, had been formerly in existence, there could be no doubt they would have had Representatives. He meant to give his cordial support to the measure, but would take the liberty of suggesting, in the Committee, that the franchise, as regarded leaseholders, might be advantageously extended. If the people had formerly been silent on this subject, it was not from indifference to Reform, but from despair of seeing it carried; but now that they saw in office a Government that was willing to carry Reform, they expressed their approbation of the measure, in favour of which they had loaded the Table with petitions. They had been told that this was an improper time for the introduction of the measure, but he thought otherwise, and hailed the period at which it was introduced, and thought it was the fittest time that could have been chosen. He asserted, in contradiction to those who had declared an opposite opinion, that the measure was not the consequence of intimidation, but the inevitable result of the triumph of those principles which had been so long and so zealously advocated by the men who were now the members of his Majesty's Government. This measure was not, like the Catholic Question, one that had been extorted from the fears of a weak Government, which would have withheld it if it could, but was a spontaneous act on the part of the Government, and came therefore, as a bounty, and with the grace of a matter of favour, at the same time that it was really an act of justice. He should therefore, give it his cordial support.

Colonel *Tyrell* begged to explain, that he was a reformer, and that he did not oppose the measure because he wished to resist all Reform, but because he thought this measure went a great deal too far.

Mr. *Charles Douglas* could not support this measure, which he thought was founded in a violation of the principles of the Constitution, and seemed to him to go to the destruction of the institutions of the country. The Lord Advocate had told the House that the people of Scotland were loyal, and that the country was in a prosperous condition, If that was the fact, where was the reason for changing those institutions under which the loyalty and prosperity of the country had grown up? He trusted, that before this Bill was brought in, the noble Lord who proposed it would more distinctly explain his objections to the state of the representation in Scotland, and his proposed remedy for them.

Mr. Alderman *Waithman* wished to take that opportunity of making a few remarks upon this most important question. He was the more anxious to do this, as he represented a very numerous constituency, who were warmly in favour of the measure now introduced by his Majesty's Ministers, and who had instructed him to give that measure his support. With that instruction he should most cheerfully comply. It had been said, that the people had been indifferent about Reform, because, during a particular period, they had presented no petitions to that House on the subject. He denied that they had been indifferent upon the subject of Reform. they had not slept upon that question; but it had not been brought forward, because, when the Catholic Question and the repeal of the

Test and Corporation Acts came under consideration, the people were unwilling to endanger their success by agitating the question of Reform. Now, when the Government was willing to entertain the question, they came forward to show their satisfaction at the conduct of the Government, and to express their anxious desire for the success of the measure. He was sorry to see, that, during these Debates, many hon. Members had risen up to defend the abuses of the Constitution more openly than he had ever heard before. The pertinacity with which they had defended these abuses quite astonished him; and those who had, in the strongest terms, defended those abuses were the persons who were individually connected with these rotten boroughs. They had been told, that this Reform was uncalled for, because there was no complaint of grievances before the House; but he denied that assertion; for, in his mind, the people complained of the worst of grievances, when they declared that they had no voice in the election of the men who made the laws by which their lives and property were to be disposed of. It was a fact, that thirty-four Peers returned above sixty Members of Parliament—all of whom held places of profit or pension under the Crown; and how was it possible, he asked, to consider these persons as the true Representatives of the people of the country? Yet, the power they possessed was considerable, and the constitution of that House was such, that the Government could not go on without their aid, while they remained in it. That alone was a source of the greatest corruption. He denied that this measure was the consequence of intimidation. Never had the people been more calm and temperate in demanding their rights, than on the present occasion, and it was a libel on them to say, that they wished to upset the Constitution. The measure which the Government had now introduced was very generally and very cordially approved by the people, and the Government had worthily gained their confidence by proposing it. At the same time that he said the people demanded this right of full Representation temperately, he would observe, that to refuse it to them now that they did demand it, would be most improper; and unless the wishes of the people were attended to, he feared that bad consequences might ensue. The people of this country were not in the least disloyal, but by long misgovernment, and by wasteful expenditure, they had been reduced to such suffering, that they had been forced to inquire narrowly into the cause; and having done that, and found it in the imperfect state of the Representation, they demanded, and with good reason, that that cause should be removed. It was said that the people who made this demand did not understand the Constitution. He denied that statement; but if it were true, what did it prove, but that the Constitution which was incapable of being understood was good for nothing, and required to be amended? He wished to call the attention of the House to one circumstance which seemed to have been but little attended to, which was, that when the Constitution was settled at the Revolution, the people were only one-third as numerous as at present, and the Debt was a mere trifle. At present the Debt amounted to eight hundred millions, and the annual revenue of the country to fifty millions; and the change, therefore, was so great, in population and in revenue, as to require a corresponding change in the Constitution. Under these circumstances, and without troubling the House further, —for his sentiments on the subject were well known—he should conclude by declaring, that he gave his cordial support to the Motion of the noble Lord.

Mr. *Lyon* said, it is not my wish, Sir, to occupy the attention of the House for many minutes, as the question now before it has been so fully argued during the last seven evenings, but, upon a question of such importance, I am unwilling to give a silent vote. Sir, the noble Lord who has brought forward this Bill has sentenced my constituents to be one and all for ever wiped out from the list of voters. The right hon. Baronet, at the head of the Admiralty, has stated upon this occasion, that men consider their promises generally more binding to their patrons than to their constituents. I can assure the right hon. Baronet that he shall not find in me an example of this, for I have no patron; but I have constituents, and I will vote for them. I will not trespass on the House by bringing forward any new arguments, but will merely make one observation upon the argument of the noble Lord who brought forward this Motion; and I assure him that I listened to him with the utmost attention. He stated, that he was not about to propose a new Constitution, but merely to renovate the old one; but, Sir, I deny that he does this; for example, (the House will excuse my alluding to myself), but was Seaford, the borough which I have the honour to represent (and many of the boroughs proposed to be disfranchised are, I know, similarly situated), was Seaford a Birmingham, or a Sheffield, when our forefathers, of whose virtue and wisdom we have been so constantly reminded, gave it a charter? It has not fallen into decay: on the contrary, it has increased in size and wealth since it received its charter; and can any one deny but that it was intended by our forefathers that all persons, from the highest to the lowest, should have a voice in this House? Therefore it was, that the right of voting was given in some instances to potwallopers; and in others, scot-and-lot payers received the elective franchise. This, Sir, I assert was the intention of our forefathers. The present Bill has not the same meaning;—it is a change, not a renovation. But, Sir, the noble Lord states that population is his guide. Is this the fact? How has the learned member for Waterford been answered? He has shown that there are towns and counties in Ireland far more populous than those to which the present Bill gives Members. Population, therefore, cannot have been the noble Lord's guide. The noble Lord states that the Cabinet are unanimous. This may be, but its supporters are not so. Has not the hon. member for Colchester just declared, that this Bill is revolutionary, and therefore he glories in it? Sir, so much of this Bill as goes to disfranchisement, I shall oppose.

Mr. *Schonswar* said, that when he first heard of this measure he thought it one of a most sweeping Reform; but when he had had time to consider it fully, he saw that it was a just and true measure of wholesome Reform; that it was conformable to the principles of the Constitution of England, the spirit of which it manifestly adopted, and was strictly in accordance with the principles of justice, liberty, and truth. It was in accordance with those principles which had existed before all Constitutions, and on which they all ought to depend; and in that belief he was ready to give it his full and cordial support. The Gentlemen opposite had taken a most extraordinary course in urging their objections to this measure. They asserted that it was forced upon the House by intimidation. They were mistaken. The advocates of the proposed Bill were not acted upon by their fears, but by their honest conviction of the necessity and justice of the measure. With revolution sometimes threatened on one side, and rebellion on the other, he trusted that they would overlook the threats of both, and coolly and steadily pursue that course which they felt to be for the benefit of the people. There was an almost unanimous voice throughout the country in favour of this measure, and he trusted that the House would recollect that circumstance, and discharge its duty to the country by passing a measure which would be a fresh bond of union between the Government and the People. They should redeem the pledge of service to their country which many of them had so recently renewed to their constituents in the face of God and the world, and give their sanction to a measure which all the people loudly demanded at their hands.

Mr. *Bayntun* said, after the wish he had expressed last night to deliver his sentiments upon this most important subject, and if, besides that of being a young Member of that House, he had any other claim upon its attention and indulgence, it was this—that he should not detain the House for any length of time. Though he was sensible that any arguments that he could bring forward in support of that great question of Reform, had been enforced by hon. Members possessing learning, talent, and experience in a degree to which he could have no pretensions, yet, in justice to that numerous constituency whom he had the honour of representing in that House, together with his own feelings towards the country, he could not consent merely to give a tacit concurrence to the measure proposed by his Majesty's Government. No man could be more averse than he to any line of domestic policy that could by possibility injure that Constitution under which we had the happiness to live; and it was precisely for that reason that he should give his concurrence to the proposition of the noble Lord, with whatever improvements further discussion might suggest. Surely, a measure framed by men having so deep a stake in the preservation of public order,—framed by the Government,—could not be deemed of a revolutionary, or even of a dangerous tendency. But he felt the danger to be on the other side,—

that not the adoption, but the rejection of the proposed measure would entail a state of things which no man could think of without shuddering, and without being prepared to make every effort, and every proper sacrifice, rather than encounter it. Let it not be supposed that he appealed to the fears rather than to the judgment of hon. Members. He appealed to the judgment of that House to look danger in the face, if it already existed; to provide against it, if likely to arise. Any opposite line of conduct would indicate either pusillanimity or perverted judgment. They were not surely called upon by any hon. Members to treat with indifference the circumstances and wants of the times in which they lived. And would any hon. Member who had had an opportunity of observing the state of public feeling throughout the country, be bold enough to declare, that the demand for Reform, so loud and so general, could be rejected without some danger? Had not a mighty spirit been awakened by recent events, fresh in the recollection of all, or rather going forward at that very moment all around them? and they might rest assured that the spirit thus awakened would not be lulled by the somniferous orations of those who, loving actual abuses,

"Not wisely, but too well,"

would rather that the whole structure should fall about their ears than that one snug comfortable nest should be disturbed. He would say with the poet—

"England! the time is come when thou shouldst wean
Thy heart from its emasculating food,
The truth should now be better understood;
Old things have been unsettled."

Nothing short of the most complete infatuation could blind any man to the necessity of conciliating the people,—a course advisable at all times, but absolutely requisite now. Before he sat down, he should just notice some observations which had been advanced by hon. Gentlemen opposite, with reference to the decayed and objectionable boroughs, which they had been told had been the means of letting in the light of so much talent into that House, although no hon. Member, except the hon. and learned member for Waterford, in his eloquent speech of last night, who had made some pointed observations upon it, appeared to have chosen to point out the probable amount of the opposite quality admitted through the same channels. These hon. Gentlemen said, that for the well-being of the country it was necessary that the aristocracy should possess considerable influence in the return of Members to the Commons House of Parliament. Now, of that fair constitutional influence, which always should, and always must, be attached to property, no one wished to deprive the aristocracy; and when hon. Members should have felicitously proved that borough influence was constitutional influence,—that it was not one of the greatest insults to the good sense of the nation, the most unjustifiable mode of packing an elective assembly,—then he, for one, should be unwilling to disturb it. But believing, as he did, that this aristocratical influence tended to the annihilation of one of the three great estates of this kingdom, and that not the least important—the Representation of the people—reducing the Constitution, in its present very decayed and nearly worn-out state, from a Constitution of King, Lords, and Commons, to that of King, Lords, and their dependents, instead of the free choice of the Commons of England—believing that, he could not sympathize in the wish of those hon. Gentlemen, that the aristocracy should be permitted to retain what, in his opinion, was an unconstitutional power, under the gentle denomination of a considerable share of parliamentary influence. He could not sufficiently thank the House for the indulgence extended to so humble an individual; and with the hope that the happy combination of circumstances which had enabled the noble Lord, after so long and so apparently hopeless a struggle, to bring forward that great question of Parliamentary Reform, backed by the Government, would lead to the tranquillity of the country, to the stability of the Constitution, to the establishment of perfect confidence between the people of England and their Representatives in that House, he would repeat the words of a celebrated writer,—

"Let us exult, that they who rule the land
Are men who hold its many blessings dear:
Wise, upright, valiant,—not a venal band,
Who are to judge of danger which they fear,
And honour which they do not understand."

Mr. *Courtenay* was anxious to take his full share of that awful responsibility, attached by the right hon. Baronet opposite to those who ventured to oppose this measure; and he wished to discharge himself from that still more awful responsibility which would attach to those who concurred in effecting this very great change in the Constitution. With regard to one borough included in the list of the noble Lord, he had to charge him with taking away its franchise upon erroneous pretences. He would not enter into any detailed defence of the present system of Representation, because the subject had been entirely exhausted; but it was, nevertheless, necessary for him to say, that after having listened with great attention to three Cabinet Ministers—to the noble Lord who brought forward this measure, and to the Judge-Advocate, and to the noble Lord, the Under Secretary for the Colonies, he was not satisfied of the principle on which it was founded. He did not deny the necessity of a Reform, but he did not agree to the principle on which that Reform was to be effected: for he could not think with the Lord-Advocate of Scotland, that a Reformed Parliament would produce benefit to the country, without first considering what the nature of the Reform was to be. That might be called a Reform which, after all, might be no amendment, which he thought would be the case, if the exposition of the principle on which this Bill was founded, was to be taken from the speech of the right hon. Baronet who spoke last night, and his learned friend, the Judge-Advocate, who spoke the night before. The right hon. Baronet, however, did not take quite such high ground as the Judge-Advocate. He merely said, he must concur with the just demands of the people; but the Judge-Advocate took a much higher view of the case; made an elaborate exposition of the principle, and asserted that this House should represent all the Commons of England, and nothing but the Commons of England. The right hon. Gentleman said, that was the principle of our Constitution; and he quoted Mr. Justice Blackstone as having clearly laid down this principle. But he confidently asserted, that the true principle of the Constitution of England was not to be found in any book, but in practice. The right hon. Gentleman would indeed find it laid down, that in order to preserve the balance of the Constitution, the three branches of the Legislature, the King, Lords, and Commons, ought to act independently of each other, each serving as a check upon the other; but he would put it to his right hon. friend, whether that had been the practice of the Constitution, and whether it could work for ten years in that manner. Mr. Speaker lately furnished a very apt illustration of the difference between the practice and the theory of the Constitution, in what he said with respect to the use made in this House of the name of the King. He decided, that Members were perfectly justified in alluding to that name, because, if Ministers acted constitutionally, they could not bring the measures under discussion before the House without having first submitted them to the King. That was most assuredly in accordance with the practice of the Constitution, as it had subsisted for many years; but, according to what was found in the books, it would be an impeachable offence. In practice, the different branches of the Constitution operated upon each other, imperceptibly producing the protection and mutual advantage of every public interest. Whatever might be the theory, the practice, as laid down by the Speaker, was perfectly correct. In his opinion, any measure which would greatly popularize the House of Commons, would destroy the balance of the Constitution, and render it impossible that the King and the Peers should preserve their station. When he said that this was impossible, he did not impute any fault to the Commons, as the hon. member for Colchester appeared to suppose, but he certainly was of opinion, that any system of pure and perfect Representation must destroy the other two branches of the Constitution. If it were said, that the only perfect system of Representation must be founded on a notion of the abstract right of the people to govern themselves, without the interference of any other power, how could one man, and a body of 300, or 400, possess each a third part of the legislative power? Mr. Fox, in one of his celebrated speeches on the subject of Reform, stated, he was not of the opinion generally held, that the Constitution was beautiful in theory but erroneous in practice, but exactly the reverse; he thinking that it was in some degree absurd in theory, but excellent in practice; for what, he asked could be more absurd in theory, than that one man should have a third part of the Legislature in his own person? The right hon. Baronet, and the noble Lord, professed to give to independent and intelligent classes the right of voting, for the purpose of returning Members to Parliament; but in doing that the noble Lord drew a line, which must necessarily be arbitrary. The noble Lord assumed that inhabitants of houses rented at 10*l.* a-year possessed independence, and intelligence. For his part he did not see that paying a 10*l.* rent afforded any security for independence and intelligence; and he was sure that the enactment would present as many anomalies as exist in the present system, because the 10*l.* householder in one place, and the 10*l.* householder in another would be in as different situations as two persons could possibly be. Without, however, going further into the discussion of that part of the subject, as he saw the House was impatient, he would only add, that he did not think the noble Lord extended the franchise to the general body of the intelligent inhabitants of this country. Suppose that 10*l.* householders represented the intelligence of the country, they must have the good fortune to reside in, or at a very small distance from, certain towns, or they would not be entitled to the privilege of voting; and supposing there are 400,000 10*l.* householders, 200,000 out of that number would, *prima facie*, be disqualified from the privilege of voting. The noble Lord, therefore, on his own principle, did great injustice. If he had recurred to the principle adopted by Earl Grey, who, when he brought forward a motion on this subject, in the year 1797, proposed to give to all householders the right of voting; he would have introduced a much more fair and just measure than this. He must also take the liberty of saying, that there was one remarkable feature in the speech of the noble Lord, in which he departed from all other speeches he ever made on this subject. The noble Lord did not state to the House any one practical benefit that he expected would result from this measure, and he would find it most difficult to discover one. The learned Lord Advocate contended, that public opinion ought to operate rapidly upon the House; but he (Mr. Courtenay) held, that the influence of public opinion should only make itself gradually felt. In the list produced by the noble Lord, of close and decayed boroughs, he found the borough of Totness, which he had the honour to represent. Would the noble Lord have the goodness to tell him whether, in his estimation, that borough was a close or open borough? Decayed it was not; it never was more flourishing than at present; and he would venture to say, that it was as open as Westminster. If the noble Lord, therefore, intended to disfranchise it, the ground for his doing so should be fairly stated. In respect to that borough, the Bill of the noble Lord would actually give rise to evils that never before existed; and this would be the case, not only in that borough, but in many others similarly situated. That borough was now perfectly open; there was no bribery—no patron—but the immediate effect of the noble Lord's Bill would be, to place it under the control of a patron. By return of post—as soon as his constituents were informed of the nature of this Bill—they wrote to inform him, that after this Bill had passed—if, indeed, it ever received the sanction of this House,—they would do their best to return him to Parliament, but that a great deal would depend on a noble Peer, whom he would not name,—who would possess a considerable degree of influence in the borough and adjoining parishes, and on the decision of the Privy Council, as to the point to which the limits of the borough should be extended. On these circumstances it would depend, whether this free and open borough should remain so, or be transferred to the influence and control of a Nobleman who, he believed, supported his Majesty's Government. It was true, that this borough had a smaller population than those left with two Members, but that and many other boroughs, contained a much greater portion of intelligence than those towns which would be put in possession of new Members. The noble Lord assigned the elective franchise, not according to the quantity of intelligence a place possessed, but according to the number of persons, without taking intelligence at all into consideration. The noble Lord actually favoured those places which contained a large number of inhabitants, without any degree of intelligence, and disfranchised those which contained a smaller number of inhabitants with a greater degree of intelligence. Judging from the population returns, about two-thirds of the boroughs would require that the neighbouring parishes should be included in them, and there would be then nearly 100 Bassetlaws. The noble Lord, the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, asserted, that a great part of the evils of this country, and especially the National Debt, was owing to the existence of an unreformed Parliament. That very allegation was contained in a petition presented to this House by the present Earl Grey, in the year 1793; and Mr. Fox, whose conduct on the subject of Reform was moderate in a remarkable degree, expressed his regret that a proposition so absurd should be found in the petition, yet that absurdity is now repeated by the son of Mr. Fox's friend. When Lord Grey, in the year 1797,* proposed, for the last time, his measure of Reform, which resembled, in some respects, that now under discussion, he felt so deeply the importance of the subject, and the difficulty of making so radical a change in the constitution of this House, that he did not move for it to pass, but that it should be brought in and printed, and laid on the Table for another Session. He would suggest the adoption of the same course on this occasion. There was not the slightest doubt but this Bill would have the effect of producing the greatest change which had ever been made in the Constitution, not excepting the Revolution of 1688; and he really thought that a measure of this unspeakable importance ought not to be passed in a hurry. It was, in his opinion, a revolutionary measure in two senses of the word—in the first place, it infused too much of the popular feeling into the composition of this House; and, secondly, it tended to produce a change which, when once effected, would instantly lead to others, leaving, at no distant time, hardly a vestige of the original Constitution of the country remaining.

Lord *Stanley* said, having the honour of being one of the Representatives of a large county, he felt anxious to trespass a short time on the indulgence of the House. There were many points connected with the measure upon which he would not now speak. He was desirous of stating what he had been able to collect from his constituents and others in the county of Lancaster, as to their opinions upon the measure which had been submitted to Parliament. It gave him great pleasure and happiness to say, that the principles of the measure were not only supported by the great body of the people in that part of the kingdom, but that they met with complete approbation. Many persons who had never before hazarded an opinion upon their own rights—having been bought and sold like cattle in Smithfield, as had been said of voters for certain boroughs in the course of the Debate—now came forward, and were loud in their praises of the measure. He was persuaded that in the course of a few days hon. Members representing boroughs, who had never been desired by their constituents to declare opinions on their behalf, would be called upon to state in that House—opinions indicative of approbation of the measure. In the course of a very short time a meeting was to be held in the county of Lancaster, for the purpose of the people expressing their satisfaction at the course taken by Ministers. Many great obstacles, he was aware, were presented, but they would give way. He was ready to confess, that when he heard the speech of his noble friend—when he unfolded the plan of Parliamentary Reform—he really was apprehensive that he had gone too far. It was not with respect to the principle of the measure; but he feared that, by its largeness, a powerful force would be enlisted against it. He had listened to the arguments, certainly with an anxious wish that the measure might be carried, and he would now say, he had confident hopes of that being accomplished. He would tell the hon. Members who had opposed it, and this he said not as a threat, that such opposition only tended to cause the people to unite more strenuously in its favour. Was the House of Commons, he would ask, to remain a doubtful power, uncertain whom it represented? or was it to become again what was the original design—the true and full Representative of the people? He had represented, in several Parliaments, a borough in the county which he had now the honour of representing; and it might be said—nay, he knew it had been said—that great influence had been made to return him. It might be so, or not. He was aware that he had many personal friends in the place; but this he would say, that, of the four times which he sat in Parliament for that borough, three were contested elections. That borough, he was glad to find, had been included in the plan of the noble Lord. He rejoiced that the House of Commons would henceforward consist of real Representatives of the people. This was a subject of great congratulation to the country. It would afford him infinite pleasure and satisfaction if he could in any way contribute in rendering so important and valuable a service to the empire, and his vote should be most cordially given in support of the measure.

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* See Hansard's Parl. History, Vol. xxxiii, p. 644.

Mr. *Keith Douglas* was exceedingly anxious to hear some explanation given of the plan as it affected Scotland, more particularly in relation to the Scotch burghs. He was prepared to show, when the Scotch Bill was brought in, that the present districts into which the boroughs were grouped could not be continued.

Mr. *Thomas Duncombe* assured the House that he should not detain it long, but having Constituents to represent, he was anxious to say a few words. Two-thirds of the time occupied in the debates which had taken place on the introduction of the measure submitted to Parliament had been occupied by hon. Members who had no Constituents to represent. The arguments of those hon. Gentlemen who represented rotten or close boroughs would have no weight with the people of England, excepting making them insist upon having the measure passed. From the knowledge which he possessed of the opinions entertained by his own constituents, they were in favour of it. They had authorised him to convey to his Majesty's Ministers their gratitude for the unflinching manner in which they had redeemed their pledge; and gone further than was expected in destroying the aristocratical influence which had so long disgraced that House, by having Peers' nominees seated as the Representatives of the people. The people were bound to support Ministers, and they would contribute their share towards such an object. The hon. Member who had commenced that evening's debate, had said that he (Mr. Duncombe) was a slight authority. He would admit that he was, and he had shown that he thought so by not often troubling the House with his observations. He thought that the hon. Member who had addressed the House at the beginning of the evening with so much vehemence, and with so little argument, would do better if he would follow his example. The hon. and learned member for Boroughbridge (Sir C. Wetherell) who had rather prematurely called upon any member of the Cabinet to uphold the measure if he dared, would now, probably, think that the challenge which he had put forward would have been much better omitted. He would, however, upon the present occasion, follow a little the indiscretion of the hon. and learned Member; and he called upon any hon. Member opposite to answer or reply to, the able speech of his right hon. friend, the Secretary for Ireland. If, however, hon. Gentlemen did not like to attempt a reply to that speech, he would beg to invite them to endeavour to answer the speech of the learned Lord—the Lord-Advocate. He begged to call upon the dying member for Boroughbridge—to answer the speech of the Learned Lord; and he would give him until the passing of the Bill—and pass the Bill would—to frame his answer. He would give the hon. and learned Member time, even until the moment when the Speaker put the question "that this Bill do pass," after its third reading, to reply to that speech—a speech fraught with argument, which the right hon. the ex-Secretary of the Admiralty had vainly attempted to answer—in language no more to be compared to the language which had been used by the learned Lord, than the trash of a certain Sunday newspaper was to be compared to the elegant diction and acute reasoning of the *Edinburgh Review*. There never was a Bill so auspicious and promising. Who were the opponents of the measure? Of course the rotten-borough Representatives. The opposition thus offered was the greatest honour which the Bill could receive, even although among its opponents were the hon. members for Wareham (Mr. Calcraft), and for Callington (Mr. Baring). If the measure were defeated by its opponents, the country would compel them to pass it. If Ministers did listen to the opposition, and wished to retrace their steps, he believed that the country would not allow them. The country had seen Ministers destroy the out works of corruption; they had witnessed the manner in which the citadel had been summoned, and did the House believe that the people of England would stand idly by, were an attempt made to abandon the siege? No. He would tell the borough proprietors to listen to serious advice and open their gates; let them unfasten their rusty bolts, for although they might possibly postpone, they could not prevent the hour of victory from arriving. The House had been told that it was something bordering upon treason to recommend an appeal to the country on the part of Ministers, should the measure be rejected. He would tell the hon. and learned member for Boroughbridge, and the noble Marquis, the member for Buckinghamshire, as far as that recommendation went, he would plead guilty: to such a charge he was a rebel. He would say, in the event of the Bill being rejected, that he would recommend his Majesty's Ministers to dissolve Parliament. Nay, he would go further, and recommend them to advise the Crown to suspend the writs for the sixty rotten boroughs that were to be totally disfranchised, and he believed that the country would put upon that proceeding the stamp of legality. He knew there was a party in that House who were opposed to the present measure, some of whom had formed part of the late Administration, men who would be happy to turn out the present Government on that question. But could they maintain themselves in the situation to which they aspired? could they succeed in cajoling the public with a sham Reform? No, let them not lay that flattering unction to their Tory souls, for never again, he could tell them, would the country submit to be governed by the system of patronage and corruption which they had upheld. As the noble Lord, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, had declared—the days of patronage were gone by, and if those who were opposed to Reform were to succeed in turning out the Ministers on this measure, to favour the principles of patronage and corruption, the country would set the rotten-borough Administration at defiance, and the conflict which they themselves now predicted, would infallibly ensue. Such a state of things no man, no honest man, could desire to witness, and in order that it might be averted from this country, he hoped the House would adopt the measure now before it, and secure to the people of England by that means a secure, safe, efficacious, and constitutional Reform.

Mr. *Tennant* addressed the House amidst loud and continued calls of question and much confusion. He was understood to express his gratitude and the gratitude of his Constituents to the Ministers for this measure. He contended, that the balance of the Constitution, supposing the different branches to be equal, and supposing them represented by figures, had been destroyed, and that the Peers had doubled the number which expressed their power, while the Commons and the Crown had diminished the number which expressed their power. He would place up in some part of the House, "Repaired and Beautified Anno Domini 1831." The Bill was, he thought, the greatest boon ever bestowed on a loyal and affectionate people.

Lord *John Russell* said, that after a Debate which had endured for seven days, of which no previous example was before the House, he felt it to be his duty to address the House in answer to what had fallen from several of those hon. Members who had spoken against the measure, and also to set them and the House right upon one or two points upon which he had been misunderstood. And, first, he must express his extreme surprise at the line of argument adopted by his opponents; a surprise awakened by the consideration that such a course should have been taken upon a question of such vital importance and of such deep interest to the country: those hon. Members who had spoken against the measure had confined themselves chiefly to an attack by means of personal gibes, and to throwing out taunts against himself and his right hon. Colleagues. They had not endeavoured to point out any of the inherent and latent faults which must ever be found in a measure based, like the present, on very broad principles, and which would make very important alterations; they had confined their chief opposition to bringing an accusation against himself and some of his friends in the Ministry, that, in framing and bringing forward this measure, they had considered the claims and interests of their own connections with too partial an eye. Now, he did not expect, when he had looked forward prospectively to the debate which he knew must ensue on his propositions, that such a system of warfare would be maintained only with such weapons. He had looked for sharp words and angry arguments from those hon. Members who were opposed to Reform; but he must say, that the course taken by them had been as unexpected as it was unworthy. Hon. Gentlemen had been seen day after day coming down to that House, pursuing a line of argument mixed up with vituperation, and attributing to the Ministers motives which could not be regarded as otherwise than base and degrading. What, on a matter of such overwhelming importance, when the future welfare of England, and the future construction of that House, and of the Constitution, were under consideration, did hon. Members leave such high matters in order to fix on him, and on his friends in the Cabinet, the paltry charge of consulting their own interests. Such a course of proceeding reflected more discredit on the opponents of the Ministers, than on the Ministers themselves. He was sure that no Member who knew him would impute to him, in advocating such a great measure, the mean, paltry, and pitiful desire to serve his party or his friends; least of all, did he expect to have found his hon. friend, the member for Callington taking that line of argument, and making such an imputation, for he had been long in habits of friendly intercourse with that hon. Member, and certainly had hoped, that the hon. Gentleman had known him too well to cast such a slur on him. He would now proceed to answer in as few words as possible, what related to the personal share he had had in selecting the basis assumed for the measure. In doing this the Ministers had taken the population returns of 1821 as the rule by which to frame the enactments of the Bill. They might have gone further and have taken the number for determining the disfranchisement of boroughs at a much higher mark; they might have gone so far, and their opponents reproached them for not having done it, as to exclude Tavistock and all boroughs which possessed a population only equal to that borough. But what would have been the consequence? Why, they found that whereas by the line which they had drawn, 168 Members only would be cut off, no less a number than 260 Members would have been cut off had they drawn the line so as to exclude Tavistock and its equals; and it was not thought advantageous to propose a measure which would have the effect of excluding Members to such an extent from that House. Supposing they had fixed the limits of the boroughs at above 500—why, Higham Ferrars would have escaped. If they had fixed the limits at 1,000, it would have been said that certain Whig interests had been considered; at 2,000, it was the same; and if they had gone to the extent of 3,000, the plan would have been open to similar unfounded imputations. He must beg to observe, that of the boroughs whose population exceeded 4,000, there were twenty-five left, and out of these twenty-five boroughs only three had been selected as points of observation by the opponents of the measure, who had totally omitted to make any mention of the remaining twenty-two. A noble Lord opposite would probably, after the measure was passed, retain some of that influence at Cirencester which he was known now to possess; and was one solitary borough to be picked out of the twenty-five, as a foundation whereon to fix an accusation against justice and impartiality of Ministers? He could assure the House that the subject had been very carefully gone into; the authentic returns laid on the Table had been taken as the basis of the whole measure, and he professed himself utterly unable to discover any plan that would not have been liable to similar objections. Then, again, some hon. Gentlemen had made a point of comparing boroughs, and had said, that one was small and another was large, and yet both were allowed to retain the same number of Representatives. He could only say, that this part of the subject also had been carefully looked at, and the different returns upon which it would be best to proceed, had been compared by the Government. And after the most mature consideration, the population returns, though they were uncertain, and in some instances incorrect, had been selected as those which, on the whole, it would be most proper to adopt as the basis of the alterations. Another ground for opposition had been taken on the proposition for giving a vote to the inhabitants of houses paying 10*l.* a year rent, and it had been asked did these form a proper criterion of the wealth and importance of a borough? It was also urged that there would be no certainty in the mode of ascertaining the number of these householders—that the persons employed to collect the taxes would favour their own districts, and that their returns would be no safeguard for a measure of this kind. To that he would only observe, that the Returning Officers had no notion that such a use would be made of these returns when they were made, and could not, therefore, have wilfully committed any errors. The hon. member for Yarmouth (Mr. William Peel) had compared the Returns with a document containing an account of the population of Tamworth; but would it have been expedient to found an Act of that House on the mere letter of a Returning Officer, without knowing whether it were correct, and especially when Returning Officers sometimes confessed their total ignorance of the subject? The hon. Member compared Tavistock with Tamworth, in respect to the number of houses rated at 10*l.* a-year. But the indirect objects of tax-officers render their returns not always a safe guide. The hon. Gent. after comparing Calne and Tavistock, and Tamworth, did not notice in the second return, that the number of houses in Tamworth is 130, and in Tavistock 260. That the measure was free from errors, he did not say, or that it would not admit of some slight amendments, but the Ministers had thought it best to take the Returns upon which they had founded it without making any private inquiries at all,—to let the general propositions first be placed before the public, and to obtain such documents as might be necessary for its perfection, after they had done so. He hoped the House would give him credit for the assertion, that the measure was founded on the general Returns, and not on any partial inquiries. The right hon. member for Aldborough had told them on a former night, that the Ministers had not gone by the population returns in regulating the number of Members for different places; that they had allowed certain boroughs to return two Members on a population of 4,000 or 5,000 whilst they had allowed the same number only to several of the large Yorkshire towns, where the population was 12,000 or 15,000. But this was no information to the Ministers; they had never put the measure of Reform on a footing of such perfect symmetry and regularity as to reduce the Representation of the country to exact proportions, so that a certain and fixed number of persons should return a certain number of Members. When the right hon. Member compared Sheffield with other towns, containing a much smaller number of inhabitants, he wished to remind the right hon. Gentleman, that the discrepancies at present were still greater, and he might have extended his observation to Westminster, which, with a population of 180,000, returned only two Members, whilst St. Alban's, Reading, and other towns in the neighbourhood, returned the same number. That circumstance was certainly an anomaly, but they had not interfered with it; anomalies they found, and anomalies, though not such glaring ones as now existed, they meant to leave. A regular distribution of an equal proportion of Members to equal population might be a wise and a great scheme, but the proposers of this measure had not thought fit to bring such a plan before Parliament; and if those who threw opposition in their way on that ground thought that such a plan would prove either beneficial or practicable, let them come forward and propose it, but let them not on account of this measure wanting a species of symmetry which they would have been the foremost to reject, censure it. Let them not bring forward arithmetical calculations on which to found arguments against this Reform, for the purpose of marring it, and stopping all improvement in the institutions of the country. The member for Tamworth had said, that he had not heard one ingenious reason from him in support of the plan for Reform which he had brought forward. He was willing to confess the truth of this charge, having thought it a sufficient merit, on his part, to have produced a plan for the remedy of evils which were so glaring in the constitution of that House that everybody acknowledged them; and he had, therefore, confined himself to the simple explanation of the remedies proposed. That Ministers were not required to state many reasons in support of the Bill, he needed no stronger proof than the reception which the measure had met with throughout the country. It had been received in all quarters, North, South, East, and West,—in Scotland and in Ireland—with one universal feeling of satisfaction; and he trusted that no fault could be found with him, because he had not taken up the time of the House by unnecessarily expatiating on the ingenious reasons in its favour which might be urged, and which the right hon. Member seemed to have expected. The nation was satisfied with the scheme as it stood, because the great and long-wished-for object of Reform would be attained by it; and he was satisfied also that there was common sense in the composition of the measure, even though there was some lack of ingenuity on his part in explaining its bearings. An hon. Member had done him the honour to read an extract from a speech made by him in the year 1819,* in praise of the Constitution, wishing to know how he could reconcile the language he then used with the measure at present before the House? Any change of opinion of his could, of course, be a matter of very little importance. The honourable Baronet was, however, partly right and partly wrong. He (Lord John Russell), had truly described the working of the Constitution in favourable terms, because he confined his view to a certain period subsequent to the Revolution; and in attending to the events of the last century, he had overlooked those of the present; but as he advanced in the labours of a Reformer he came to juster notions—

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* See Hansard, 1st Series, xli, 1104, 5. Also 3rd Series, ii, 1342, 3.

"From fiction's heights, where I had wandered long,
I stooped to truth, and moralized my song."

He certainly admitted, that in the year 1822, when he again came forward with a measure of Reform, and, looking at the state of the country, he perceived that the middle class, as compared with the corresponding body in the preceding century, had risen in wealth, and intelligence, and knowledge, and influence; and as they advanced, the limits of the Constitution became narrower and narrower, while the basis upon which the middle classes had established themselves was becoming broader and broader. Considering the increase of importance in that class, he had come to the conclusion that they were not sufficiently represented in the House. The basis upon which it was constituted was too narrow to admit of their equal participation of that Representation, on that account they had become dissatisfied, and on that account he had thought an extension of the Representation necessary. The votes of that House were not calculated to restore the confidence of the people. He had proved that on almost all great Questions of Economy, Retrenchment, and Reform, the Representatives of populous places were in favour of them, and the Representatives of the boroughs against them. There might be some egotism in reading part of a speech of his own, but that was he thought necessary in this case to set himself right with the House. He was censured for having said something in praise of the Constitution in 1819, but in 1821 he had moved for a Committee to inquire into the state of the Representation, which was not granted, and in 1822 he brought forward a measure more extensive than the present Bill, for it went to disfranchise 100 boroughs. The reason he had then given for that change in his opinion was as follows: "The indifference of the House to the measures I then proposed, has compelled me to look for others more calculated to insure the co-operation of the country at large, and to obtain from the House in the gross, that Reform which they were unwilling to effect by gradual and unpretending means."* He could but express much sorrow that the proposition he had then brought forward, for transferring the franchises of 100 boroughs to the larger towns had not been adopted; for, though it would not have been a final measure, it would have made the transition from the evils of the Representation to a reformed state of things much more easy than it was now. One right hon. Gentleman had said, in reference to the willingness expressed by the hon. member for Chichester to give up his boroughs, that those who liked might give them up, and that those who did not should retain them. The right hon. Gentleman counselled the Whigs to give up their boroughs, which was as much as to say, leave the field open to us and we shall find a rich harvest of patronage and emolument. But as long as the House was formed, as at present, it was necessary for Ministers to have some influence in such boroughs as Midhurst, Tavistock and Calne, in order that they might be able to meet their Tory adversaries in that House, and to have some chance with those who raised their voices in favour of corruption and patronage, as those hon. Gentlemen had so long done, with great advantage to themselves. The hon. and learned member for Boroughbridge had talked about the democratic Assembly, the Ministers were about to create, which would, at no distant day, destroy the King and the House of Lords; but there was a fallacy in the word democratic, which it seemed was made to imply an association of democrats, whose wish was, to overturn the House of Lords and the Crown. He denied altogether that the measure would have the effect of rendering that House a democratic assemblage, in that sense of the word. He could not conceive why Yorkshire, which now sent four Members, who were not democrats, should, when six Members were returned from that county, all at once send nothing but democrats. Nor could he conceive why Manchester, or Birmingham, should send democrats any more than Bristol or Liverpool. He did not know where Members could come from, who should be disposed to overturn the Crown. He was rather inclined to look upon the supposition as one of the same class of chimeras as had agitated the minds of hon. Members when the Test and Corporation Acts had been repealed, and when the Catholics had been admitted into that House. There was, in fact, no change proposed, down to a simple alteration of the Game-laws, which Gentlemen did not meet by similar arguments. The gallant Officer, the Ex-Secretary for Ireland, had made two mixed objections to the measure—the first, that it would take the Crown off the King's head; and the second, that it would give too many Members to Durham; these were very disproportionate objections, and as to that about the Crown, he thought he might leave the safety of his Majesty to the protection of his people. The advocates for the existing state of Representation were mistaken, if they thought their arguments would prove that the stability of the Throne depended on their boroughs. It was not upon such rotten and decayed timbers that the Throne could with safety rest. They were a disgrace to the House, and a peril to the country! It might be very true, that the borough Members, up to the present time, had had too much influence in the councils of the Sovereign, but he was apt to imagine that, upon inquiry, it would be found that their advice had not increased, but rather diminished the loyalty of the people. The Crown would be more secure, and the Throne more firm, by being placed upon the affections of the people. They were the fittest guardians of the institutions of the country. What might be suited to other times was unfit for the present, and the sooner the vicious parts of the system were lopped off the more would the people be disposed to consider it with that respect and reverence which the inhabitants of a free country should entertain for those institutions by which they were guarded. But the House had been told, it would be impossible for the Government of the country to be carried on if there were no boroughs by means of which Members of the Government could find seats in that House! When a Member of Parliament accepted office, and took upon himself the duties of a situation of great labour and responsibility, he acknowledged that it was sometimes convenient for such a person to get in for a close borough, where he had no constituency and no responsibility. He admitted that this convenience would be lost; but that men of great eminence, of any party, would not get into Parliament as the Representatives of great counties or towns, he altogether denied; let them look back to the leaders of the House. Mr. Pitt represented the University of Cambridge, Mr. Fox, the City of Westminster, Mr. Canning represented Liverpool, and Lord Castlereagh the County of Down. Now, if these Gentlemen, after they had accepted office, had chosen to retain their seats for those places, or had chosen at any time to resume those seats, he was satisfied that they might have done it. And as to the right hon. Baronet, the member for Tamworth, he was certain, that if at the last general election, that right hon. Baronet had chosen to stand for Liverpool, or for any of the large manufacturing districts with which he was connected, any of those would have been glad to obtain the services of so able and efficient a Representative. Men of great eminence, therefore, would not be excluded from Parliament. The abolition of the close boroughs, he admitted, might subject persons in office to some inconvenience, but in a great Question of this kind, the benefit must be weighed against the injury. In such a measure it was impossible there should not be some inconvenience; but the advantages to be reasonably expected from it so far overweighed the inconvenience to which individual members of the Government might be subject, that he did not look upon that argument as deserving of any consideration, being satisfied that the practical working of the measure on the Constitution would be productive of no injurious effect. Much had been said of threats and intimidation in and out of that House. What would hon. Members, who made this charge against his Majesty's Government, say to the words of Lord Chatham? "If this House does not reform itself from within, it will be reformed with a vengeance from without." Had his Majesty's Ministers said anything so strong as that? Had they thrown out such a threat to the House of Commons? But he should read for hon. Members the words of Mr. Burke, whose name was put forward, and his authority quoted, as the great antagonist and opponent of Parliamentary Reform—the enemy of all innovation, the champion of the Constitution and of the aristocracy, and the protector of that House against all the schemes of wild democracy. Mr.

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* Hansard's Parliamentary Debates, vol. ii., New Series, p. 79.

Burke, in introducing his plan of economical Reform, spoke to this effect—"The whole hope of reformation is at length cast upon us; and let us not deceive the nation, which does us the honour to hope everything from our virtue. If all the nation are not all equally forward to press this duty upon us, yet be assured that they all equally expect we should perform it. The respectful silence of those who wait upon your pleasure ought to be as powerful with you, as the call of those who require your service as their right. Some, without doors, affect to feel hurt for your dignity, because they suppose that menaces are held out to you. Justify their good opinion by shewing that no menaces are necessary to stimulate you to your duty. But, Sir, whilst we may sympathize with those in one point who sympathize with us in another, we ought to attend no less to those who approach us like men, and who, in the guise of petitioners, speak to us in the tone of a concealed authority. It is not wise to force them to speak out more plainly what they plainly mean. But the petitioners are violent. Be it so. Those who are least anxious about your conduct are not those that love you most." "Let us return to our legitimate home, and all jars and all quarrels will be lost in embraces. Let the Commons in Parliament assembled be one and the same thing as the Commons at large."* That was the way in which Mr. Burke, in one word, disposed of the theory that the House was not to represent the people, but that it was to be something better, and should not in all points represent the Commons at large. Mr. Burke went on to say, "The distinctions made to separate us from the people are mischievous. Let us identify and incorporate ourselves with them. Let us cut the chains and cables which hold us from them, and float into that harbour, whose moles and jetties extend to receive us;" and then he added, "War with the world, and peace with our constituents." Such were the words of Mr. Burke, in introducing a measure of economical reform, from which the people at that day hoped every thing. In that hope, however, they were mistaken. No cutting off of offices or of patronage, though it was done with ever so unsparing or so judicious a hand, could prevent the Hydra from rising again. Until the House was reformed, the people had no hope from retrenchment; for if one office was abolished, ten were created. What the people now called for was, not economical reform; it was another remedy. They saw clearly its necessity, and acted wisely in demanding an amended Representation in that House. What the people wanted was Representatives in that House in whom they could confide, as the most vigilant guardians of the public purse and the national interests. The people wanted not to trouble themselves by considering particular measures of Reform, and the abolition of particular places, but they expected such a change in the character of their Representatives, that in future they might rely confidently on it, that, when an expense was found to be unnecessary, it should be retrenched; when an armament was useless it should not be made, and when a law was oppressive, it should not be passed. There was but one topic more on which it was necessary to trouble the House. The right hon. member for Tamworth expressed his regret, partly for his own sake, partly for the sake of his Majesty's Ministers, but, most of all, for the sake of the country, that the Government had not produced such a measure as he could agree to—a measure in which there should be nothing of confiscation; by which the right hon. Baronet no doubt meant—no disfranchisement of the boroughs. The right hon. Baronet had wished that such a measure had been produced, as might have been passed through that and the other House of Parliament, without any dereliction of duty, or any great offence to the principles on which the majority of those Houses were in the habit of acting. If the ministers had done that, and acted on the right hon. Baronet's suggestion, no doubt they would have conciliated many—they would have avoided much opposition—the measure they produced would have been carried by a vast majority—they might have gone on with success through the Session; but they would have inflicted a great evil on the country at large. The hon. member for Callington (Mr. Baring) said, there was something or other about the institutions of this country, which did not succeed. There was something which wanted to be amended; but he did not know why or wherefore this was. Now such language was very well for a mere critic of the Constitution; but men who took upon themselves to conduct the affairs of the country, and were called by their Sovereign to its councils, had a more serious duty to perform. They ought not to rest satisfied with merely ascertaining that things did not go on well, their whole hearts, and souls, and minds should be employed in making them go better. What was the great evil—a greater evil far than even the constitution of that House, which the Government felt it hard to contend with? It had been seen, for several years past, that there was an increasing want of confidence in public men. The people had been for some years separating themselves into parties and sects, and unions and classes, without looking to any set of persons in that House with perfect confidence and reliance. If that were to go on for many years longer, he was satisfied it must lead to a total separation between what he might call the constituted authorities, and the mass of the people. Well, then, if Government had produced a trifling and unsatisfactory measure of Reform, it would have confirmed the distrust, and perpetuated that want of confidence with which public men were regarded. The Government might have obtained a large majority in that House; they might have gone on for a time triumphantly, by exhibiting, in this measure, a care and indulgence for private and personal interests, and also a respect for long-established and confirmed prejudices. They might have had that House with them, but could they, he asked, have gone on long without the confidence of the nation? And if they, the present Government, were removed from office, could the Gentlemen at the other side go on at all? He said no. The Gentlemen at the other side would have an additional difficulty to contend with. The evil would have increased. The public would give its confidence to no party. Those now in office would be said not only to have denied Reform, but to have betrayed the people. The hon. Gentlemen opposite would suffer from the want of confidence felt for them by the people, from their having opposed—perhaps with honesty—but certainly with a fixed and obstinate determination—those measures on which, as he believed, the great majority of the people had set their hearts. The people's want of confidence in that House would increase; they would continue to separate themselves into classes, and seek for a Reform—not a peaceable Reform—not a reformed system of Representation, including all the wealth and property of the kingdom—but the country would come to a species of Reform which might, indeed, be properly termed revolutionary—a Reform in which the interests of the higher classes would be but little considered, but to which the country must submit, as to the law of a conqueror. They had had bad examples in their own times of holding out too long against necessity. They had seen men come down to that House, and talk of making their stand on the fixed principles of the Constitution, and that nothing should ever shake them, let the consequences be what they might; and then they had seen those very men coming down to propose the very measures which they had thus argued against. As often as they had protested that nothing should induce them to yield, they had seen those men yield avowedly to fear. That, he conceived, was the worst course that any Government could pursue. A Government should act when it was not forced; it should anticipate the will of the people; it should propose more than was expected; it should take advantage of the reasonable time, and then Reform would produce gratitude and affection, instead of producing nothing but contempt. The language on the other side, "We are not to be intimidated" merely meant "We are not to be intimidated to-day. We see no sufficient reason for yielding at present. We can postpone it for another year. Put it off for another year, and, if we find it impossible to resist then, why, we must yield." Such was the fact. No Gentleman who talked of resisting the measure ventured to say, that the time would not come when it must be granted. The House had been told of the opinions of Mr. Canning and Mr. Huskisson, but, opposed as they were to Parliamentary Reform, though they might have thought that Reform was not an improvement, yet both of them were of opinion, that many years could not elapse before some measure of Reform must pass. Within eight months he had shown Mr. Huskisson at the bar some Resolutions he had prepared, with a view to a motion on Reform last year, and, after having looked over the Resolutions, Mr. Huskisson said "I cannot support those; but before long something of that kind will be carried in Parliament." If such was the opinion of wise men, of able men, and of men who were enemies to Reform, why should they hesitate, or wait longer? If Reform was to be carried let it be carried now, and they would raise an altar to the Constitution, in the affections of the people. Let those who had personal interests give them up freely, and with a good grace, as the Duke of Norfolk, and other men, with a truly liberal spirit, had already done. Be assured (said the noble Lord in conclusion) that there is nothing mean, nor timid, nor cowardly, in a sacrifice of private and personal interests, for the sake of the peace of the country—for the sake of future harmony, and for the sake of preserving the Constitution of this mighty—and as, I hope, enduring—empire, with satisfaction to the people.

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* Hansard's Parl. Hist. vol. xxi., pp. 70.

The Question that leave be given to bring in a Bill to amend the Representation of England and Wales, was then put from the Chair.

The voices which shouted forth "Aye" were loud and many, but, when

The Speaker, in the usual form, put the question in the negative, there were only two or three voices cried "No," one of which was remarkable for its loudness, and the others scarcely audible.

The Speaker having decided, that the question was carried in the Affirmative, that announcement was received with loud cheers from the Ministerial benches.

The Bill was ordered to be brought in by Lord John Russell, Lord Althorp, Sir James Graham, Mr. Charles Grant, Mr. Stanley, the Attorney General, and the Solicitor General.

REFORM BILL FOR SCOTLAND.] Lord J. Russell then moved for leave to bring in a Bill, to amend the Representation of the people in Scotland.

Sir *G. Clerk* protested against such a Motion, at so late an hour of the night. No part of this measure had been explained to the House. The Bill ought not to be brought in without affording the Scotch Members an opportunity of knowing its details, so that they might be able to form some opinion as to its operations.

The *Lord Advocate* thought, that the general outline of the Bill had been opened by the noble Lord, in his introductory discourse. At the same time, the House had certainly a right to know the particulars before they went into a Committee. If, however, the House would indulge him, he would in a few minutes supply any of the details that had been omitted by the noble Lord; and he might be the shorter on the subject, because the objections which had been made to the proposed alterations in England, would not apply to Scotland. In England, sixty-two Members were to be cut off; but in Scotland, there was to be an addition of five to the Representation. The objections which had been made to the Bill for England on that account, would not, therefore, apply to Scotland. It had been insinuated, that the Scotch plan differed in principle from the English plan, because in England it was proposed to add to the county Members, and in Scotland to reduce them. Upon looking to the results, however, it would be found, that the plans were coincident, and the principles on which they proceeded identically the same. In England the number of county Members was less than one-fifth of the whole Representation; but in Scotland, at present, the county Members amounted to thirty, while there were only fifteen Members for boroughs; on the same principle, therefore, that it was right to give an increase of county Members to England, it was right to give an increase of borough Members to Scotland. Instead of forty-five, the amount of the present Representation of Scotland, as proposed by this new Bill it would be fifty, and of these, twenty-eight were to be Members for the counties, and twenty-two for the boroughs. The proportion of borough Members to county Members would still be much greater in England than in Scotland, and Scotland would on this point have nothing to complain of. The Representation of the counties of Scotland was settled at the time of the Union, and was very anomalous, particularly of the small counties; and it was therefore now proposed, to conjoin or marry several of the small counties, one to the other, by which the Representation would become more equalised; and, in his opinion, the small counties would be better off, by being thus united. At present, some of these small counties only returned a Member alternately with some other, by which they had Members for unequal times, viz. the duration of Parliament. To some of these a whole Member would be given, others, as he had said, would be united. Kinross and Clackmannan, which returned a Member alternately, were to be united, while Caithness, being a large county, was to have a Member of its own. Bute was to be united with Dumbarton; Ross and Cromarty were to be consolidated with Nairn, and one Member was to be suppressed. Selkirk was to be united with Peebles, which had hitherto sent each a Member, the former containing only, according to the population returns of 1821, 6,800 inhabitants, and the latter 10,200. After being united, therefore, these two counties, containing only 17,000 people, would be smaller in amount of population, than many of the unconsolidated counties. It would be delusion to say, too, that the electors of these counties would be injured, by sharing their right to return a Member with other electors. At least, the franchise would in them not be so much diminished in value as in the more populous counties, where the influx of new votes, by altering the franchise, would be much greater than in these small counties. The qualification being approximated to that of England, all who were duly qualified would have a vote for a Member, and this would be the means of making the system more level and just in every direction. One great wish of the Government had been, to give Members to those districts that more imperiously required it, from their wealth and commerce—the wealth and commerce of Scotland chiefly being in towns that had sprung up since the Union; and he, therefore, thought, that the Government had been well advised, to allocate five additional Members in that way; and there would be, besides, two saved from the old county Representation, to give to those towns. Since the time of the Union, Edinburgh had always returned a Member for itself; and all the then boroughs were cast into fours, fives, or sixes, each of which groupes together returned one Member. With that arrangement the proposed plan would interfere; but he thought that it would appear to the House, that it did so on grounds perfectly defensible. It was proposed to give to Edinburgh two Members; to Glasgow, which might be called the third town in the empire, and the population of which amounted to 200,000, two Members; to Paisley, which was almost the rival of Glasgow, and which had a population of 50,000, one Member; to Aberdeen, one Member; and to Dundee, one Member—taking those boroughs out of the districts to which they had hitherto belonged. Leith, the sea-port of Edinburgh, and Greenock, the principal sea-port of the West of Scotland, whence all the shipments nearly were made for America and the West Indies, were also each to have a Member. The other boroughs would remain the same; only that the smaller ones, instead of having an equal vote, would only have one in proportion to the amount of their constituency. As he had before observed, there were fifteen of those burgh districts; thirteen of them were to remain with the alteration he had described, while one—viz. that of Fife, or the Anstruther district of burghs—was to be suppressed altogether, in consideration of its being extremely small, and consisting rather of small villages than of towns. It appeared from the population returns, that the whole number of people in these burghs did not exceed 6,000, while the number of inhabited houses rated at 10*l.* was not much above 200. He should have more reluctance than he had to deprive these burghs of their share of the Representation, if it were not that Fife enjoyed besides them the privilege of returning a Member for the county, two Members for burghs, and influenced the return of two others. With respect to those places which were, for the first time, to have the privilege of returning a Member on their own account, it was thought advisable to replace them, in some instances, in the burgh districts from which they were removed: therefore, in the place of Glasgow, it was proposed to put Kilmarnock; and in the place of Aberdeen, the thriving port of Peterhead; Falkirk was to be added to the Linlithgow district, by which means the burgh Representation would be signally improved. So far from the present system giving a monopoly of Representation to the great landowners, he thought that, on inquiry, it would be found, that the real landed proprietors were overborne by those who had no property at all. At present, a person without a foot of land might have a vote, while the owner of a large estate had none; the consequence was, that the out-voters frequently outnumbered the residents, and the Members who were said to represent Scotch counties, really represented gentlemen living in Lombard or Leadenhall street. In England it was the greatest pride of a gentleman to be a county Member; and he trusted that, under the proposed alteration, the same result might be produced in Scotland. The right of voting was to be fixed at 10*l.*, the same as in England. It was intended, also, to give the suffrage to those who held leases for nineteen years, at a rent of 50*l.* per annum. At the same time, those who were possessed of parchment votes were to continue to enjoy their privilege during their life. One means by which the country gentlemen might defend themselves against the smaller proprietors was this. Under the law at present, no specific qualification was necessary to enable a man to represent a Scotch county; it was intended to establish one. The rate of qualification was to be this:—No person who did not possess a landed estate of 500*l.* in Scotland, should be capable of representing a Scotch county. By this the country gentlemen would be able to defend themselves against their 10*l.* rivals, who, by this arrangement, would never be able to return any one of themselves; and if the landed gentlemen ever had a Representative they did not like, it would be their own fault. The burgh Representation in Scotland had been hitherto confined to the Town Councils, which elected one delegate, and each delegate gave a vote for the Member. By this plan, the Town Council of Edinburgh, which, perhaps, did not contain one-thousandth, or one eight-hundredth part of the population and property of the town, returned the Member. It was necessary to make a change in the plan, and it was proposed to give the right of voting to the inhabitants of towns at large, and by the same criterion as the right of voting was given in England—that of occupying a house rated at 10*l.* This would afford a moderate constituency for the large towns, but in the small towns rather a stinted constituency. In Edinburgh, he believed, the number of persons inhabiting houses of that description were not above 4,000, and taking minors, &c. into consideration, the average number would not be much above 3,500. In Glasgow, he believed, the number of such houses was about 5,000, and in all the other towns under 1,000. He had to notice also, that by a mechanical plan, the whole voting would be completed in two days, as in England. Persons, he must also state, were not to vote for the counties by reason of the same property which gave them a vote for boroughs. He hoped, that the information which he had been able to give, which was necessarily imperfect, would be sufficient to satisfy the Gentlemen opposite, that the Motion of the noble Lord, for leave to bring in a Bill, to which he gave his cordial assent, ought to be granted.

Sir *William Rae* was of opinion, that the explanation given by his learned friend was very unsatisfactory, and would be regarded as very unsatisfactory by the people of Scotland. A great alteration was proposed, of which no sufficient explanation had been given. Why, he wished to ask, when the number of Representatives had been so much increased for English counties, was not the same rule followed as to Scotch counties, which had advanced in an equal degree to those of England? There were six counties in Scotland, each of which contained from 120,000 to 240,000 inhabitants, and no addition had been made to their Members. Why was that? Thus was one left quite in the dark. On the contrary, instead of an increase, two county Members were taken away from other counties, and given to the burghs, the Representatives of which were increased. That, his learned friend might be assured, would not give satisfaction to the landed gentlemen of Scotland. Looking to the rapid advance of the counties of Scotland in wealth and population, he was decidedly of opinion, that the number of their Representatives ought to have been increased. There were six counties which now had to return Members alternately, and he objected to the arrangement by which it was proposed to combine them. Small counties were swallowed up in the large counties, and large counties had new electors brought into them, which would be considered as a great grievance, and had not been satisfactorily explained. Then again the mode by which this had been done was not good. If such an arrangement were made, Kinross, which was certainly the smallest county of Scotland, and had been formerly united to Fife, ought to have again been united to it. Clackmannan, too, which had formerly had the same Sheriff as Stirling, ought to have been united to that county. The proposed plan might be susceptible of satisfactory explanation, though he had not heard such an explanation, unless it were what he had heard out of doors, which he was constrained to disbelieve, that it was to serve an electioneering purpose. He did not think the arrangement as to Bute and

Dumbarton, one of the most flourishing counties in Scotland, satisfactory. Caithness, too, instead of having a separate Member, ought to be united to Sutherland, which, up to 1806, had one Sheriff in common. The principle of the Bill was, to put down the nomination of Peers; and in Sutherland the election was entirely in the hands of one noble family, to which almost the whole of the territory of that county belonged. If they wished to get rid of that, they ought to have united Caithness to Sutherland. He did not object to the influence of that noble family in Sutherland, any more than he objected to the influence of another noble family in Bute, for he believed both those families had rendered most essential service to these counties; but those who brought in the Bill did object to that influence, and it would have been consistent with their principle to have weakened it, by uniting Caithness to Sutherland. He would not insinuate under what influence these arrangements had been made; he would only say, that they would not be satisfactory to Scotland. He objected also to the union of Peebles and Selkirk, which was, he thought, uncalled for. He objected wholly to the Bill, because it introduced a great and uncalled for change in the whole elective franchise of Scotland, without any adequate cause—at least none had been assigned. He knew much had been said against the paper votes, but he defended them on account of the beneficial result; which practically was, that in the great majority of cases, the largest landed proprietor in the county became its Representative in Parliament. They formed admirable defenders of the landed interest; but now, by the introduction of the mere occupiers of houses [The *Lord Advocate* said, owners]—well, owners; there were few occupiers of such houses in Scotland, who were not the owners; and, by giving votes to them, the landowners would by no means be satisfied. There were more owners of such small houses in Scotland than English gentlemen would be inclined to believe, and this alteration would take the right of electing Members for the counties out of the hands of the landowners, and give it into the hands of large bodies of men whom the landowner would be unable to influence. At present the candidates were at no other expense than the pleasure of entertaining the electors; but after this change, the expense of an election would be great, and no gentleman would be able to contest a county without suffering considerably in his purse. No explanation had been given of the necessity of making so great a change, and disfranchising in this manner the landed proprietors. He objected also to the disfranchisement of the boroughs on the eastern part of Fife, which deprived 6,000 persons of their franchise, without any reason whatever. The plan of granting an additional member to Edinburgh, Glasgow, and other places, he approved of; but as Leith was part of Edinburgh, he did not approve of giving it a Member, and omitting to give one to Inverness, which was the chief town of a large district, and had at least 20,000 inhabitants. In reference to the number of voters, he believed that the learned Lord had understated them. Supposing Edinburgh to include the suburbs, he believed that the number of houses rated at 10*l.* would be 12,900. It would not benefit the middling classes to have the franchise shared amongst so many, nor could he understand of what value it would be to them when it was so much divided. He regretted the extension of the franchise, because it was well known that Scotchmen seldom came together in a multitude without causing bloodshed, or at least riot. He besought hon. Members to look at the Scotch character, and they would find that what he said was true. He would not detain the House further, but say, that no sufficient explanation had been given of the Bill which was to be brought in.

Lord *Althorp* said, that as both parties had made their statement, which would enable the county to discuss the merits of the Bill, and which would also be facilitated by its being printed, he hoped that the Bill might then be allowed to be brought in.

Sir *Charles Forbes* thought it was reasonable, when seven days had been taken up in debating the Bill for England, that somewhat more than one hour should be allowed to Scotland. Was that in proportion to the population of the two countries? He thought the learned Lord's statement very unsatisfactory, and that it would do him no honour in Scotland; and that the statement of the learned Gentleman would do him great honour. He should wish that the Debate should be adjourned. There were many Scotch Gentlemen who were naturally anxious to deliver their sentiments, and who were ready to stand up and do justice to Scotland. He was sure that they would not allow Scotland to be injured. He hoped that the Motion would not be acceded to without further discussion.

Mr. *Kennedy* knew that his hon. friend greatly desired the welfare of Scotland, and he could confer no greater benefit on that country than by allowing it to receive this measure as soon as possible. The printed Bill would be the most accurate information of what was intended, and he hoped his hon. friend would not persist in his wish for an adjournment.

Mr. *Cutlar Ferguson* thought it not unreasonable that an adjournment should take place, but he would not move it: if his hon. friend, or any other member, moved it, he should think it his duty to support the Motion.

Lord *J. Russell* expressed a hope that the hon. Member (Sir C. Forbes) would allow the Bill to be brought in, and the discussion could take place on the second reading, which he was willing to fix for Monday or Tuesday.

Sir *G. Clerk* recommended his hon. friend to concur in this suggestion.

Sir *G. Warrender* recommended that the Bill should be printed before they came to a discussion on the second reading, as the Members for Scotland were not acquainted with its details.

Leave given to bring in the Bill for amending the Representation of the people of Scotland. Bill ordered to be brought in by the same parties, as the Bill for England, substituting the Lord Advocate for the Attorney and Solcitor General.

REFORM BILL FOR IRELAND.] On the motion of Lord J. Russell, that leave be given to bring in a similar Bill for Amending the Representation of Ireland,

Mr. *Ruthven* said, he approved of the principle of the Bill, but he thought that Ireland should, to preserve its situation with respect to England, have an addition of thirty-two Members instead of three.

Mr. *Leader* knew, that the proposed measure was approved of in Ireland.

Mr. *Wyse* was of opinion, as population was the principle of the Bill, that Ireland ought to receive an increase of Members.

Mr. *Alexander Dawson* believed, that the Bill would give satisfaction to all parties in Ireland.

Mr. *Cutlar Ferguson* took the opportunity of asking, if any alteration was to be made in the disqualification of the sons of Scotch Peers?

The *Lord Advocate* replied, that a clause would remove that disqualification.

Leave given, and Bill ordered to be brought in by the same parties as the other Bills, substituting the Solicitor General of Ireland for the Lord Advocate.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

Thursday, March 10, 1831.

MINUTES.] Bills. The Irish Population (Census) Bill, the Bankrupt Laws' Amendment Bill, and the Calico Duties Repeal Bill, brought up from the Commons, and read a first time. Settlement of the Poor Bill read a second time. The Army Mutiny Bill read a second time. The Marine Mutiny Bill committed. Frauds on Creditors' Bill, and Richmond Lunatic Asylum Bill, read a third time and passed. Grosvenor's Indemnity Bill passed through all its stages, the Standing Orders suspended.

Petitions presented. By the Earl of LIMERICK, from the Soapboilers of Limerick, complaining of Distress, of being Undersold in their own Market by Smugglers, and praying for Relief. By the Duke of RUTLAND, from the Shipowners of Scarborough, in Yorkshire, complaining of Distress, and praying for Relief. In favour of Reform, by Earl GREY, from the Inhabitants of the Parish of St. Leonard's, Shoreditch; from a place in Northumberland; from the Royal Borough of Perth; from Dartmouth; from St. Mary's, Stratford-le-Bow; from Cambridge; and from the Parish of St. Helen's, Bromley:—By Lord DURHAM, from Houghton-le-Spring, Durham:—By Lord CAWDOR, from Rutherglen. By the Earl of PEMBROKE, from Owners and Occupiers of Land in Pembrokeshire, for a Repeal of the Malt Duties. By Earl GREY, from Dartmouth, for a Repeal of the Coal Duties; and from Cookstown, for the Abolition of Slavery. By the Marquis of CLANRICARDE, for the Repeal of the Union.

REFORM.] The Earl of *Hardwicke* presented a Petition from Cambridge, in favour of Parliamentary Reform. He took the opportunity to state, that he approved of that part of the Reform plan of Ministers, which went to give additional Representatives to counties; and he hoped there were other parts of it which he might be able to approve.

Earl *Grey* stated, that he held in his hand a Petition from Birmingham, in favour of the measure of Reform proposed by Ministers. It was agreed to at a Meeting, where 15,000 persons attended; and he might mention, that although there was no place where the Ballot was more eagerly contended for than Birmingham, yet the measure in question had united the suffrages of all, and quieted all divisions among the people.

Lord *Calthorpe* presented a Petition from the Magistrates, Clergy, Merchants, and Manufacturers of Birmingham, in favour of Reform generally. The petition was put into his hands before the measure proposed by Ministers was introduced, and he believed that some of them, although they were favourable to some Reform, were not prepared to go to the extent of the Ministerial measure, but he was bound to state, that the mass of the petitioners were decidedly favourable to the plan. As for himself, he was not prepared to accede to so extensive a change. It was the most extensive change that had taken place since the Revolution of 1688, and he thought it was too much to pass such a sweeping measure in the course of a single Session. He thought that more time ought to be allowed for consideration, and he did not think that any alteration could reconcile the plan to his mind, while its present principles were retained.

Tithes.—Haste in passing Bills.] Lord *Tenterden* gave notice, that on Tuesday next he would present a Bill, for limiting the time within which proceedings could be instituted to set aside Moduses in lieu of Tithes. He would on that occasion explain the principle and object of the Bill.

The Earl of *Fife* complained of the mode in which important Bills were carried through the House, without sufficient notice and publicity. Two most important Bills—the Fraudulent Debtors' and Law Expenses' Bills—had passed in that manner, and yet they were most important, as connected with the liberty of the subject. The most grievous oppressions were often practised by lawyers under the forms of law, and when they themselves brought in bills to remedy grievances, they often only made matters worse.

Lord *Wynford* remarked, that he had brought in the Bills before Christmas—that they had been repeatedly postponed for the accommodation of those who felt an interest in them, and had stood for committal twice or thrice. He did not know how he could have given them more complete publicity; and as to oppression, he could not understand what oppression there was in compelling men to pay their debts, when perfectly able to do so.

Lord *Tenterden* called the attention of the noble Earl to his statement, that he meant on Tuesday to explain the nature and object of his Bill, when he hoped that he would be present, and not afterwards complain.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Thursday, March 10, 1831.

Minutes.] Bills. The Calico Duties Repeal, read a third time and passed. Post Roads (Ireland), read a second time. Vestries Act (Ireland) Amendment, the Suits in Common Law Courts, the Frauds on Creditors, and the Canada Lands Bill, read a first time.

Taunton Election Committee reported, that Thomas Bainbridge, Esq. was duly elected for that Borough.

Returns ordered. On the Motion of Mr. S. Lumley, the total amount of the Expenses incurred by the Lords of the Treasury, on account of the East Retford Disfranchisement Bill:—On the Motion of Mr. Hodges, the Overseers of the Poor of every Parish, Township, or other place, in England and Wales, at the time of finally settling their respective accounts for the year commencing on the 25th March, 1830, to prepare an account, shewing the total amount of Money levied for Poor-rates and County-rates, in the year ending on 25th March, 1831, upon such parish, township, or other place, maintaining its own poor, and also, the total amount of money expended in that year; distinguishing, in the said account, the amount of money paid for any other purpose than the relief of the poor; such overseers, as soon as may be, to transmit such account to the Clerk of the House of Commons, stating, in addition to such account, whether any Select Vestry has been formed, and now exists, and whether an assistant overseer is now in office, under and by virtue of the Act 59 Geo. 3rd, c. 12; and any other observations which may be thought necessary.

Petitions presented. For the Abolition of Slavery, by the Attorney General, from Bristol and Thornbury:—By Sir J. Wrottesley, from Wolverhampton:—By Mr. Callaghan, from places in Cork. For the Commutation of Tithes, from the Occupiers of Land in Corbridge, by Mr. S. Lumley. Against being obliged to shut up their Houses at an early hour, from the Retail Brewers of Nottingham, by the Attorney General:—By Mr. G. Robinson, from the same class of persons in the Metropolis. For the Reduction of the Stamp Duties on Newspapers, by the Attorney General, from the Pressmen of Nottingham. For the Abolition of the Duty on Soap, by Mr. Ewart, from the Soap Manufacturers of Liverpool. For facilitating the Building and Endowment of Churches, by Mr. Hughes Hughes, from the Clergy of Sheffield. For a Repeal of the Union (Ireland), by Mr. Callaghan, from the Tailors of Cork; and from the Merchants of Cork, against any alteration of the Timber Duties. For Reform, by Mr. Hodges, from Woolwich. Against the Vestry Bill, by Mr. Byng, from St. James's, and from Paddington; and against the New Police, from the parishes of St. George the Martyr, and St. Andrew's, Holborn.

Reform—Bristol Petition.] Colonel *Baillie* said, he held in his hand a Petition on the great Question of Parliamentary Reform: and, as he had not had an opportunity of expressing his sentiments upon that subject in the course of the Debate, he should now very shortly trouble the House with a few remarks. The petition which he was about to present was agreed to at a meeting held at Bristol on Monday last, which had been most respectably and numerously attended — a meeting convened for the express purpose of giving support to his Majesty's Government for the measure.—The petition was signed by the Chairman on behalf of the meeting, and consequently, in point of form, could be received as the petition of the

Chairman only, but in point of fact, it was the petition of the highly respectable meeting assembled on that occasion, they deputing him to sign it, as they were extremely desirous of conveying their sentiments to the Legislature with as little delay as possible. With regard to the great principle of the Bill itself, he begged to express his satisfaction—as far as the disfranchisement of so many rotten boroughs was concerned. He also concurred in that part of the arrangement which went to throw open close Corporations to the great body of householders, as exemplified in the case of the City of Bath. He likewise concurred in that part of the plan which gave to large towns, such as Birmingham, Manchester, &c. the right of the elective franchise. But there was one part of the measure in which he could not coincide; he meant that part giving to counties additional Members. This would increase the power of the landed interest; and, if the Bill passed without any modification on that head, he despaired of seeing any beneficial alteration in the Corn-laws. He had communicated with his constituents, and he understood that the measure would disfranchise from 3,000 to 4,000 persons. With the exception to which he had alluded, he should support the Bill; but he most certainly should oppose that part of the plan to which he had stated he entertained objections.

Mr. *Hart Davis* said, having presented a petition from Bristol against Parliamentary Reform, he should be excused in offering a few words on the present occasion. He denied that the petition now before the House conveyed the sentiments of his constituents upon the subject, and declared, that he should give the Bill his strenuous opposition on its second reading, conceiving it to be, as it had been aptly described, "a revolutionary measure"—

The Petition laid upon the Table.

Growth of Tobacco in Ireland.] Mr. *Warburton* rose to move for leave to bring in a Bill to prohibit the Growth of Tobacco in Ireland. The Motion was made in pursuance of a recommendation of a Committee of that House, and therefore needed but little explanation, and no support, from him to induce the House to allow it to go as far as the second reading without opposition. Before the Easter recess last year, the Chancellor of the Exchequer gave notice of his intention to lay a tax on the growth of tobacco in Ireland, at the rate of 1*s.* 8*d.* per pound, keeping the duty on foreign tobacco at 3*s.* That proposition having been objected to, the right hon. Gentleman, much to his credit, proposed to refer the matter to a Select Committee. That was done, and the Committee, after a patient investigation, reported, that it was expedient to extend to Ireland the prohibition to grow tobacco, which already existed in England. The House would probably agree with the report, when he stated, that tobacco could not be grown in Ireland without a protecting duty equivalent to 700 per cent. So monstrous a proposition exceeded any thing ever proposed by Buonaparte, in the height of his power, and if it were allowed here, we might next proceed to cultivate, under a high protecting duty, sugar and silk. The revenue collected on tobacco was nearly 3,000,000*l.* a year, and the quantity imported, which yielded the revenue, was 20,000,000lbs. To endanger that revenue by allowing the growth of tobacco in Ireland would be most impolitic. It would have caused endless vexation and endless fraud to have levied a duty on Irish grown tobacco. In France the expense and the establishments necessary to collect the tax, had been so enormous, that any one acquainted with the subject must see, that to employ such a system in Ireland would aggravate a thousand fold all the evils that country now suffered from the collection of the revenue. Instead, too, as was hoped, of providing employment for the poor, it would only lead to crime of every kind, through the encouragement it would give to an easy kind of smuggling. He did not think it necessary to say more, and would therefore move for leave to bring in the Bill.

Lord *Althorp* said, that the cultivation of tobacco in Ireland was one which could not exist without extraordinary protection, and that it was in other respects unsuited to the country. He had intended to reduce the duty on imported tobacco so much as to render the growth of the article unprofitable in Great Britain or Ireland. But when he found himself unable to effect that reduction, he saw the necessity of prohibiting altogether the home cultivation of tobacco. However, under the circumstances of the present times, he thought the prohibition unadvisable, although the revenue might suffer considerably by permitting tobacco to be grown in Ireland. He should be much more willing to sacrifice the revenue than to add to the distress or increase the discontent of that country. He did not mean to oppose the Motion, but he certainly should oppose the second reading of the Bill. He wished it, however, to be distinctly understood that the present arrangement was temporary, and if any person chose to increase his cultivation of tobacco, he did it at his own risk.

Mr. *Frankland Lewis* said, that the present was the time for passing the law. If it were delayed, the difficulties in its way would be increased, and in consequence of the additional capital that would be employed in the cultivation, it would be impossible to enact the prohibition. The revenue derived from the duty upon foreign tobacco was upwards of three millions sterling, levied in the most unobjectionable manner, whereas the prime cost of all the tobacco consumed in Great Britain and Ireland, was no more than 350,000*l.*; so that, if it were all grown at home, three millions of revenue would be sacrificed, and the country would gain only the profits of 350,000*l.* invested in an altered cultivation. He could not admit that the prohibition would create discontent in Ireland. The whole of the land employed there in the growth of tobacco was only 450 or 500 acres; and they must have very shallow views of the causes of distress and discontent in that country who supposed that either would be increased by changing the cultivation of that small quantity of land. He did not know on what principle if tobacco might be cultivated in Ireland the prohibition to cultivate it could be continued in England, and he was sure the English land-owners would claim their right to cultivate it if the prohibition were not extended to Ireland. One or two gentlemen now made 100*l.* an acre by the cultivation, and if the prohibition were not enacted, or the duty were not very much lowered, the result would be, that we should make to the landowners of Ireland a present of 3,000,000*l.* a year. The country would, in fact, give a bounty, to that amount on the growth of tobacco in Ireland. If the noble Lord should throw out the Bill on the second reading, he would move to reduce the duties on tobacco, for he had no wish to enrich a few Irish landlords.

Mr. *Ruthven* had scarcely expected that a measure so ungenerous as the Bill introduced by the hon. Gentleman opposite, could have come from so liberal a quarter. If it were passed, it would create at least suspicion in Ireland that the interests of that country were but slightly attended to by the House. Neither did he, nor any Gentleman representing Ireland, wish anything to be done for the advantage of Ireland, inconsistently with the general interests of the empire. All, therefore, that he could desire was, that the cultivation of tobacco in Ireland should be tolerated for the present season, as the noble Lord had intimated to be his intention, on account of the distress now prevailing in that country. The imagination of the last speaker had conjured up evils and dangers which he was persuaded did not exist. He would follow the noble Lord, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, in not opposing the Motion, but he certainly should object to the second reading of the Bill.

Mr. *Lefroy* observed, that the cultivation of tobacco was carried on to a much greater extent in Wexford than the right hon. Member had stated it to be. In fact, it gave employment to a large population.

Mr. *James Grattan* approved of the intentions of the noble Lord (the Chancellor of the Exchequer), who had acted as a man of feeling and of good sense with respect to the Bill. He thought, that when the House recollected the state of distress which was known to exist in Mayo, it would be very cautious how it adopted any measures that might increase that distress, and nourish bad feelings in Ireland. He had no objection to allow the Bill to be brought in, as a sort of notice to the tobacco cultivators in Ireland; at the same time, he must say, that he and all the Members for Ireland would be obliged to the hon. member for Bridport if he would withdraw his motion.

Mr. *Hart Davis* heard with great surprise the statement of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, that, though he conceded that the principle of the proposed measure was a just one, yet he must give his opposition to the Bill proposed to be brought in by the hon. member for Bridport (Mr. Warburton). The proposal to prohibit the growth of tobacco in Ireland had been opposed on the ground that some compassion should be shown to the Irish people; but he contended, that compassion was also due to the lowest English trader. In the year 1811 the duty on tobacco was only 2*s*. 2*d*. per lb., and in the year 1822 it was increased to 4*s*. per lb. There was a difference in the consumption of 7,000,000 lbs under the increased rate of duty, and no doubt the decrease was to be accounted for by the increased consumption of smuggled tobacco. If, as the Chancellor of the Exchequer proposed in his Budget, a duty of only 1*s*. 6*d*. per lb. was laid on all tobacco, it would prevent the growth in Ireland, and he was satisfied that in a few years the eighteen-penny duty would produce more to the revenue than a 4*s*. duty. For his own part he would rather give £250,000 per annum of the public money to the people of Ireland than permit the growth of tobacco in that country.—He hoped, therefore, when the noble Lord reconsidered the measure, that he would be of opinion that the hon. member for Bridport's Bill ought to be carried into effect.

Mr. *Jephson* concurred with those who thought there would be an increased difficulty every year in putting an end to the cultivation of tobacco in Ireland. Tobacco was a great comfort, however, to the lower classes, and he thought the House was bound to do all in its power to reduce the present duty, which was odious and onerous, instead of endeavouring to prohibit the cultivation of the herb.

Mr. *Callaghan* never would advocate any measure of injustice to Ireland; at the same time he would never ask a boon for Ireland, to the prejudice of England and Scotland. Those who embarked in the cultivation of tobacco in Ireland well knew that in a short time the Government must interfere. It was a great mistake to suppose the Bill of the hon. member for Bridport would give general dissatisfaction in Ireland. It was necessary for the protection of the traders in the article, who were tempted by the high duty to smuggle the home-grown article, and were then liable to be ruined by the Excise officer. At present, smuggling was carried on to a great extent, to the injury of the morals of the people. He was, in general, in favour of equalising duties in both countries, but he was disposed to think that the duty on tobacco ought to be lower in Ireland than in England.

Mr. *Leader* said, the candour and feeling manifested by the noble Lord (the Chancellor of the Exchequer), with respect to Ireland, was creditable to him, and would be most grateful to the feelings of the people of that country. He had intended a large boon to Ireland, by reducing the tax on tobacco and glass, but his proposals, when he brought in his Budget, were rendered nugatory by the decisions of that House, and Ireland received no other advantage by the remission of taxation this year than her proportion of the amount of the coal-duty. It was important, therefore, that Ireland should be allowed to retain whatever advantage she enjoyed from the cultivation of tobacco—an advantage secured to her by the sixth Article of the Act of Union, which should be repealed preliminary to the passing of the hon. member for Bridport's Bill.

Mr. *Curteis* was no enemy to Ireland, though he loved his own country.—He saw no reason, however, why the English agriculturist should not be allowed to grow tobacco as well as the Irish farmer. As an English farmer, however, he thought that if the cultivation was to be put an end to, the sooner the better. He entirely concurred in the views of the hon. member for Bridport.

Lord *Oxmantown* agreed with the hon. member for Sussex that, if the only question was, whether the cultivation should be put an end to now, or next year, the longer the prohibition was delayed the more detrimental it must prove to the country.

Lord *Valentia* thought, if the Chancellor of the Exchequer felt so secure in his revenue as to permit tobacco to be cultivated another year, the hon. member for Bridport need scarcely object. The great evil of Ireland was its redundant and unemployed population—an evil which the growth of tobacco went to remedy. There were not five or six, but 500 or 600 persons employed in growing tobacco in the county of Wexford; and in Enniscorthy, where the cultivation chiefly took place last summer, there was comparatively little distress. The proposal for prohibiting the growth of tobacco might be used for the most mischievous purposes, and produce the worst consequences at this period, when the Repeal of the Union was already in agitation. For these reasons he should give the Bill his decided opposition.

Lord *Lowther* thought that tobacco might be grown in England and Scotland with advantage, as well as in Ireland. Almost every country in Europe now grew its own tobacco, and derived revenue from it. He was able to state also, from returns, that a very small proportion of the tobacco consumed in this country was imported from our own colonies. He hoped, therefore, that the noble Lord would not allow the Bill to pass.

Sir *Robert Bateson* could not avoid entering his protest, as an Irish Member, against the Motion. Whilst there were thousands of persons wanting subsistence in Ireland, he was surprised that any person should propose a measure to put a stop to a description of cultivation which gave employment to so many. He agreed with the noble Lord that the cultivation of tobacco might be advantageously extended to England and Scotland; and he just asked the House what the people of Kent would think and say, if it were proposed to prohibit the growth of hops in that county, because they may be had cheaper or better from the West-Indies or America?—His opinion on this subject was disinterested, for the soil of the north of Ireland where his property lay, was not adapted to the growth of tobacco.

Mr. *Brownlow* could have wished that the hon. member for Bridport had left this measure of Excise in the hands of his Majesty's Government. At the same time, he was forced to admit, that he considered the arguments contained in the report of the Committee, against the growth of tobacco in Ireland, quite conclusive.—The better way of putting an end to the cultivation, however, was, by affording free competition, and reducing the duty on tobacco imported from America. He was satisfied that the loss to the revenue would be very small. Indeed, there would be no loss at all, but a great gain to the revenue, for by reducing the duty, as the temptation to smuggling would cease, the consumption would increase.

Mr. *Goulburn* was ready to admit, that the question of the growth of tobacco in Ireland was one of considerable difficulty. In 1828 he brought forward a bill to prohibit its growth; but owing to circumstances which were then stated, he withdrew the bill for that Session, with the understanding that either the growth should be prohibited next year, or a duty be paid on what was grown, so as to place it on an equality with the imported tobacco. He afterwards gave his consideration to the point, whether tobacco might not be allowed to be grown in any part of the United Kingdom on payment of a duty. The subject was afterwards referred to a Committee, which recommended that it should be put an end to in the year 1831; and care was taken by the Government to give notice that it would be put an end to accordingly; and had it not been for the death of his late Majesty, a bill to that effect would have past last Session. The question was, whether they would give the power of growing it to the whole of the United Kingdom, or whether they would prohibit it in Ireland. If their decision was to prohibit it, the present was the best time for doing so, as due notice had been given to that effect.

Lord *Althorp* explained: He agreed that they ought either to prohibit the growth altogether, or introduce a duty. But, in his opinion, the Government ought not to run the risk of creating discontent in Ireland by prohibiting the growth at present.

Lord *Killeen* expressed a hope that the cultivation of tobacco would be permitted during the present year.

Mr. *Warburton* replied. He did not see why he should give up his present Motion because the Chancellor of the Exchequer had pledged himself virtually to prohibit the growth of tobacco by a proposition in his next Budget. He would, therefore, persist in the Bill.

Leave given, Bill ordered to be brought in by Mr. Warburton and Mr. Hart Davis.

CHARITABLE INSTITUTIONS.] The Attorney General moved for leave to bring in a Bill to continue the inquiry into the Funds of Charitable Institutions in England and Wales.

Mr. Alderman *Winchester* complained that some vexatious proceedings in Chancery had been instituted under the authority of the former Commissioners, and he hoped that a clause would be introduced to prevent unauthorised persons from proceeding against trustees of Charities.

Mr. *Hume* said, he would not object to the bringing in of the Bill, but he much doubted whether the public ought to pay the expense of these Commissioners. It appeared that they sat but four months in the last year; and he was satisfied that one set of Commissioners might, with proper application, do more in one year than the whole five sets had hitherto done. The expenses, he was of opinion, ought to be paid out of the funds themselves. The inquiries had cost £135,000, and 20,000*l.* with proper management would have paid all the expenses.

The *Attorney General* said, that at any rate the first step to be taken was to ascertain the amount of those charitable funds. It would then be open to any Gentleman to submit any motion he might think proper.

Sir *C. Wetherell* thought the hon. Alderman must have laboured under some mistake when he supposed that vexatious litigation had taken place, as the law officers of the Crown had always taken the greatest precautions to prevent such an abuse. He must reply to the hon. member for Middlesex, that the object of the present Bill was to ascertain how money left in charity had been disposed of and apply it as the donor had directed. He did not think, therefore, that the hon. Member ought to lay his hands on any portion of that.

Mr. *Hunt* knew that the money derived from charities was frequently spent in guzzling by those who were bound to apply it to other purposes.

Leave given, and Bill ordered to be brought in.

TOWER HAMLETS MILITIA.] Mr. *Lamb* moved for leave to bring in a Bill to alter the regulations for making the Ballot for the Tower Hamlets Militia. According to the Act, each Hamlet was bound to furnish a certain quota of men, which was no longer fair, in consequence of one Hamlet having been half converted into St Catherine's Docks.

Mr. *Hume* suggested the propriety of consolidating the laws relative to the Militia. He complained of the severity and irregularity of the operation of these laws in Middlesex. He recommended that a tax should be raised to pay the Militia, and that the regiments should be raised by beat of drum. As for the ballot, it was a source of great inconvenience, and ought undoubtedly to be done away.

Mr. Alderman *Wood* supported the view of Mr. Hume, and enforced his suggestion.

Mr. *Hodges* fully agreed with the hon. member for Middlesex, and was of opinion that the present system of balloting for militia was most objectionable.

Mr. *Lamb* also admitted the propriety of Mr. Hume's suggestion, but stated, that it would require time to remedy the defects. He would, however, give his best attention to the subject, with a view of correcting the evils.

Leave given, and Bill brought in.

PETITION FOR THE MINISTERIAL PLAN OF REFORM.] Mr. *Watson* presented a Petition from the Corporation of Canterbury, in favour of the Bill brought forward by his Majesty's Ministers. As he saw the hon. and learned Gentleman, the member for Boroughbridge, in his place, he wished to observe, that this was a most respectable Corporation, and they voluntarily came forward, and offered to surrender their privileges, as they conceived that it would be for the general good.

Sir *Charles Wetherell* wished to ask the hon. Member a question, in reply. The petition purported to come from certain freemen of a corporate body, and they offered to surrender their rights to the Parliament; now, he asked whether these men had not taken an oath to maintain them inviolable, and to support all the privileges of their Corporation. One of the most sacred and valuable of those privileges was the right of sending Members to that House. Did the hon. Gentleman think these persons had acted consistently with the oath they had taken, in offering to make this surrender? He asked him, both as a Member of Parliament and as a man, whether he thought a minority of eight or ten persons in a Corporation, in spite of the oaths they had taken, were justified in coming forward to make a surrender of the privileges they enjoyed in common with others? He would most assuredly continue his opposition to this new project of Reform, and his exertions to procure its rejection should suffer no relaxation. Did the hon. Gentleman according to the vulgar interpretation of an oath, not think that those who offered to sacrifice what they had sworn to maintain, laid themselves open to a charge of something like perjury?

The *Attorney General* said, that his hon. and learned friend was mistaken in supposing this to be the petition of a minority; it was the petition of the Corporation, and bore the Corporation seal.

The case was simply this:—a most respectable corporation came forward and said it was willing to surrender an exclusive privilege, and share its enjoyment with the rest of their fellow-citizens. He presented, a few evenings ago, a similar petition from the Corporation of Nottingham, and those petitioners also expressed the same willingness to surrender their privileges, and he had no doubt that many similar petitions would be presented from corporations in all parts of the country. The members of this corporation, and of others, thought undoubtedly, that by the success of the measure submitted to the House a few evenings since by his noble friend, they would be relieved from a degrading stigma. He was surprised to hear his hon. and learned friend make any observations regarding the sacredness of an oath; and surely he could not have forgotten that no oath of such a nature as the present could prevent the Legislature from passing any measure it might deem expedient. Such rights are always in the power, and under the control of the Legislature, and these petitioners merely came forward to say, that they would not be impediments to any arrangement the Parliament might deem expedient.

Mr. *Hunt* wished to ask the hon. member for Canterbury, whether the out-voters of that place had signed the petition. He understood that there were a few dissatisfied out-voters, who had had a meeting, and had expressed their fear of the probable success of the Reform Bill. He was not surprised at their alarm, for if the Bill should pass, the proceedings that used to take place at the Spread Eagle on the occasion of an election, were not likely to be renewed.

The Petition read.

Mr. *Watson* had only heard of the meeting of the non-resident freemen of Canterbury, to oppose Reform, from the public prints. He did not ask any question of the hon. and learned Gentleman, but merely called his attention to the fact of petitions having been presented from corporations in favour of the Ministerial Bill.

Sir *Charles Wetherell* could assure the hon. Gentleman, that it was superfluous in him to call his attention to the subject of Reform, because he had long attended to it. He did not want the hon. Member as a "flapper" to awaken his attention to the subject. Those petitioners came forward to make an improper and illegal abandonment of their privileges. There were non-resident voters connected with this corporation, which had no authority to surrender privileges in which others besides themselves were concerned. The question was simply whether freemen who had the right of voting, whom by the noble Paymaster's Bill it was proposed to cashier, were justified in offering to sacrifice the privileges they had sworn to maintain. With every respect for the learned Attorney General, he must deny that the House had any right to deprive, *volens nolens*, a large body of voters, at the request of another body, of any portion of their privileges. His hon. and learned friend might have presented a petition for the surrender of the privileges of the town of Nottingham; but that did not alter the question. The Bill would inflict injustice and irreparable injury. He was as well aware as his hon. and learned friend of the power of the Legislature, but, although petitions like this were presented from the 120 places the noble Paymaster proposed to cashier, he could tell the House, that he would never be a party to the surrender of privileges. It certainly might be advantageous to the resident freeman, to deprive the non-resident freeman of his vote, but the House ought not to sanction such gross wrong. The whole scheme of Parliamentary Reform was in truth an extensive plan of plunder and robbery.

Mr. *George Robinson* was surprised to hear the hon. and learned Gentleman apply such epithets to the plan of Reform, and characterize the sacrifices which the petitioners professed themselves ready to make as injustice. They did not pray the House to deprive the out-voters of their privileges, but merely said, that they were ready, if the House should judge it proper for the public good, to sacrifice their own. He could not comprehend the principle by which the hon. and learned Gentleman had arrived at the conclusion that these petitioners were prepared to violate their oaths. That was the first time he believed that the patriotic offer to sacrifice questionable privileges had been so designated.

An hon. *Member* concurred in all that had been said by the hon. and learned member for Boroughbridge. He could not see how any man who had sworn to defend the privileges of the body of which he was a member could consent, without violating his oath, to surrender those privileges.

Mr. *Hunt* said, that the great difficulty with many of the parties was, not the surrender of corporate rights, but giving up the good living—the comfortable feasts, on which corporators had so long fattened.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Friday, March 11, 1831.

MINUTES.] Bills. The Royal Assent given to the Pensions Duties, the Exchequer Bills, the Consolidated Fund, the Transfer of Aids, the Judgement and Execution, the Postmaster General, and the Richmond Asylum.

Returns ordered. On the Motion of the Earl of HADDINGTON, the number of Degrees taken at the Universities of Edinburgh, Glasgow, St. Andrew's, and the two Colleges of Aberdeen, since 1830.

Petitions presented. In favour of Reform, by Lord DACRE, from Bishopsgate-street Ward, and from three Parishes of Hertfordshire:—By Lord KING, from Saltash, Long Sutton, Grantham, and Falkland:—By Earl SPENCER, from Market Harborough, and the Renfrew Political Union:—By the Earl of GLENGALL, from Clanwilliam:—By Lord BELHAVEN, from several Parishes in Scotland:—By the Duke of ARGYLE, from Campbell's Town:—By the Earl of ROSEBERY, from the Convenor of the Trades, and half the Members of the close Corporation of that City, and from the Heritors and Commissioner of Supply of Linlithgowshire. For a Revision of the Tithe Laws, by Lord KING, from Melsonby:—By the Earl of GLENGALL, from Tamlaght Finlagan. For a Repeal of the Union, by Lord FARNHAM, from Headford:—By Lord KING, from St. Mary, Kilkenny:—By the Earl of GLENGALL, from Caspell. For the Repeal of the Duty on Seaborne Coals, by Lord KING, from Bridport, Beaminster, Charmouth, Bishopsgate-street Ward, and several other places. By Lord BELHAVEN, from the Post Masters of Glasgow, for a Reduction of the Duty on Post Horses and Stage Coaches. For the Abolition of Slavery, by the Duke of GORDON, from the County of Aberdeen:—By the Marquis of BUTE, from Merthyr Tidvill and Dowlass:—By the Earl of RODEN, from certain Dissenters of Dublin. By the Earl of WHARNCLIFFE, from Mr. Golding, of Ditton-place, Kent, against the Game Laws. Against the proposed Alteration of the Timber Duties, by the Marquis of BUTE, from Shipowners at Cardiff and Greenock:—By Earl STANHOPE, from the Shipowners of Hull. Complaining of Distress, and praying for Relief, by the same noble Earl, from the Landowners and Occupiers of Brenchley:—By the Earl of GLENGALL, from the Labourers of Navan. By the Bishop of LONDON, from the Managers of the Savings' Bank at Chelmsford, for an Alteration in the Savings' Bank Act.

CLERKENWELL CHURCHES.] Lord *King* stated, that he had in his hand a Petition from the Churchwardens, and others, of the Parish of St. James, Clerkenwell, to which he begged leave to call their Lordships' attention, before they proceeded to the Order of the Day on the Church Building Bill. The Petitioners complained of the conduct of the Commissioners for the building of new Churches, in inflicting on the parish a new Church, which was quite uncalled for and unnecessary. Of course, he had no information on the subject than what he derived from others; but the petitioners stated, that there were already in the parish three churches, in each of which there were a number of seats unlet. In St. James's Church there were 409 seats unlet; in Pentonville Chapel, 203 unlet; and in St. John's Church, 150 unlet; making in all, 762 seats unlet. The churchwardens of St. James's had objected to the building of the last new church, and they were, therefore, much surprised, when they found that the Commissioners had begun to build another, and they remonstrated against it without effect. In another parish in the neighbourhood they had, in the same manner, begun to build a new church, and the people of that parish remonstrated, and the building in that instance was stopped: and yet the petitioners said, that when they applied to the Commissioners, and remonstrated, their application was treated with contempt—that was what they stated. There were certain circumstances likewise to be attended to; for in one of these churches there was a very popular preacher, and a greater number of people attended in consequence—some of them being from the neighbouring parishes, and yet, notwithstanding this, there were a number of seats unlet. The Commissioners proceeded on the principle of the amount of population, but that was a very uncertain and precarious criterion, for a great portion of the population might be Dissenters. And then the parish had already been put to an enormous expense, and was obliged to pay not less than 2,000*l.* annually, on account of the churches. In the new churches, the gross amount of the pew rents went to the preacher, and the parish was left to pay the sexton's salary, and other incidental expenses. That really appeared not to be just, for it ought to be the nett surplus of the pew rents, and not the gross amount, that should be given to the preacher. The petitioners stated, that they had expended 3,000*l.* on the decorations of the last-built new church of St. Mark's, that now there was very great difficulty in raising the poor-rates, and that they were unwilling to be loaded with an additional expense on account of a new church, when it was not necessary. The petitioners stated, that they had the strongest desire to promote the interests of morality and religion, and that they only objected to the other church, because it was unnecessary. The petition was signed with about 1,800 names, and the petitioners prayed relief in this matter.

The Bishop of *London* thought himself called upon to say a few words on this subject, as the parish was in his diocese. The population of that parish was 52,000, and if the Commissioners did, in building the new churches, act on the principle of population, they did so by the direction of the Legislature; and if there was anything erroneous in it, they were not in fault. He did not know whether any remonstrance had been made by the petitioners against the building of St. Mark's Church; but, were he to judge from circumstances, he should say that the remonstrance, if made, could not have been very strong: for they had, as they rightly stated, expended 3,000*l.* on the decorations of that church, which was more than was required. If in some of the churches the seats were not all occupied, it was, perhaps, owing to some temporary circumstances; for that of St. Mark, as soon as it was built, was filled to overflowing. Soon after, a representation was made by many respectable inhabitants of the parish to the Commissioners, that there was still great need of another church, for the accommodation of those who resided about Battle-bridge, a circumstance which was sufficiently obvious, and this representation was accompanied with the offer of a site for another Chapel. The Commissioners were, at the time, rather straitened for funds, but they did, in the execution of what they considered to be their duty, make preparations for erecting a cheap chapel, for the accommodation of the poor. All this was well known, and yet no remonstrance had been made till the labourers had been engaged, and the work, in fact, been begun. It was true that then a remonstrance was sent to him, which he forwarded to the Commissioners, and it was then represented to the parties that they had come too late, but the remonstrance was not treated with disrespect. The noble Baron had stated the facts in a very temperate manner, and no blame could attach to him or to the petitioners for bringing forward their complaints. The Commissioners, however, thought it their duty to provide, as far as their funds allowed, churches for the accommodation of the whole of the population, if they chose to attend; and the objections probably did not come so much from the petitioners, who, he believed, were worthy persons, as from others of a different description.

Lord *Kenyon* begged permission to say a few words on this subject, as he happened to be present, on Tuesday last, at a meeting then held by the Commissioners, when this subject was under discussion. The grievance was certainly a small one, for the parish was not called upon to pay one farthing towards the building of this chapel; and if all the seats in the churches already built were not taken, it was still a great object to give an opportunity to attend to those who chose to do so. It ought to be observed, that accommodation already existed only for 4,000 out of a population of 52,000, and this additional chapel would only accommodate 1,200 more; and the whole accommodation would still be rather below the mark. As to the expense, if the petitioners had thought the expenses extravagant, they would not have laid out so much on the decoration of St. Mark's.

Lord *King* said, that the petitioners did not object to a proper expense, and therefore they had laid out the 3,000*l.* on the decoration of St. Mark's, since, as the thing was to be done at all, it was reckoned desirable to do it handsomely. But what they complained of was, that when they were already at an expense of 2,000*l.* a year for the parish churches, they were to be saddled with an additional and unnecessary expense. There was no denial of the correctness of their statement, that in the existing churches there were 762 seats unengaged.

Petition laid on the Table.

CALICO DUTIES.] Lord *Auckland* moved, that the Calico Duties' Bill be read a second time. He was not aware that there would be any opposition to his Motion, but he wished, if there were, that the discussion might take place on Monday next, when he meant to move the third reading of the Bill. The object he had in view was, not to avoid any discussion which the Bill might deserve, but to carry it forward with as much expedition as possible, in order to relieve the trade of the state of suspense in which it was at present; and he assured their Lordships, that no less than 200,000 persons were out of employment, and would continue so until this Bill had passed into a law.

—Bill read a second time, and ordered to be read a third time without being committed.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Friday, March 11, 1831.

MINUTES.] New Writs. For New Romney, in the room of the Hon. ARTHUR TREVOR, accepted the Chiltern Hundreds.

Bills: The Corporation Funds, read a second time. To prohibit the Growth of Tobacco in Ireland, for ascertaining the Boundaries of the Forest of Deane, for making a New Street from Waterloo-bridge, to Repeal the Excise Duties on Tallow Candles, read a first time.

Returns ordered. On the Motion of Mr. SPRING RICE, the value of the Imports into, and Exports from, the Port and Harbour of Belfast, during each of the fifteen years ending 5th January, 1831; also, an account of the number of Vessels, with the amount of their tonnage, and the number of men and boys employed in navigating the same, that entered inwards, and cleared outwards, at the Port of Belfast, from and to all parts of the world during the same time; also, the amount furnished by the Chairman of the Carrickfergus Forgery Committee, for the expenses of Witnesses:—On the Motion of Lord Viscount ACHESON, the Duties collected on flint, plate, and crown Glass, in England, Scotland, and Ireland, distinguishing the amount paid in each County, for the years ending 5th January, 1829, 1830, and 1831; also, the Drawbacks paid on flint, plate, and crown Glass exported from each country for said years.

Petitions presented. In favour of Reform, by Mr. KENNEDY, from Campbell Town and Kilmarnock:—By Mr. NEELD, from Chippenham:—By Mr. R. TREVOR, from Carmarthen:—By Mr. J. JOHNSTONE, from the Hammermen of Edinburgh, and from the Guild of Stirling:—By Mr. S. RICE, from St. Mary's, Lambeth. For the Repeal of the Assessed Taxes, by Lord MORPETH, from Gisborough, and other places in Yorkshire. For the Abolition of Slavery, by Mr. KENNEDY, from various places in Scotland. By Mr. SHAW, from the Dublin Society for Suppressing Duelling, for measures to prevent that practice. Against any alteration in the Timber Duties, by Mr. KENNEDY, from the Shipowners of Ayr and Irving. By the same hon. Member, from the same place, against the proposed Tax on Steam-Boats; from the Procurators of Irving, against the Stamp Duty on Procurators' Certificates; from Mr. Murray M'Cullock, for an alteration in the Law of Entail; from the Post Masters of Banfshire, for the Reduction of Duties on Post Horses; from the Justices of Peace of the County of Aberdeen, against the Tailzies (Scotland) Bill. For a General Fast, by Mr. R. HOWARD, from the Inhabitants of Powerscourt. For extending the Galway Franchise, by Lord DUNCANNON, from the Protestants of Nun's Island:—By Mr. SPRING RICE, from the Protestants of Rahoon. From the Quakers of Limerick, for the Abolition of the Punishment of Death; and from certain Inhabitants of Limerick and Ennis, for the substitution of Solemn Affirmations in the place of Oaths.

WEST INDIAN TRADE WITH AMERICA.] On the Motion of Mr. *Poulett Thomson* the House went into a Committee on the Colonial Trade Bill. The right hon. Gentleman then said, that the circumstances connected with this measure had been so frequently detailed to the House, that it would be unnecessary for him to do more than shortly recall them to the recollection of hon. Members. In the year 1826, an Order in Council had issued, in consequence of the United States having refused to accede to the proposals made to them in 1822, and under the Reciprocity Acts in 1825, prohibiting all intercourse between the United States of America and our West-Indian Colonies. This prohibition continued until nearly the close of the last year. Different negotiations had subsequently been entered into, which led to the long correspondence between Mr. Gallatin and the late Mr. Canning, which was so well known to the House. They ended in an Order of Council, repeating the former Order of Council, and bringing into operation the Act of 1825; and the duties payable under that Act. He was glad that it would be unnecessary for him to enter into any examination of the policy which had produced the unnatural state of things that had lasted for so long a period; but he might observe, having carefully examined the conduct of the United States since 1817, that, in his opinion it would have been better even to have continued the prohibition than to have renewed it on the terms adopted in the last Order of Council. Passing by this, he had next to mention, that when the present Administration came into office they found a bill on this subject lying before the House. That Bill had been called for by the consequences which had resulted from the prohibitory Order in Council, and particularly from the necessity of protecting those interests in our own North American colonies which had grown up in consequence of the prohibition. Upon coming into office, the Administration also found the despatches which had been sent to our colonies, informing the colonists of the nature of the bill which had been introduced; and almost the first documents which met his eyes when he came to the Board of Trade, were protests against the bill from the American Minister, from the West-Indian colonies, and also from the North American colonies. He could not hope, any more than his predecessor, to content all these parties, but he had reason, to believe from communicating with them, that the alterations he had introduced into the schedules rendered the Bill more acceptable to them all, than it was as proposed by the late Government. The principle of the late Government was, to raise many of the Duties on goods imported direct from the United States, and make them permanent, giving at the same time a portion of relief by removing the duty altogether from some articles. The object of the present Government had been, to give temporary protection by, higher duties on the produce of the United States, and provide means gradually to revert to the scale of 1825 for all articles on which the duty was not now to be lower than it was then. The schedule of the measure which the present Ministers had proposed in lieu of that which their predecessors had left behind them, had been some time before the House, and the Committee, therefore, would be aware of the difference between the measure now under consideration, and that which had been proposed by the late Government. It remained for him, then, merely to state shortly the grounds of that difference, and the extent to which it went. The first article he would mention was flour, the duty on which he proposed to leave as it stood in 1825, at 5*s*. per barrel, instead of 6*s*. By taking off altogether the duty from Canadian flour, that would give a protection to the produce of our own colonies and our own shipping, amounting to 25*s*. per ton, which he considered quite sufficient, and affording great advantages to our shipping, by securing for them the freight of all the American flour that came down the river St. Lawrence. As no wheat went from Canada, he proposed to remove wholly the duty on that article. The duty on shingles which by a bill of the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Herries) was 10*s*. 6*d*. and 21*s*., he proposed to reduce, as in 1825, to 7*s*. and 14*s*. The best shingles were made from Cypress wood, which grew almost wholly in the south, and as they were much used, he saw no reason for procuring the use of an inferior article by a high rate of duty. On staves he proposed to levy a duty of 25*s*. for three years; the right hon. Gentleman having proposed 18*s*. 9*d*.; at the end of that time to lower the dnty to 21*s*., and finally to reduce it to 13*s*. 9*d*. the rate fixed in the year 1825. He thought that at present 18*s*. 9*d*. was not in proportion to the protection afforded to other articles. The right hon. Gentleman proposed to levy a duty of 31*s*. permanently on yellow and white pine timber; by the present schedule he proposed a duty of 28*s*. for three years, then a duty of 25*s*., and finally a duty of 21*s*., the sum proposed in 1825. Pitch pine not being exclusively the growth of the northern colonies, he proposed to place on it at once the duty of 1825, of 21*s*. The duty on wood-hoops he proposed should be 5*s*. 3*d*. At present a direct import of beef and pork was permitted from the United States, on the payment of a duty of 12*s*. the barrel, and live stock was imported duty free. To secure the advantage of this trade to our own colonies, he proposed to remove the duty on beef and pork when imported from them, and allow those articles to be imported duty free. These alterations would, he believed, relieve the West Indies to the extent of 20,000*l*. a year, and would afford a greater degree of protection to our North American colonies than the bill of the right hon. Gentleman. To satisfy all the conflicting interests that were concerned in the measure was impossible, but he was able to say, that all the parties were better pleased with his scheme than with that of the right hon. Gentleman. A great advantage would accrue from the arrangement of allowing salted provisions to be imported free of duty, that of getting rid of all the Custom Houses on the St. Lawrence, and opening that outlet to the productions of the States of Maine and of Ohio. In voting for the amendments he proposed, the Committee would only sanction the schedule, and for the duties which were to be increased, he should have afterwards to move Resolutions in a Committee of the whole House.

Mr. *Herries* objected to the course which the right hon. Gentleman opposite had pursued. The forms of the House would require that they should go into a Committee upon the schedule. It would be more necessary that the forms of the House should not be departed from, because he would venture to say, that no one who had listened to the right hon. Gentleman could understand either the nature of the proposed alterations, or the manner in which the right hon. Gentleman intended to carry them into effect. He should therefore recommend that they should go into Committee upon the details of the schedule, and that when those details were settled, the right hon. Gentleman should ask for leave to bring in a bill to carry them into effect. The Bill with the alterations, would then be printed and brought fairly before the public; all the details would be fairly discussed and clearly understood, which would not be the case if the right hon. Gentleman were allowed to pursue the course he had commenced. If this advice of his were taken, he should feel it the less necessary to state his objections in detail now, and he should be glad to be relieved from this task, for if he were to enter upon it now, he was sure that he should be as little understood as the right hon. Gentleman had been. The real point for the consideration of the Committee was, whether the principle of the bill which he had introduced in November last, and which had been lying on the Table for consideration ever since, should or should not be adopted. It was highly satisfactory to him to find that the present Government had abjured the principles on which they had opposed that bill of his, and that they had adopted the principle of his bill. Whatever deficiency of support the Government might experience from those who had lately supported their other measures, he could assure them that they would find none on this Bill from those who were opposed to them in other respects. The principal alterations in the right hon. Gentleman's schedule were those in the duties upon flour, and staves, and boards. He was very well aware that staves had been placed too low in the schedules of Mr. Robinson in 1822, and of Mr. Huskisson in 1825. Flour and staves were inseparably connected, since a cargo could not be made up without both. He concurred in the propriety of giving a fuller protection to staves; but the connexion between staves and flour being as he had stated it to be, he was not prepared to concur in the proposed alteration in the duty on flour. He was happy to see that the Government was disposed to act on the principle of allowing the produce of the United States to be imported into the West Indies from our North American colonies at a lower rate of duty, in some instances without paying any duty whatever, than when imported direct from the United States. It might be said that that was not fair to the United States, but he for one must protest against the United States, or any other State, dictating the terms on which we chose to regulate the intercourse between our own colonies. He was aware that in addressing his Majesty's Ministers he was addressing Gentlemen among whom there was considerable difference of opinion on this subject, unless some of them had greatly altered the opinions which they had formerly expressed. For instance, his right hon. friend, the President of the Board of Control had read him a long lecture in no very friendly terms of reproof, and had even spoke of his measure in a tone bordering upon indignation. The principle of his measure had, nevertheless, been adopted by the present Government, and he was very glad to find that some of the members of the Government had changed their opinion with regard to it, for he was sure that that principle was a sound and a safe one. He trusted his right hon. friend would on that occasion either retract some of the animadversions his right hon. friend had formerly made on his measure, or manfully oppose it, and shew that merely becoming a member of the Government had not made him change his opinion. He expected that his right hon. friend should do one or the other, or he would certainly depart from his usual candour and fair-dealing. It was a principle which was not consistent with what were called political economical doctrines, but it was consistent with a much higher doctrine, that of justice, and of giving to our colonies that protection which they had a right to demand at our hands. The schedule of 1825 had got a fair trial. In consequence of the withdrawal of protection, the tonnage between the Canadas and the West Indies in the three years, from 1822 to 1825, had declined from 76,000 tons to 36,000 tons. He complained of the tortuous course of policy which had been adopted by the United States throughout the whole of these transactions and he instanced the tonnage duty which had been placed by them on British vessels as one exemplification of that policy of which the tariff was the completion. The protecting system which had been adopted towards our North American colonies subsequent to the year 1826, had raised the tonnage employed by them in the West-India trade from 36,000 to 100,000 tons. He would ask, should we return to that system which had in three years depressed that tonnage to 36,000 tons? Ought they then suddenly to lay the colonists open to the unlimited competition of the United States? He thought that none but the purest theorists, the most hard-hearted political economists, would call upon them to return to such a system as that. He congratulated his Majesty's Ministers, who, when out of office, had been partly converts to the doctrines of such persons upon not carrying such doctrines into practice when in power. He would not detain the House by entering into the details of this measure now, as he should have another opportunity of discussing the matter on a future day. The Bill, as it stood substantially at present, should have his support; and it was with extreme satisfaction he found, that after so long differing from the right hon. Gentleman, that right hon. Gentleman had come back to the principles of this Bill.

Mr. *Poulett Thomson* said, that he would take the earliest opportunity to move the alterations in the duties which he had stated to the House. He could not avoid remarking, that the right hon. Gentleman opposite had been himself a party to the taking off that protection from the colonies with respect to which he had made complaints against the present Government, for the right hon. Gentleman was a party to the repeal of the Orders in Council by the late Administration. This Bill was intended to benefit the West Indies ultimately by sacrificing something at present. He defended the consistency of the present Government in the course which it had pursued on this occasion. To the principle of affording a certain degree of protection to our colonies, he, (Mr. P. Thomson) was ready to give his entire assent; but they should always take care not to carry that principle too far, and not to afford protection beyond that amount which would be consistent with the interests of the empire generally. The right hon. Gentleman charged his right hon. friend, the President of the Board of Control, with inconsistency. He certainly could see no inconsistency in the conduct of his right hon. friend, and should certainly have voted with him had he been present in the House on that occasion. The division took place on a proposal of the right hon. Gentleman to lay a duty of 1*s.* 2*d.* on wheat, and that duty was actually expunged from the schedule. What his right hon. friend opposed and what he should always oppose, was giving such a degree of protection to one interest as was injurious to the whole of the empire.

Mr. *George Robinson* contended, that the course of policy which had been adopted, both by the late and by the present Government, towards our colonies, had been a most impolitic one. That policy was said to be in accordance with the principles of the late Mr. Huskisson; but he was quite sure that that lamented statesman would not in 1830 (for the repeal of the Orders in Council took place last October) have given his assent to a measure for allowing a direct intercourse with the West Indies to the United States, if at the same time the United States had passed a tariff virtually prohibiting the introduction of British manufactures into that part of America. If nothing had occurred, indeed since 1825, he should not be disposed to complain, but since then the Congress of the United States, had adopted a system of commercial policy, that was directed in a hostile spirit against the trade of Great Britain. His right hon. friend, and other right hon. Gentlemen, seemed to think that their policy would meet the approbation of Mr. Huskisson, were he alive. It was impossible to know, that, but he would take the liberty of reading a short extract from a speech delivered by that statesman in 1828, on his moving for the production of the American Tariff. Mr. Huskisson then said, "whilst iron, cotton, and hardware were rendered liable to duties which almost amounted to a prohibition, being the staples of this country; the production of other countries were, in the same proportion, lowered, evidently shewing an intention to wound and injure, if not altogether ruin, the extensive trade carried on by this country in articles of its own manufacture."* "A man must be blind to the interests of this country who should consent to deprive Government of the means of promptly meeting the effects of such restrictive measures by corresponding regulations.†" "Unless we asserted our dignity and protected our interests what would be thought of our apathy by the people of the Brazils, who received all our goods on the payment of only fifteen per cent."‡ Mr. Huskisson then commented on the importance of the carrying trade; and speaking of the offer, in 1825, to open a direct trade between America and the West Indies, which America had refused to accept, he added, "For one long year this country submitted patiently, I had almost said too patiently, to the regulation without adopting any retaliating measures. At the end of that period his Majesty was advised to issue an Order in Council, prohibiting the intercourse between America and our West-India possessions. The intercourse was interdicted and then came America with a tardy proposal accepting the terms which up to the moment of the prohibition, this country had offered to her in vain. The advice for issuing that order was given with reluctance, but if they must be driven to measures unfriendly to commercial intercourse, it became them to persist in such measures with firmness."* In that there was no evidence to suppose that Mr. Huskisson would have patronized the present policy. On the same occasion, the right hon. Baronet, then Secretary of State for the Home Department, said "that he was not prepared to go the length of admitting that even the perseverance of America should not drive us to the adoption of measures of retaliation. It was with no unfriendly voice, that he would say that the policy on which America was now acting was founded in error, and that before long, she would be convinced that she had mistaken her own interest."† At that time the right hon. the President of the Board of Control, concurred with the right hon. the Secretary of State and Mr. Huskisson, and there were therefore, the highest authorities against making the concessions which we had made to the Government of the United States. He would ask, why did the Government of this country give to the United States the boon of a direct commercial intercourse with the West Indies, without stipulating, at the same time, that they should allow the introduction of British manufactures into the United States? We gave every thing to them, and they would give nothing to us. He would have said, until you return to the Tariff of 1824, we will not even entertain the question of opening the West-India trade to your shipping. He did not know whether Members had read the correspondence between Mr. M'Lane and Lord Aberdeen, but he had; and he thought it afforded an excellent illustration of American skill and British credulity. Mr. M'Lane began by professing great cordiality, and in stating some general principles in which he cordially agreed. "It should be, he said, the desire, as it is the interest of both countries, to extinguish their causes of mutual bitterness, to correct the errors which may have interrupted the harmony of their past intercourse, to discard from their commercial regulations measures of hostile monopoly, and to adopt instead a system of frank and amicable competition." Unfortunately the acts of the American government did not correspond to Mr. M'Lane's language, and while he professed nothing but liberality, it continued those measures of exclusion and hostility that were intended to ruin our trade; and while its conduct remained the same he could not understand the policy of our taking a single step for the advantage of America. The late Government, however, adopted the views of Mr. M'Lane, and opened the trade to the West Indies, giving up, in fact, to America a part of our own coasting trade. The present Government went further and proposed to take away the protection which our own colonies enjoyed for their timber in order to allow the Prussians and the Norwegians to bring their timber in their own ships into our market. Between both these Governments he saw no succour for the colonies but what God might vouchsafe. To shew what the late Government at one time thought of the trade between the West-Indies and America, he would beg leave to quote a passage from an answer written by Lord Aberdeen in August 17th, 1830, to Mr. M'Lane. His Lordship then said, "It is most essential that his Majesty's Government should not contract, by implication, any engagement towards that of the United States, with respect to alteration of duties, because his Majesty's Government have already had under their consideration the expediency of introducing some modifications into the schedule of duties attached to the Act of 1825, with a view more effectually to support the interest of our North American colonies. To those interests, fostered as they have been by the suspension of the intercourse between the United States and the West Indies, his Majesty's Government will continue to look, with an earnest desire to afford them such protection, by discriminatory duties, as may appear to be consistent with the interests of other parts of his Majesty's dominions." After this, he contended that the present proposed regulations gave the inhabitants of our North American colonies a right to complain. After the correspondence which had taken place between Lord Aberdeen and Mr. Galatin, after the language that had been used by Mr. Huskisson, after the continual protestations of our Government, he must say, that the present measure was dealing very narrowly with the colonies. If the trade were thrown open at all, the measure ought to be at least prospective. If the West-India interests took this as a boon, in lieu of a reduction of duties upon sugars, they would find themselves very much mistaken. The West-India islands could be as well supplied by our American colonies as by the United States, but this act would take away employment for 150,000 tons of British shipping, and give it to American vessels. The calculation was, that the West-India islands would save by these regulations an expenditure to the extent of 50,000*l.* to the utmost; but the loss sustained by the British shipping interests would be very great. It was clearly shown by returns on the Table, that when the United States were excluded from the trade, the shipping of our own North American colonies increased very rapidly. We were, therefore, by every such measure as that under discussion, increasing the maritime strength of that Power, and decreasing our own. He knew that the right Vice-president of the Board of Trade hon. might call such language inflammatory, but he thought it was justified by the conduct of the Government of the United States. The President in his last message said, " The arrangement secures to the United States every advantage asked by them, and which the state of the negotiation allowed us to insist upon. The trade will be placed on a footing decidedly more favourable to the country than any on which it ever stood." This, it should be remembered, was said in relation to the negotiation in which the President thought he had obtained a triumph over Great Britain. He congratulated the United States on the success and added, " that the prosperity of this country, so far as it depends on this trade, will be greatly promoted by the new arrangement, there can be no doubt. Independently of the obvious advantages of an open and direct intercourse, its establishment will be attended with other consequences of a higher order." That shewed the estimation in which the Government of the United States held the advantages which we had so unwisely conceded. But the important part of the quotation was those " consequences of a higher order," mentioned by the President which could mean nothing, he believed, but the increase of the American navy, which would be the infallible consequence of our bestowing on the United States a large part of our own trade, and of employment for our own shipping. He was confirmed in this opinion, by the President immediately afterwards recommending the navy to the care of the congress, adding, "that in a few years the Government would be prepared to send to sea on any emergency a powerful fleet of new ships." We had been so long accustomed to the supremacy of the seas, that we were beginning to think that we could keep it against the struggles of all other nations, and without any exertion on our own part; but he thought that a very little examination of the progress of the Americans ought to be sufficient to show that we were called on to make the greatest efforts to be able to compete with them. It should be recollected, that when we were struggling for the liberties of Europe, America threw herself into the scale against us. He was justified, therefore, in supposing that in contributing to foster the naval power of America, we were strengthening a nation that would again be hostile to us, and he owned that he was not without apprehension, in case of another war occurring in Europe, that the American government would declare against this country. He was afraid, that in touching on those topics, he was laying himself open to a charge of illiberality; but he could with confidence state, that the had the highest admiration for the Americans and their Government. They were every day showing the soundness of their measures and policy; and it was because he feared that we should one day be brought into collision with their power and strength, that he gave those cautions to his Majesty's Ministers. He trusted that he had succeeded in showing that we had employed a very different policy towards America to that which she had pursued towards us. Never had the Americans, in any one instance, yielded a single point to us, but had always shown themselves most pertinacious in advancing their own interests. He would, therefore, speak out boldly at once to America, for she could not pursue a more hostile course than that which she was now pursuing. He objected also to the present measure, that it did not fix the duties at once, but left them open for further change and further discussion, in the years 1834 and 1836. The whole course of our commercial policy was full of changes. We raised up great interests, and then struck them down, spreading ruin amongst thousands of those who trusted in the Government. The American government acted differently. It thought the manufactures and commerce of America could not flourish without protection, and while we only levied a duty of 18 or 20 per cent on their goods, they levied a duty of 80 or 100 per cent on our produce. The conduct of that government, as to the Sugar duties, shewed by what spirit it was animated. It was proposed to Congress this year to lower the duties on all foreign sugars, which would have benefitted the British West Indies; but the anti-English party was so strong, that this proposition was rejected, and the duty on sugar, imported from our colonies, was still 80 per cent. They shut out West-India sugar and rum to protect their own planters and distillers, and we gave them the benefit of a direct trade with our colonies, by which they would enjoy all the advantage of the freight on the cumbrous articles we allowed them to supply us with. In their trade with the West-India islands they would take nothing but specie in return for their produce, and they had always shown a most unconceding disposition in all their negotiations, as was witnessed in their treaty with France, in claiming their losses,—in their demands upon England for the compensation for their slaves carried away from the southern States,—and, lastly, in their pending negotiations respecting the north-western boundary line, by a shifting of which they expect to obtain such great advantages. It was impossible for the Americans to have shown a more hostile spirit than they had done towards this country, notwithstanding that the English took from them annually to the amount of 33,000,000 of dollars' worth of raw produce. They had done every thing short of prohibiting the export of their own commodities, and that the government could not do. The United States could not refuse their raw cottons to this country, for the very existence of the Southern States depended on our taking them. Hitherto, he must repeat in conclusion, we had been going on a wrong system, for we should never have conceded a single point to America without an equivalent. But though this had been our course, he could see no reason why we should not alter it—late as it was in the day. The American shipping already amounted to 1,640,000 tons, while the English was but 2,000,000 tons; and if the present course were persisted in for five years, he had no doubt that by that time the amount of American shipping would be equal to ours.

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* Hansard, New Series. vol. xix. p. 1770.

† *Ibid.*

‡ *Ibid.* p. 1771.

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* *Ibid.* p. 1774. † *Ibid* p. 1776.

Mr. *C. Grant* thought, that the wisest thing we could do was, to bury in oblivion any hostile feelings that might exist towards America; and he must say, that the President of the United States appeared to him to have acted in the most candid and frank manner. He thought that the late Government had been perfectly justified in opening the trade between America and the Colonies; and he thought that the documents which passed on both sides were highly creditable; and he could not but think, that what had then taken place might be the means of removing any unpleasantness of feeling between the two countries, and draw them together in a closer bond than they had been for the last twenty years. With reference to his opinions in 1828, he must positively assert, that he never had wished that the intercourse with America should not be renewed, and if any record of parliamentary proceedings attributed that to him, it was erroneous. He thought that, renewing their connection with America, they ought to return as speedily as possible to the rate of duties laid down in 1825; and therefore he could not agree with his right hon. friend (Mr. Herries) that the two bills, that of the present Government, and that of the last, were substantially the same; for in very many cases his right hon. friend had proposed a considerable increase on that scale. He (Mr. C. Grant) did not intend to say, that the scale of 1825 was to be the minimum; but he thought, that at all events they ought to come down to that scale as speedily as possible; because, if they did not, they would be making a step, not in advance, but in retrogression.

Mr. *Keith Douglas* was glad to hear that the Bill was intended to promote the intercourse between our West-India islands and our North American colonies; but he observed at the same time, that this was to be effected at the expense of those islands. He was aware, however, that they had no alternative but submission; but that being their condition, it was the duty of the mother country to see justice done to all. That the West-India islands found a market for their produce in the North American colonies, was, he admitted, an advantage, though he doubted if that compensated the increased prices they would, in consequence of this Bill, have to pay on many necessary articles. For his part, he did not wish to sever the interests of our colonies, and should be happy to see them all united, and their prosperity promoted by the Crown. It was said, that this measure was in principle like the measure that was proposed by the last Administration, but he thought it differed very materially, and in some respects objectionably. It pretended to give protection to the manufacture of staves, but that was to be limited to a short period; and at the same time that this Bill was to protect the Canadian trade, the measure of the noble Lord relative to the Timber Duties would have the effect of displacing 200,000 tons of shipping, in order to place 700,000*l.* in the Exchequer. That was inflicting distress on the shipowners. In fact, the Government never took into consideration the interests its own measures had raised up, and which it too lightly abandoned. Under all the circumstances of the case, he hoped that the West-India colonies would, in due time, be deemed proper objects for the calm consideration of the House.

Mr. *Courtenay* did not feel inclined to follow the hon. member for Worcester into all his discussions concerning the Order in Council; he only wished to observe, that the hon. Member was in error when he said, that Mr. Huskisson declared that he would never consent to rescind that Order. When Mr. Huskisson was applied to in 1827, he stated that he would not hamper the Government by any such declaration, or impede it in any measure which it might suppose to be necessary to propose to Parliament; but he then said, that he saw no immediate chance of its being rescinded. There was a contradiction between the assertion of his right hon. friend the President of the Board of Control, that this Bill was not like that proposed by the late Administration, and the statement of the Vice-president of the Board of Trade, that it was in principle exactly the same. The right hon. Gentleman, indeed, stated, that the bill proposed by the late Administration was to be permanent, while this Bill was to be temporary; but he had himself stated last November, that the bill then proposed was not to be permanent, and that it was founded on the necessity of giving temporary protection to interests which had been raised up by Acts of Parliament.

Sir *Henry Parnell* observed, that whatever might be said of others, he still maintained the same principles as in last November. His right hon. friend, the Vice-president of the Board of Trade, had stated, that this was a measure of protection for a particular branch of trade, and, it was therefore, a recurrence to the principles which had been abandoned by Parliament in 1825. Mr. Huskisson then stated, that those principles ought not to be retained any longer than could be helped, and he was sorry that he was obliged to keep up any principles of protection. This was the first Bill, since 1825, which had recurred to those principles of protection that were then abandoned. He was sorry to refer to principles of free trade, particularly because those who took an opportunity of censuring such principles were apt to be cheered by the House. That was partly occasioned, probably, by the details of such subjects not being understood by hon. Members. Had he spoken on the Reform Question, he should have supported it on the ground that the measure proposed would introduce into the House a greater proportion of men than at present who understood such questions, and would attend to them. Hon. Members who spoke against the principles of free trade, and said, that those who supported them overlooked the principles of justice, were, in his opinion, sporting a parliamentary fallacy. While they condemned political economists as visionary and hard-hearted, they were themselves the veriest theorists possible; and to accommodate their theories to their interests or their wishes, they even reasoned falsely from the false premises they assumed. It was said by these Gentlemen, that the interests of the North American colonies must be supported; but, in doing that, the Legislature injured the interests of the public. The protection given in the first instance to the North American colonies came out of the pockets of the West-India planters; but the West-India planters remunerated themselves by raising the price of sugar to the English public. Thus the consumers—the English consumers—were injured by that protection which it was proposed to give to the colonies. For that the British public were taxed.

In fact, the whole subject was taken up under very narrow views. It was well established by the evidence given before the Finance Committee, that in no branch of the public service could such savings be made as in the government of the colonies. It was stated by the noble Lord (the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs) and the Secretary at War, that if the government of the colonies were placed more in the hands of the colonists, the expense of an army for the protection of them might be saved. He contended, therefore, that those who looked at such questions only as far as they affected the colonial interests took a very narrow view of them. He regretted this measure and all similar measures, because they afforded a justification to the Americans to enforce their Tariff against us. Already these restrictive laws had done our manufacturers a great deal of mischief, and he could not but apprehend that more mischief of the same kind would be done by laying restrictions on the trade of the United States with the colonies. On the whole, therefore, he was decidedly adverse to the present measure, which he considered to be most impolitic as well as most important.

Mr. *Stuart Wortley* admitted, that it was very improper, as a general principle, to foster any interests by laws, because the day would surely come when the protection must be withdrawn, and then the difficulty of withdrawing it, and the mischief done, was in proportion to the degree of protection which had been afforded. At the same time, the present question was, how they might best protect interests that had been called into existence by the laws; and he did not agree with those who thought that the Legislature ought to act without any regard to those interests. If, as the hon. member for Worcester stated, the United States could not supply the West Indies cheaper than our own North American colonies, it was clear that they would not be injured by the change. He certainly was one who viewed with alarm the sudden application of the principles of political economy to our colonies; but he could not suppose that those principles, as far as they were correct should never be applied. The whole question appeared to him one of transfer and navigation, rather than of protection; but he was glad the measure had been discussed, as that might lead in time to getting rid of the protection without inflicting injury.

Mr. Alderman *Thompson* reminded the House, that the Representative of the West-India interest, and the Representative of the North-American colonies, had both declared that this measure would not be of service either to the West-India or the North-American colonies. The Bill appeared to him calculated only to benefit the third party, namely, the people of the United States. The House should, however, recollect what the right hon. member for Harwich had said of the increase and decrease of the trade between our North-American colonies and the West Indies. Perhaps the House was not aware, that at present the trade between those colonies and the mother country was equal to half the foreign trade of the United States, and the trade between England and her colonies had increased by one-half since 1816. In his view this made that trade of considerable importance, and he could not agree to any measure which might injure it. The exports during the last year to our American colonies, amounted to 2,000,000*l.*, while those to the Northern States of Europe, did not exceed 600,000*l.* He must, therefore, deny the utility of disturbing a trade which was so advantageous to this country. While he was on this subject, he would take leave to ask the noble Lord (the Chancellor of the Exchequer) what was the course the Government intended to pursue with respect to the new Timber Duties. This was the season of the year when the persons engaged in the timber trade chartered vessels to bring home cargoes, and it was of extreme importance to a large body of his constituents that the noble Lord should state distinctly, if he intended to persevere in that scale of duties he had announced.

Mr. *Bernal* could not let the discussion terminate without declaring, plainly and openly, that the West-Indians would derive little or no alleviation from their sufferings from this Bill, and that they did not look on any of its provisions as a boon granted to them. It was, in truth, the same Bill which the late Government proposed, with some little difference as to the time when all its provisions were to come into operation. The repeal of the Non-intercourse Act would leave the situation of the West Indies, with respect to the supply of lumber, just the same as before. The planters of the colonies could receive lumber, notwithstanding all prohibitions, through the medium of a neutral port. He had himself received lumber at all times, imported into the island of St. Thomas, and from that direct to the British West Indies, which he had been compelled to pay for in hard dollars. The Government might learn from this, how futile it was, to restrain the intercourse between nations, and that no Act of Parliament could have the power to defeat that which the people found necessary to their interest. As to the present Bill, he could only say, that the duties were apparently lessened, but really increased by the operation of its provisions. And so far, therefore, as the benefits of the West-Indians were concerned, he must say, it was mere moonshine. He did not mean to deny, that there was some benefit received from the intercourse between Canada and the West-Indies; for he believed that nearly one-half of the rum, and sugar, and molasses, exported to North America, was consumed by the Canadians. The duties, however, were much too high. Sugar paid, he believed, a duty of half-a-crown a hundred weight; molasses, nine pence; and rum, one shilling a gallon. He knew that the produce of these duties was necessary to enable the Canadas to pay their own expenses; but he thought that a reduction of these duties should take place as speedily as possible. He concluded by protesting against the use of any language, with respect to the United States, which could in any degree affect the bonds of amity that ought to prevail between great commercial countries.

Mr. *Warburton* said, that the 70,000*l.* derived from these protecting duties, was just so much taken from the West-Indians; who paying so much more than they should do for their lumber, were compelled either to suffer the loss themselves, or attempt to charge it on the consumers of their produce. He wished much to know whether the wheat which the Canadians were allowed to import from the United States, was intended to be warehoused for the use of the West Indies; because, as he looked on the Canadas to be the great agricultural colony from which England would soon take her corn and flour, it was necessary to know how this wheat was for the present to be disposed of. As to the duties laid on lumber by the Bill, he saw that many of them amounted to 100 per cent, and he thought they were much too high.

Lord *Althorp* would first answer the question of the worthy Alderman (Thompson), by stating at once that the Government did intend to persevere with the propositions respecting the Timber Duties, and that he would bring them under the attention of the House on that day fortnight. With respect to the measure now before them, he cordially agreed with the principles laid down by the right hon. Baronet (Sir H. Parnell), but he must deny that the Government were retrograding in the provisions of this Bill. It was founded on the scale agreed to by the House in 1825; and the only alteration of importance made by the present Government, was, to let in some articles free of duty which were at that time saddled with too high a duty for the interests of the trade of the colonies. He admitted that the Bill did not go so far as might have been desirable with the reduction of duties, but the Government had made a provision that they should expire gradually, because that would be less injurious to the existing interests, which had grown up under the present laws, than an immediate and total repeal. In consequence of the Non-intercourse Act, capital had been employed to some extent in certain channels, from which it could not be immediately removed without great loss, and it was to avoid this evil that the reduction was made gradual. The hon. member for Worcester (Mr. Robinson) had complained that the colonies would be sufferers by these arrangements, but when the interests of the whole empire were concerned, a particular class could not complain that those interests were not sacrificed for their particular advantage. He regretted much, and deeply, that the Government could not afford to take off the Sugar Duties; but what it had done was intended for the advantage of the colonies, and he believed it would prove so. The noble Lord concluded by declaring, that he thoroughly approved of the principle which had regulated the policy of the country on the subject of prohibiting duties for some time past, and that the departure from them in the present Bill was only for a season.

Mr. *Hume* protested against the use of the words perpetual protection by the Vice-president of the Board of Trade, as being contrary to the principles which had now for years regulated the policy of the country. He regretted much to find that the mischief was not confined to words, and that several of the duties proposed to be levied under the Bill were a return to that system of prohibition which the House had formally declared its intention to abandon. He believed that no alteration could be made in duties in a Committee, but when the proper time came, he should propose, as an Amendment, to return to the system of 1825. The West-Indians had suffered much from the conduct of the Government, but he feared much that retracing its course would not relieve them. This measure, although good, would not bring back to the West-Indies that great trade in coffee, rum, and sugar, which they once possessed in supplying the United States. Vast quantities of rum, molasses, and sugar, were formerly imported from the West Indies into America, but the people of the United States now distilled their own rum, and imported sugar from South America and Cuba. He did not quite agree with the hon. member for Rochester in all he said, because, if the West-India planters went to St. Thomas's for their lumber, they in this way increased its price from 10 to 16 per cent, without bestowing the least benefit on any interest connected with this country. The right hon. Gentleman below him had spoken with severity of the doctrines of political economy, but he should say, that those doctrines were quite as good as any propounded by that right hon. Gentleman. Ignorance of the mischief which might be occasioned by the measures introduced in the way of meditated improvement, was one of the greatest possible evils in these respects, inasmuch as the influence of Government too frequently gave weight to those suggestions, which finally could not bear the test of trial and practical application.

Mr. *P. Thomson* contended, that the course which Government had thought fit in this instance to pursue, was not a departure from its avowed principles. It should be recollected that our colonies stood in a different position, as respected the mother country, from the colonies of other countries.

Mr. *Herries* expressed himself disposed to leave the defence of the measures which were pursued in this respect by the Government of which he formed a part, in the hands of his successors.

Mr. *Callaghan* believed, that in the present artificial state of the country, it was absolutely necessary that a restrictive policy should be adopted with respect to our colonies. The interests of Ireland, with respect to the provision trade, more particularly required that a preference should be given to its exports over those of North America, in respect to beef, pork, and butter.

Mr. *Irving* stated, that the reason why the West Indies ceased to export sugar to the United States was, that sugar was so extensively cultivated in New Orleans and Louisiana, that the United States had made themselves quite independent of our colonies. We might open the trade of those islands to the Americans, but they would assuredly take nothing from them except money. On the contrary, the Canadas took a great quantity of the West-India produce, and everything possible ought to be done to foster and encourage that trade.

Mr. *O'Connell* contended, that the Irish provision merchant could not at present afford to lose the protection, which he had till now enjoyed in the colonial market, from the rivalry of American imports of the same description as his. According to the Bill then before them, the Americans would supply our colonies duty free by sending their provisions to Canada.

Mr. *P. Thomson*—It was not intended to alter the existing duty of 12*s*. per cwt. on direct imports from the United States. That would still remain as a protection for Irish produce.

Mr *Hume* observed, that if the hon. and learned member for Waterford complained that the removal of the protecting duty was a hardship to Ireland, he ought to remember that there was another party to the transaction—namely, the colonists, who could not fail to think themselves ill-used if the restrictive system were continued.

Schedule passed *pro formâ*, and the House resumed.

MINISTERIAL PLAN OF PARLIAMENTARY REFORM.] Sir *C. Wetherell* wished to know from the noble Lord (the Chancellor of the Exchequer) whether it was intended to bring in the Bill for Parliamentary Reform, leave for which had been obtained on Wednesday.

Lord *Althorp* said, he had expected that it would have been ready before that hour, and would have been brought in that evening; but he now found that it could not be brought in before Monday.

Sir *C. Wetherell* expressed his surprise that a plan of Reform on which they were told the Cabinet were unanimous,—a plan which had undergone the longest discussion in that House that had ever been given to any measure ever before submitted to the consideration of Parliament—should not be ready two days after that on which leave had been given to bring it in. Was he to understand from this, that the plan was not yet prepared; or was it to be a different plan from that which they had had so long under discussion?

Lord *J. Russell* said, the plan was ready, though it had not been copied out in sufficient time to have it brought in that evening. It would, however, be presented on Monday, and be printed, and ready for delivery on Tuesday morning, which was as early as Members could have it if it were brought in that evening.

Sir *C. Wetherell* observed, that if the plan had been prepared at the time the motion was made for leave to bring in the Bill, as the House had a right to expect, the draught of the Bill ought to be ready now. [" *no, no*".] Hon. Members might cry " no," but he said yes; and he would contend, that the House and the country were not fairly treated by the delay. He repeated, the House and the country were treated badly by this delay.

Lord *Althorp* said, he had such respect for the opinion of the hon. and learned Gentleman, that he should regret coming under his lash, but he did not think that he had been deservedly brought under it in this instance; or, if the hon. and learned Gentleman thought so, he hoped the House and the country would think differently. It was no just ground of charge against Ministers that they were not quite ready to lay the draught of a measure of this importance before the House the moment they obtained leave to bring it in. The general plan of the measure was prepared and agreed upon before the motion of his noble friend was submitted to the House, but it might have been necessary, without any change of that general plan, to alter some of the details before the Bill was laid on the Table of the House.

Sir *C. Wetherell*—I now beg distinctly to ask the noble Lord, when is the Bill to be brought in?

Lord *Althorp*—On Monday.

COMMITTEE OF WAYS AND MEANS.] Lord Althorp moved the Order of the Day for the House to resolve itself into a Committee of Ways and Means.

On the question that the Speaker do leave the Chair.

Mr. *Attwood* said, he was anxious to take this opportunity of saying a few words on a subject of great importance to the country. It was now nearly a month since the noble Lord had brought forward his plan for making several great changes in the duties affecting some important branches of the commerce of the country. On that occasion he submitted certain intended changes in the amount of duties, particularly those on timber. The plan had no sooner been submitted to the House, than it created a very great sensation in the commercial world. It was then suspended; and though the public were most anxious to ascertain the decision of Parliament with respect to it, the noble Lord now intimated that the measure was to be further postponed for a fortnight. Such delay as this, on a matter where such extensive commercial interests were depending, was most ruinous in its effects on large capitals embarked in the trade which was to be affected by the proposed change in the duties. He alluded now to the proposed changes in the duties on timber. Not less than 9,000 tons of shipping, ready to sail for the Canadas in this trade, with cargoes exceeding 100,000*l.*, were delayed by this suspense. This, he must say, was not treating the House or the country fairly. Ministers ought to be ready to come forward with the measures which they opened to the country, as soon after as possible, to prevent that uncertainty, than which nothing was more injurious in matters of extensive trade. An hon. friend of his had a petition to present from a large body of merchants interested in this trade, and he had waited day after day to hear the farther details of their plan from Ministers; but now, as these were to be further postponed, the discussion must come on on the petition—a course most inconvenient to those concerned, who as yet knew only a part of the plan that was to be brought forward. If the petitions of the people were not to receive more attention than this, the best Reform which Ministers could introduce, would be that by which greater attention might be paid to the grievances of the people. It would be more effectual than that plan by which so much of the time of the House had been already occupied. The grievances of the people ought to be attended to before any supplies were voted; and if his hon. friend who had the petition to which he had alluded would now move, as an amendment to the Motion before the House, that this petition be read and discussed, instead of going into the Committee, he (Mr. Attwood) would readily second it. The petitions of the people had the first claim on the attention of Parliament. Already had 2,000 of them, complaining of and praying for redress of grievances, been presented, and he thought Ministers would have been much more usefully employed in reading and classifying them, and seeing what it was for which they prayed, than in bringing forward a measure of Reform, as it was called, in which no one grievance of the people was redressed. But a noble Lord had asked, if that House occupied itself in reading the petitions of the people, what time would there be for passing Acts of Parliament? He would answer, that if fewer Acts of Parliament were passed, it would be so much the better for the country. There were already a host of Acts passed for bettering the condition of the poor, and yet that condition was every day becoming worse. The noble Lord, the Under Secretary for the Colonies, proposed to add to these Acts one for bettering the condition of the poor, one promoting emigration; but if he examined before he legislated, he would find that six Acts had already been passed on the subject, each of which seemed to leave the condition of the poor worse than before. He must again repeat, that the plan of Reform brought forward did not propose to redress any grievance of which the people complained; while that and other measures relative to the finances of the country proposed by Gnvernment, would tend to the ruin of all classes. The Ministers had failed in showing that they were men of practical knowledge as statesmen and political economists, they had delayed proceeding with their plans, on which, if the House had been earlier called to decide, it would have become necessary to have a different set of men as advisers of the Crown.

Lord *Althorp* admitted that delay in matters affecting commerce would be injurious; but the parties interested in the timber trade could not, with justice, complain of any inconvenience from the delay to which the hon. Member alluded, because, at the very opening of the plan, it was stated that the new duties were not to take effect before the 10th of October; so that all the tons of shipping which the hon. Gentleman had mentioned would have full time to go to Canada and return to this country before that period. The changes with respect to the other duties would not be delayed, for they were proceeding with them as rapidly as the other business of Parliament would permit. As to the petitions of the people, he should be glad if the business of the house would admit of having them more fully read and discussed, but the arrangement for not bringing forward petitions after five o'clock was made before he and his friends came into office. He did not find fault with that arrangement, as he thought that some arrangement of the kind was unavoidable; for it must be obvious, that if the House occupied itself in reading and discussing all the petitions which came before it, it would have no time for discussing measures to redress those grievances of which the petitioners complained. The hon. Member had introduced the subject of Reform, but that had so recently undergone a full discussion, that the House would excuse him if he refrained at that time from following the hon. Member into it.

Sir *C. Wetherell* contended that the course pursued by Ministers in opening the Budget of the year, and then suspending some of its most important parts, was unprecedented. It was too bad that an Administration should open the Financial Budget, then suspend it, to bring forward a plan of Reform, with which also they were not ready. So that there was now before the House a suspended Budget, and a suspended plan of Reform. The delay in the noble Lord's plan of duties, particularly in those intended with respect to timber, was very generally complained of amongst commercial men. He had had several representations made to him from most respectable merchants in the City, on the subject. Why they should have addressed themselves to him, — one of those rotten Members who were sought to be got rid of by the noble Paymaster's plan of Reform,—he knew not, but so it was. Those respectable parties complained that their business was at a stand, and they could not tell what course to pursue in the uncertainty as to the measures which Parliament might finally adopt with respect to those Timber Duties. The further delay now intended by the noble Lord was an aggravation of the original suspension. He did not state these things with any view to harass or impede the noble Lord (Althorp). No man was more disposed to support the Government of the noble Lord than he had been at first, and he was anxious to express to him and the right hon. Secretary for Ireland his thanks for the vigour and firmness they had displayed in carrying on the King's Government, particularly in Ireland; but when he found that among the measures proposed by the noble Lord were two,—one involving a breach of duty to the colonies, and the other a breach of national faith, — he was determined not to give his support to the noble Lord's Government any longer. On the contrary, he would support any motion which should compel the noble Lord to bring forward the plans which he had opened to the House, that the sense of the House might be taken on them.

Mr. *Goulburn* said, that he did not rise to prolong this conversation, but he felt it necessary to state, that he also had had applications from many merchants, who complained strongly of the suspense in which they were kept by the delay in the measures opened to the House by the noble Lord, particularly with respect to the Timber Duties. It was true the proposed duties were not intended to come into operation before the 10th of October, and that vessels now ready would have time to go out and return home by that time; but then there was an uncertainty as to what would be the state of the trade, as far as regarded the duties, by that time. It was not and could not be known to the merchants whether Parliament would ratify the noble Lord's plan. But the delay with respect to these duties was not the only cause of anxiety. There were some who looked upon the whole proceeding with some degree of alarm, for it appeared that the sum on which the noble Lord calculated, as the produce of the new duties on Timber was 600,000*l.*, which was to supply a part of the large amount of taxation proposed to be taken off; but it should be considered that the new duties not commencing till the 10th of October, only a very small part of the expected amount could come into the account of the present year, and when it was recollected that there was only a small surplus revenue from the last year, the apprehension was not ill-grounded, that there might be a deranged Budget at the close of the year.

Mr. *Warburton* said, that the persons engaged in the timber trade had had ample notice that the duties were not to commence before the 10th of October, and as the vessels which sailed for Canada went about this time, and could be back before that period, it could make no difference to their speculation whether the measure of the noble Lord were proceeded with now, or at a later period of the Session.

Mr. *Goulburn* said, that what the merchants wanted was some guarantee for the first step.

Mr. *Herries* said, that he also had had many applications from parties expressing their great anxiety as to the delay in the noble Lord's plan, which he must say was quite unprecedented. He did hope, therefore, that the noble Lord would reconsider the subject, and bring forward the Timber Duties earlier than the time he had fixed. Before he sat down, he would wish to ask the noble Lord one question with respect to the Timber Duties. He had heard that the proposed alteration was not intended to apply to Ireland. He wished to know how that was.

Lord *Althorp* said, that no alteration of duties with respect to timber from the Canadas to Ireland was intended.

Mr. *Hunt* said, that when he had been only a fortnight in that House, he complained that sufficient attention was not paid to the petitions of the people, and he was now glad to find that he had got two such able allies in advocating those petitions as the twin members for Boroughbridge. He admitted, that the Reform plan brought forward did not contain what the great mass of petitions presented to that House had prayed for; at the same time he must say he did not oppose the Bill. The petitions, by the way, were not as numerous as the hon. Member (Mr. Attwood) had stated. They were not 2,000, but somewhere about 646. They complained of many grievances; they prayed, in addition to Reform—for Retrenchment — for Reduction of Salaries and Pensions, of Sinecures and Allowances—for the shortening of Parliaments, and many for the Ballot; but only two of all these—that from Exeter, and that from Bristol—prayed alone for anything which was granted; but he was bound to add, that all over the country, in every parish of the metropolis, in every town and village throughout the land, the people were running mad in favour of the Ministerial measure. He had letters every day, and sometimes twenty-five over his number, which was very expensive, giving him accounts of meetings to support Ministers. Never was there greater unanimity; but he should be a hypocrite if he did not declare, that although he would support the Bill, he should not be satisfied with it, as it did not concede any of the favourite objects of his life—neither retrenchment nor reduction of salaries, nor abolition of sinecures and pensions, nor extension of the suffrage (indeed, in many instances, the Bill operated as a curtailment of the suffrages), nor the Vote by Ballot; nor, in short, any one of the objects he had most ardently desired. He would not, therefore, hesitate to say, that even after this Bill was passed, he would go forth and endeavour, out of that House and in that House, to get a great deal more for the people.

The House went into a Committee.

SUGAR DUTIES.] Lord *Althorp* declared, he felt most sincerely for the distress of the West-India interests; and if anything could be done to relieve them, without interfering with other interests, it would be the duty of Government to propose it, and of the House to give it most serious consideration. It was necessary to look upon taxation, as it pressed on the community generally. He felt that a small reduction of the Sugar Duties would be of no use to the West-India interests, nor to the consumer. And as to a large reduction, were it even beneficial, he considered that the taking off the duty on sea-borne coals was a much greater boon to the people. But he was not sure that even a large reduction would be of use; the remedy must come in some different manner. The evils of the West-India interests were too deeply situated for any palliative. As long as the consumption of the country could not absorb all our colonial sugars, so long must the price in our market be regulated by the price abroad. Under these circumstances, Government felt it was impossible to propose any effectual remedy: and having stated this, it only remained for him to add, that the Government did not intend to propose any alteration in the annual duties imposed by the Act of last Session. These duties were reduced last year in a small degree, but it was attended with no beneficial effect except to the retail dealer. The noble Lord then moved, "That it is the opinion of this Committee, that towards making good the Supply granted to his Majesty, the different Duties on Sugar and Molasses, imposed by the Act of last Session, and the bounties granted thereon, shall be further continued for the space of one year."

The Marquis of *Chandos* said, he gave the noble Lord full credit for his desire to relieve the West-India interests from the dreadful state of distress under which they were at present labouring. He felt, however, that he should not do his duty if he did not bring under the notice of the House the situation in which the West Indies were placed. And he should consider it advisable to move the voting of a relief to this interest, as he did last year, when it was his fortune to divide in a minority. He thought there were modes of relief; and he trusted, if they were so considered by his Lordship, he would not hesitate to adopt them. There was, in fact, great and lamentable distress in the colonies; and if it continued, no one could answer for their security. The noble Lord concluded by moving as an Amendment, "That all Brown Muscavado and Clayed Sugars, imported from the British possessions in America and the Mauritius, should be imported at a duty of 20*s*. per cwt."

Mr. *Bernal* said, that he heard with regret the declaration of the noble Lord, that he could not consent to a reduction of the Sugar Duties; but as that was the case, he trusted that some relief would be afforded in another way. The noble Lord knew that the West-India interest might be much benefitted, if he would permit their sugars to be used in the breweries or distilleries of England. It was true that the landed interest might feel somewhat jealous of such a proposition; but he believed, that if they did, it would be without any great reason; for, in his opinion, they would not be sufferers by the measure. At the present moment, barley was introduced from the Continent for use in our breweries and distilleries; and if the proposition he submitted were adopted, the only change would be, that the sugars of the West-Indies would be substituted for that foreign barley, and the barley produced at home would continue to be used to the same extent as at present. If, therefore, the noble Lord was not prepared to concede the reduction of duties, as proposed by the noble Marquis, he ought to allow the introduction of sugars for the use of the breweries and distilleries. If the noble Lord did not hold out some hope of the admission of sugars for these purposes, he should feel himself compelled to vote for the Amendment. If sugars were not admitted, perhaps the noble Lord might permit the introduction of molasses for the use of breweries and distilleries. The present duty on sugar was 24*s.* per cwt., and the amount of duty upon twenty hogsheads was 360*l.* But the West-India planter was placed in this unfortunate predicament, that he was obliged to pay the duty immediately the sugar was sold. He sold it, however, on credit, and before he received his money the purchaser might fail, and he lose both the value of his sugar, and the duty he had paid to the Government. To be relieved from that risk would be a great benefit. He did not press the noble Lord for the reduction of this duty, because the noble Lord had told them distinctly, that at this moment the Government was not in a situation to spare the amount of the duty, and because he did not wish to do anything to embarrass the Government, but he thought that some relief ought to be afforded. He agreed with the principle, that when the public interest was made out to be on one side, private interest, if opposed to it, must give way; but then the public interest must be clearly made out to justify a Government in calling on a body of people for the sacrifice of their private interests. He did not think that it had been made out in this manner on this occasion, at least so as to prevent the hope of relief on the part of the West-India interest. He trusted that the noble Lord would take this matter into his serious consideration.

Mr. *H. Davis* agreed with the proposition of the hon. member for Rochester. If the duty was reduced, there would be a larger consumption of sugar, and the revenue would not suffer to the extent supposed. The noble Lord, if he could not admit the sugars into the breweries, ought at least to allow them to be introduced into distilleries.

Lord *Althorp* assured the hon. member for Rochester, that he had taken the introduction of sugars into breweries and distilleries into his serious consideration. The introduction of sugars into breweries and distilleries had not been permitted since 1812, and then only sugar had been permitted. With respect to breweries, if sugars were admitted, they would displace malt, and at the present moment the malt trade was improving, and the revenue from it was increasing very much. He feared he should hazard that revenue, which was one of the most important, if he consented to the proposal of the hon. member for Rochester. The revenue on malt this year would, he believed, exhibit an increase of 800,000*l.*, and at the present time he should not be justified in putting it into hazard. He had already made inquiries into the matter, and was aware that the landed interest would at this period of the year be but little interfered with by the admission of sugars for the purposes of the distilleries, because at the present moment they had not a large stock of barley on hand; but it would have some influence on their welfare next year. It was not entirely, however, their interest that was to be considered at this moment, because that would be but very slightly affected, but the interest of the revenue which did not permit him to agree either to the proposition of the noble Lord, or to that of the hon. Member.

Mr. *Robert Gordon* said, that if the noble Lord was correct in his estimate of the increase of Malt Duties during the present year, he would surely be able to afford relief to the West-India interest by taking off the duty in the manner proposed by the noble Marquis, since that increase would more than cover any deficiency that might arise in the revenue from the proposed reduction. But he begged to state most distinctly, that in his opinion there would be no such deficiency, for the increased consumption of sugar would fully make up for the reduction of the duty. He feared that the noble Lord had forgotten the principles on which they were accustomed, when they both sat on the other side of the House, to argue these questions, or he must feel pretty well assured that the revenue would not suffer in proportion to the reduction of the duty. If, however, he could formerly have had any doubt upon the subject, he would find in the events of the two last years a sufficient security that an increase of consumption, and a proportionate increase of revenue always followed a reduction of duty. The noble Lord ought either to reduce the duty, and thus afford relief to the West-India planters, or he ought to admit sugars into breweries and distilleries, and one way or the other the West-India interest would be benefitted, and on their behalf he appealed to the favourable consideration—he might almost say, to the pity—of that House.

Mr. *Irving* preferred the introduction of molasses into breweries and distilleries, to the reduction of duty. He wished also that rum should be admitted at the same rate of duty as that paid on British spirits.

Sir *E. Carrington* said, that some relief ought to be afforded to the West-India interest, if the House expected them to do what they had been repeatedly called on to do. That House had passed Resolutions, calling on the planters to instruct the negroes as well as to feed and clothe them; but it was impossible for the planters to do that unless relief was afforded to them. He hoped some means of doing that might be found, which he assured the House, was absolutely necessary, in order to enable them to improve the condition of the negroes, as that House desired, and as the planters wished.

Mr. *Benett* said, he should prefer the proposition of the noble Marquis to that of the hon. member for Rochester, if the revenue of the country would permit the reduction of the duty, for the latter would inflict an injury on the landed interest of this country for the sake of the West-India interest; and at a moment like this, when the landed interest were suffering severely, he did not think it fair to relieve the West-India interest at their expense. The West-India planters seemed to forget that the landed interest had to support the poor and the Church, and were also subject to numberless other burthens, from which they required relief instead of having in addition their market destroyed.

Mr. *Cutlar Ferguson* asserted, that the interest of the West-India planters had been sacrificed more than that of any other body of men in the empire. He was sure that the revenue would not suffer by the proposed reduction of duty, while great relief would be afforded to the consumer. He should therefore vote for the Amendment.

Mr. *Hume* put in a claim on behalf of the people of England, for a reduction of these Sugar Duties, and he was satisfied, that if it were granted the noble Lord opposite would suffer no diminution of revenue on that account. The Government was, indeed, pledged to make the reduction, for the duty was a war duty, and when imposed, it was understood to be imposed only for war purposes. He asked the noble Lord what had been the amount of the falling off in the revenue on sugar during the last year? He believed, that the falling off, if any was very trifling, and had been occasioned less from the reduction of duty than from other causes, among which was a short supply of sugar arising from a deficient crop.

Mr. *Maberly* thought it was not fair to deal with the noble Lord in the abstract in this matter, after he had said he had reduced the duty as much as he could. The question, however, was not one affecting the West-India interest alone, for all duties fell on the consumer, and the matter, therefore, chiefly related to him. It might be true, that the introduction of sugars into breweries and distilleries would afford relief to the West-India interest, but then it appeared that there were other interests that would be injured, and these must be consulted.

Colonel *Davies* said, it was true the duty was paid by the consumer, but still, if that duty was too high, the amount of the consumption of the taxed article would be less, so that the producer would suffer. The duty might, it was plain, be so high as to amount to a prohibition which would deprive the consumer of a little enjoyment, but would actually ruin the producer. He thought, as relief was necessary, it was the duty of the Government to reduce its expenses, which he and his hon. friend who spoke last knew could be done, and give that relief to the West-Indians which they prayed for.

Mr. *Keith Douglas* supported the proposition for the reduction of the duty. He admitted, that it was possible the produce of the Malt Duties might be somewhat injured by the introduction of sugars or molasses into breweries, but that could not be the case if sugars were allowed to be employed in our distilleries, where they would only supersede foreign barley. The West-India interests loudly called for relief, and he hoped the noble Lord would re-consider the subject.

Mr. *Whitmore* could not vote for the Amendment of the noble Marquis, although he lamented deeply the distresses of the West-India interest, and should be happy were it possible to relieve them. He feared, however, that assistance could not be afforded with due regard to the welfare of the other great interests of the country. The distresses of the planters arose out of no law, and could be remedied by no law passed in this country.

An hon. *Member* contended, that Ministers had reduced taxes to the utmost extent that could be afforded, and therefore, though he had formerly voted for a reduction of the sugar duties, he could not then vote for the proposition of the noble Marquis.

Sir *F. Burdett* observed, that it was hard upon the noble Lord, who had been only a short time in office, to be so severely pressed. In the course of a few months, the present Administration had afforded more relief than the last Administration in about as many years. He agreed that the West-India interest was of great importance; and if it could be established that the revenue would not suffer by the proposed reduction, Ministers ought, and he had no doubt they would be most happy to adopt the plan. It had always been their wish, he believed, to relieve the people whenever it could be done without too great a sacrifice. It was fit that some little patience should be exercised, and he had no doubt that the public would benefit by the forbearance. No partial measure of this description could give general relief, but he was very willing to acknowledge that the claims of the West-India interest ought not to be lightly passed over. If the present Government had even common sense, to say nothing of integrity, they would adopt the Amendment of the noble Marquis, or some corresponding measure, the moment they found it practicable.

Mr. *Goulburn* was satisfied, that the proposed reduction could not be made; but he thought, nevertheless, that the West-India interest had a more just claim to relief than that of the classes to whom the noble Lord, in his Budget, had paid more attention. When he looked at the amount of taxes already reduced by the noble Lord, he was quite alarmed; he saw that revenue had been relinquished to the extent of 1,740,000*l.*, while means of supplying the deficiency were only found to the extent of 800,000*l.*, leaving 940,000*l.* deficiency, and how that was to be supplied he knew not, especially when the surplus revenue was only calculated at 300,000*l.*

Lord *Althorp* recalled the recollection of the right hon. Gentleman to the fact, that when he (Lord Althorp) stated the Budget, he had not taken credit for any increase in the revenue from the greater productiveness of certain taxes, particularly the Malt Tax, from the change in the law relative to beer. The right hon. Gentleman had himself calculated upon an increase before he left office. At that moment, too, he (Lord Althorp) had the advantage of knowing what had been the produce of the Revenue during the last two months, and he therefore did not in the slightest degree participate in the apprehensions of the right hon. Gentleman. In the reduction of the duty upon Tobacco, he had calculated upon the increase of the revenue from the diminution of smuggling; but the same reasoning would not apply to any reduction of the duty on sugar. It was very true that the reductions of last year had occasioned a small diminution of revenue; a further reduction in the duty on sugar might, to a certain extent, increase consumption; but unless that increase were to a great extent, the revenue would lose more than, in the present state of the Government, could be afforded. Having given the different items the best considerations in his power, before he brought on his Budget, he thought he had selected those articles for reduction of duty which would afford the greatest degree of relief to the people.

Mr. *Warburton* said, that he could not vote for the Amendment, but he did not see sufficient ground for refusing to allow the use of sugar and molasses in the breweries and distilleries.

Mr. *Hunt* supported the Amendment, because a reduction of the duty on sugar would be a great advantage to the lower orders. The hon. Baronet, the member for Westminster, being a great landed proprietor, had called upon the country to have patience; that might do for him, but it would not do for the people. When the hon. Baronet said that great reductions had been made, he seemed to have discovered a mare's nest.

The House divided. For the original Motion 147; For the Amendment 49—Majority 98.

Resolution agreed to, and the House resumed.

Reform—Explanation.] Lord *Morpeth* presented several Petitions from Halifax, Wakefield, and other places in the West Riding of Yorkshire, in favour of Retrenchment and Reform. He stated the prayer of these petitions generally, because they had been agreed to before the announcement of the great measure of Reform brought forward by his Majesty's Ministers.

Colonel *Sibthorp* availed himself of that opportunity to correct some gross and unwarrantable misrepresentations which had appeared in the public press respecting his sentiments and his conduct. He was represented, to have said, that he would give his most strenuous opposition to the second reading of the Reform Bill. He had said no such thing. He had said, that he would not oppose this Bill in its first stage, because he thought that the country ought to have an opportunity of making itself acquainted with the details of it. He had likewise said, that though friendly to Reform, he would not pledge himself at that moment to support the details of the Bill. In another paper it had been stated, that he was the nominee of Lord Monson for the city of Lincoln. This was a gross falsehood. He was an independent Member, freely elected by the people, and he was not, nor would he condescend to be, the nominee of any man. It had likewise been said, that his constituents, being 1,300 in number, were all open to the highest bidder. This was the most gross and unwarrantable falsehood of all. His constituents were as honest and independent a body as any constituency in the whole country.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Monday, March 14, 1831.

Minutes.] Bills. Calico Duties' Repeal, read a third time and passed. Population (Ireland), read a second time.

Petitions presented. For the Abolition of Negro Slavery, by the Bishop of St. Asaph, from Holywell:—By Lord Dacre, from the Protestant Dissenters of London and Westminster:—By Lord Farnham, from the Wesleyan Methodists of Cavan. For Parliamentary Reform, by Lord Goderich, from the Mayor and Corporation of Lincoln:—By the Earl of Radnor, from the Borough of Aughtermuchtie:—By the Earl of Rosebery, from the Tailors of Edinburgh, and from the Inhabitants of the Royal Burgh of Linlithgow:—By Earl Spencer, from the inhabitants of the parish of Christchurch, Surrey. By the Earl of Aberdeen, from the Manufacturers of Paisley, against the Duty on Cotton Wool. By the Earl of Glengall, from Rehill, praying for some modification in the Tithe System; from Navan, for an alteration of the Bishop's Courts, and for an Equalization of Political Rights; and from Rossmore, for the Repeal of the Union. By Lord Dacre, from Dissenters at Watterfield, for the Abolition of the Punishment of Death for Violation of the Right of Property. For opening the Trade to China, by Earl Gower, from the Staffordshire Potteries. For the Repeal of the Duties on Sea-borne Coals, by the Earl of Hardwicke, from the Merchants and Dealers of Coals in Cambridge. By Lord Calthorp, from certain Unitarians, for the Emancipation of the Jews.

Petitions on the Reform Bill.] Lord *Durham* said, that the electors of Southwark had done him the honour to request that he would present to their Lordships a Petition from them, praying their Lordships to give their support to the great measure of Reform recently introduced into Parliament by his Majesty's Ministers. He had much pleasure in complying with their request, as also in presenting a Petition with a similar prayer from the inhabitants of Sunderland, Bishop Wearmouth, and Monk Wearmouth. It had been signed by 468 persons in a few hours; and it would have been signed still more numerously had not the petitioners been desirous of communicating their wishes on this subject to the Legislature with as little delay as possible. The noble Lord also presented a similar Petition from the Town Council, &c., of the Royal Burgh of Forfar.

The Duke of *Devonshire* said, that he had a similar Petition to present from the inhabitants of the parish of Clerkenwell. He would take that opportunity of stating, that on the subject of Parliamentary Reform, his opinion was, that his Majesty's Ministers deserved the gratitude of every man in the country for the measure which they had just introduced into the other House of Parliament. He thought that in that measure they had consulted the true interests of men of all classes in this free country, and that they had relieved the hereditary proprietors of boroughs from the reproach of employing objectionable means in securing the election of their friends and dependents as Members of the House of Commons. He said objectionable means—and he spoke advisedly; for the means were objectionable, although they might sometimes receive a sanction from the merits of the individuals returned by them. At the same time, he felt that his Majesty's Ministers had secured the rights which property ought to have, in a most proper and efficacious manner. He was not going to occupy the time of their Lordships with any further observations on the subject of Parliamentary Reform; but as he was on his legs, he could not refrain from expressing his approbation of the plan of Reform then before the other House, and his resolution to support it to the utmost of his power. The noble Duke then presented another Petition on the same subject, and with the same prayer, from the Mayor, Corporation, and Inhabitants of Poole,—a petition which he considered very creditable to them, as they were in possession of exclusive privileges.

The Marquis of *Cleveland* had a Petition to present on the same subject from the inhabitants of Totness. There were parts of that petition to which he could by no means give his assent. As he had already explained to their Lordships his sentiments on the subject of Parliamentary Reform, he deemed it needless to say more of his opinions or his wishes on that subject on the present occasion, than this—that no personal considerations, no personal interests, no personal wishes, should prevent him from endeavouring to put an end to the continuance of a system which was not only impolitic in itself, but also highly detrimental to the country. As he could not agree with the petition in several points and as he did not wish to discuss those points at present, he would merely beg the favour of their Lordships that the petition be read.

The petition was read accordingly. It objected to several of the details of the Reform Bill ordered to be brought into the House of Commons. The petitioners contended, that their borough, though an ancient borough, had not lost its rank and station in the country, but that of late years it had increased considerably. They made no objection to having the elective franchise extended to the resident householders of the borough, but they objected to extending it to the householders of the neighbouring parishes.

The Marquis of *Lansdown* said, that consistently with the rules of the House, it was impossible to receive this petition, inasmuch as it related to the provisions of a Bill which was not yet before Parliament.

The Marquis of *Cleveland* had read and discovered the objectionable parts of this petition, but as it was respectfully worded, he did not see how he could refuse to present it. With the leave of their Lordships he would withdraw it for the present.—Petition withdrawn.

Earl *Grey* presented a Petition from the Freeholders of Northumberland, voted at a public meeting convened by the High Sheriff, and held on the 9th of February last, in favour of Reform. The petition prayed for a Reform by means of an extension of the elective suffrage to all householders; it prayed also for the shortening of the duration of Parliaments, and it also prayed for the taking of votes by Ballot. On this latter subject his sentiments were too well known to require explanation. The petition was signed by 5,000 persons, and spoke the approbation of the county which he had so long had the honour of representing, in favour of the principles of Reform.

BANKRUPTCY COURT BILL.] Lord *Wynford* said, that a few weeks ago, when he laid on their Lordships' Table a Bill enabling parties to be examined on oath in their own suits, his noble and learned friend on the Woolsack had stated that it would make such a sweeping alteration in the law of England, that he must require time for its consideration. When his noble and learned friend made application to him for time, he was immediately of opinion that time ought to be given; for he had too much respect for the law of England as it now stood to wish to innovate upon it without due consideration. Now, if the measure which he had introduced some weeks ago deserved the title of a sweeping measure, much more did the bill which his noble and learned friend had since introduced deserve that title; for it was so extensive in its details, and so sweeping in its alterations, as to require more time for consideration than any bill which had been laid upon the Table of their Lordships since he had the honour of a seat in their House. At this moment a noble and learned friend of his who wished to take part in the discussion on this Bill, was prevented from attending by indisposition. His noble and learned friend hoped, however, to be able to attend in his place in the course of a week; but as his hopes had been disappointed several times already, perhaps his attendance might not be so early as himself and his friends wished. Their Lordships were also aware that another noble and learned friend of his, who had expressed his intention of explaining his sentiments on this Bill, was now absent from town on the Circuit. If, then, the Bill to which he was referring were not of such a description as he had already stated, he should conceive that the absence of his noble and learned friends, who had expressed a wish to be present at its discussion, would be sufficient to induce their Lordships to accede to the motion which he intended to propose to them. But if their Lordships would only consider the rapidity with which this Bill had hitherto passed through its different stages, and the importance of every one of its clauses to the community, he was sure that their Lordships would see that a delay for the time which he asked was not either an extravagant or an unreasonable request. Besides, he had only got this Bill on Saturday morning in its printed form. He had devoted the whole of Saturday to a consideration of it, and he thought that, if necessary, he could convince their Lordships that it required a longer time for a fair investigation of its merits. He was inclined to think that this Bill was calculated to do a great deal of good; but he was also inclined to think that it would not do that good, unless it was altered in some of its details, and altered too, in a way which he was not prepared at that time to describe. When he mentioned the important subjects to which this Bill had reference, every body would see that it was impossible to state what alterations ought to be made in it without time being given for consideration. He thought that the Bill in question would clash with the whole system of our bankrupt law, as it was developed in the Statute of the 6th of the late King. How much of that Statute must be repealed, he was not then prepared to state; but that some part of it must be repealed he was quite convinced, otherwise they would have two Acts on their Statute-book inconsistent with each other, and producing that confusion in the administration of justice, which was not only impolitic, but also dangerous to society. The Bill of his noble and learned friend swept away at once seventy-two Commissioners of Bankrupts. On the first blush of the matter he thought that it would be a good thing to do away with these Commissioners; but he had since heard the observations which had been made on that subject by a noble and learned Lord, who had greater experience than himself in matters of bankruptcy. He confessed, that though he was inclined to stand by his original opinion on this point, the opinion given by his noble and learned friend induced him to hope that the Bill would not pass through their Lordships' House without undergoing full consideration. The Bill got rid of seventy officers, whose joint salaries amounted to 21,000*l.* a year. Now the Judges who were to be appointed in their stead, though only ten in number, if they were to be supported as Judges ought to be supported, would cost the country, in the amount of their salaries, 25,000*l.* a-year. Thus, on this single point, an increase of 4,000*l.* a-year would be made to the burthens of the country. To this sum must be added the salaries of a Registrar, seven clerks, and thirty assignees. He must here state, that if these officers were to be paid in such a manner as would give the public security that they were men capable of discharging the duties of their offices properly, the expense which they would fix upon the country could not be less than 14,000*l.* a-year. Surely a Bill, which increased the expenditure of the country so materially in a time of general financial distress, was not one which ought to be passed without due forethought and deliberation. His noble and learned friend had said, that this Bill would not inflict any additional charge on the public, for the charge was to be taken out of the Suitors' Fund. [The *Lord Chancellor* intimated his dissent.]—Well, he might be mistaken in saying that the charge for the registrars, clerks, and assignees, was to be defrayed out of the Suitors' Fund, but as to the other part of the charge coming from that quarter there could be no doubt: for in the Bill it was distinctly stated, that the Commissioners were to be paid out of that fund. Now he begged to enter his protest against that arrangement. The Bankrupt Court and the Court of Chancery were distinct Courts; and their Lordships had no more right to take the funds belonging to the suitors in Chancery, and to apply them to the expenses of the jurisdiction in bankruptcy, than they had to transfer them to any other public object whatever. This was a tax on public property. If the Suitors' Fund did not belong to the suitors, to whom did it belong? To the public. It was true that the unclaimed dividends in the Bank had also been considered public property, and had been applied to public purposes. He had not made up his mind as to whether the objections against dealing with the Suitors' Fund as public property ought to prevail,—all he meant to say of them at present was, that they deserved time for consideration. Another objection against this Bill appeared to him, as at present advised, to be this—that it constituted too many Judges, and that those Judges were not co-ordinate. It produced a species of tribunal, which had no similarity to any of the tribunals which we had at present in the country: it would produce something more like to the Courts in France, or to the constitution of the different Courts of Session in Scotland. The four senior Judges in these new Courts of Bankruptcy were to be entitled "Elder Brothers," and the six junior Judges were to be entitled "Younger Brothers." He had heard of Elder Brothers of the Trinity-house, but he had never yet heard of any elder brothers on our benches of co-ordinate Judges; and he must say that in his opinion the introduction of these terms was very impolitic. He was convinced that if the Bankruptcy Court were constituted as the other Courts of Law were constituted in this country, five Judges would be sufficient to perform all the business which would come before it. Three of them might sit regularly in Court for the despatch of serious business, and the two others might, like the Judges of the ordinary Courts, sit at chambers for the purpose of despatching ordinary business. He would undertake to prove that these five Judges would be equal to all the duties of their situation, and that thus a saving of 10,000*l.* a-year might be effected. He must also observe, that there appeared to be a very plentiful allowance of officers to this new Court. In the Court of Common Pleas, when he had the honour of presiding there, there were only three Prothonotaries and three Secondaries. He therefore could not see any necessity why this new Court should have two registers and two deputy registers, together with seven clerks and seven clerks' deputies. If it had such a staff of officers, it would have more officers attached to it than the Court of Common Pleas, which administered justice throughout all the counties of England; and yet the jurisdiction of this new Court would not extend much further than the limits of the metropolis! There were also some other objections to the Bill, which he would take that opportunity of stating. There was to be a Court of Appeal, he believed, from this Bankruptcy Court. Now if there were to be such an appeal, he thought that it ought not to be to the Lord Chancellor. He had a great respect for all Chancellors, and as great a respect for his noble and learned friend then on the Woolsack as for any noble and learned Lord who ever sat there. He had heard that—

"Judges are wise, but Chancellors wiser still;"

but even allowing them all credit for judicial wisdom, he never could allow the propriety of admitting an appeal from four Judges to one. In all such cases, the appeal, if, indeed, an appeal were to be allowed, should be to that House. What he should recommend would be, that the appeal should be to as great a number of Judges, at least, as the Court consisted of. Their Lordships were well aware, that until the Act of a late Session was passed, a Writ of Error lay from the Court of Common Pleas to the Court of King's Bench, and *vice versâ*. The consequence of that arrangement was, that in case the two Courts differed from each other in opinion, the parties, knowing that it was only the decision of four learned Judges in one Court against the decision of four equally learned Judges in another Court, appealed, as a matter of course, to their Lordships. To obviate the litigation which arose from this source, their Lordships had passed a law, by which it was provided, that the Writ of Error from the King's Bench or the Common Pleas should be to the Judges of the Court of Exchequer and the Judges of one of the two other Courts from which the Writ of Error did not come. That alteration was much approved of by the Commissioners who were appointed to examine into the administration of the common-law in this country. Now their Lordships would be absolutely retrograding in the career of legislative improvement, if they permitted an appeal to be made to the Chancellor alone from a large body of independent Judges. Perhaps, when he had heard all that could be said on this part of the case, he might be inclined to change his opinions, but, in the mean time, he trusted that he had laid down sufficient grounds for granting the delay for which he asked. As yet there had been no debate on the second reading of this Bill. He did not mean to insinuate that there had been anything unfair on the part of his noble and learned friend on the Woolsack; but somehow or other it had happened, that no notification had been made as to the period at which this Bill was to be read a second time. His Motion was, that this Bill be not re-committed till the 15th of April; and he was the more encouraged to hope that his Motion would succeed, from his knowing that the public interests would not suffer from the delay which he now asked.

The *Lord Chancellor* could but compliment his noble and learned friend on his having lost none of that skill and address for which his noble and learned friend was distinguished when his noble friend and he were accustomed to meet together in Court sometimes engaged on the same side, and sometimes on opposite sides, but always zealously striving for the interests of their clients. He had listened with no ordinary feelings of wonderment to the speech of his noble and learned friend,—a speech than which, one more skilful, more judiciously adapted to damaging a measure in the eyes of that House and the public, without directly opposing it, he had never heard, and which, when taken into consideration with the most unprecedented motion with which his noble and learned friend concluded,—a motion which, under the pretext of delay, would do away, to all practical purposes, altogether with the present important Bill,—would, he was sure, be felt as justifying a few remarks in reply to it. His noble and learned friend, instead of following the usual mode of opposing measures pursued in both Houses of Parliament, and boldly and gallantly coming forward with a decided motion to get rid of the Bill, by moving that it be read a third time that day three months, by which it would, according to Parliamentary usage, be defeated for ever and a day, asked their Lordships to consent to the next stage being delayed till that day four weeks. By this delay all the purposes of those interested in the defeat of the measure would be obtained, and a stigma would be fixed on it equivalent to its ignominious rejection,—which, aided by the artful statement of his noble and learned friend, that would go forth to the public, would give birth to feelings of a most disastrous nature on the part of a most important portion of the commercial community. His noble and learned friend's statement had, indeed, amazed him a little,—it was so artful,—so skilful,—so cunningly (he used the term in its ancient sense, as synonymous with knowingly) skilful for its object, and was, besides, so timed, as to take him completely off his guard. And what, after all, was the gravamen of his charge? Why, that the advocates of the Bill were hurrying it too rapidly through its stages, and that, by so doing, they should be depriving themselves of the advantages of the observations which a noble and learned Lord (Eldon) was prevented by indisposition from offering on the present occasion, and of the observations of another noble and learned Lord (Lyndhurst) by his judicial attendance on Circuit. But it should be recollected, that neither of these noble and learned persons had urged any objection—at least any that he ever heard of—to the principle of the Bill, long as it had been before the House, though they had expressed their dissent from the provisions of a bill, not yet before their Lordships, for regulating the examination of witnesses before the Court of Chancery; so that it would be too much for his noble and learned friend to ground his Motion on what those noble and learned Lords might possibly have to say, were they then present. He readily admitted, that it would be desirable to have the assistance of these noble and learned Lords, but he had never before heard it urged as a reason for delaying a necessary measure, that some noble Lords who did not attend might possibly have some objections to urge, if they were present. Their Lordships would recollect that it was now three weeks since he had fully—indeed, he feared at a tedious length—explained the principal features of the present Bill; and since that occasion it had passed through several stages, each affording a convenient opportunity for a discussion, if his noble and learned friend felt himself called upon to provoke any; and yet his noble and learned friend, neither on the evening on which he had made his lengthened statement, nor when the Bill was in Committee, nor when the report was brought up, nor on the stage when the further consideration of that report stood as an Order of the Day, had made a single objection to the principle of the Bill, or to its chief features. Even now, he must say, he did not understand where the objection of his noble and learned friend actually lay, unless, indeed, the single objection summed up in what his noble and learned friend stated to be, not a change, but a modification of his opinion, with reference to what he termed the wholesale sweeping away of the seventy Commissioners of Bankrupts. This, after all, was, he was sure, the nucleus, though carefully wrapped up, of his noble and learned friend's objection; his noble and learned friend was, perhaps unintentionally, the advocate of these seventy gentlemen, interested in preserving what the Bill went to remove altogether. The seventy,—the septuagint of the bankrupt commission,—had evinced an activity of opposition to the present measure which their Lordships were little aware of: they were the assiduous commentators,—the translators, much more laborious than faithful, of its tendency and provisions; and had employed every means in their power out of doors, and as far as they went, peradventure, in the House, to have it thrown out altogether. Hence the present Motion of his noble and learned friend to have the Bill delayed for four weeks, his force, he supposed, not being equal to the more open and decided measure of a Motion, that it be re-committed that day three months,—all in obedience to the unremitting exertions of the seventy Bankrupt Commissioners; he should correct himself, not all of them, but the large majority, who were personally interested in the existing machinery, with all its abuses and imperfections. He was himself actually besieged by these Gentlemen, hourly beset, either by letter or in conference with themselves, or some friend, counsel, judge, attorney, wife, cousin, aunt, or relation—all endeavouring to influence him to abandon or modify the provisions of the Bill, so far as they affected their individual interests, without any reference to the still more important interests of public justice. Their Lordships could hardly credit the unremitting energy with which this siege had been, he might say strictly, hourly carried on since he first proposed the measure for their adoption. It almost amounted to a blockade, and all that it wanted to constitute a close blockade would be afforded by the artful motion for delay just proposed by his noble and learned friend. He therefore called upon the House to refuse its sanction to the Motion, as one fraught with more insidious mischief than their Lordships could have supposed from the artful statement of his noble and learned friend. Not that he was a captious stickler for a particular day, or would sacrifice, in the slightest point, the public good to the strict letter of a motion; but that he felt himself bound to oppose the principle on which he was persuaded his noble and learned friend had brought it forward. He was anxious, however, to remove all the grounds of cavil on the part of the opponents, direct or indirect, open or covert, of the measure; and he was, above all, anxious that its provisions and principles should be thoroughly understood; and therefore should not object to a moderate delay, if he could persuade himself that by the delay they would have the advantage of the observations of the noble and learned Lord who had so long presided over the Court to which the jurisdiction of the present Bill properly belonged. He would consent to this moderate delay with a frankness at least equal to that with which his noble and learned friend had proposed his Motion, but should offer to his Motion as it stood his most strenuous dissent. He felt some difficulty in replying to the observations of his noble and learned friend on the Bill itself, in consequence of the shifting, qualified, untangible nature of those objections. His noble and learned friend never expressed himself but in doubt, throwing out as a *quasi* friendly suggestion, qualified with a salvo of its not being intended as a decided objection to the Bill, but as a matter worthy of delay for its serious consideration. But, alas! all this friendly suggestion, by way of doubt, was much worse for the Bill than a decided protest against its principle; for the inevitable tendency of such an insidious opposition, out of doors at least, was to favour the clamour and misrepresentation which those interested in its defeat had, since its promulgation, been endeavouring to excite. His noble and learned friend had compounded his charge by every artifice of imagination and forgetfulness;—of forgetfulness, for he had carefully forgotten all that he (the Lord Chancellor) had explained at such length, of the tendency and principle of the Bill, on a former occasion, supplying the omissions from his own fruitful fancy. He would cite one or two instances of this combination of artful oblivion and fancy. His noble and learned friend had dwelt upon the tendency of the Bill to add to the public burthens, expressing a becoming jealousy of all unnecessary expenditure of the public money. Now, to say nothing of his being, perhaps, as entitled to lay claim for having exercised a constitutional jealousy on this score as his noble and learned friend, he would only point out the insidious insinuation, which this, as he would show, most unfounded statement contained. His noble and learned friend well knew, that there was no one mode more certain than another, by which the public mind could be raised against a measure, than to impress it with the notion that its tendency would be to add to the public burthens; and therefore, the burthen of his noble and learned friend's speech was, that the new staff of judicial officers, to quote his own expression, would be an additional expense instead of a saving to the public: or, said his noble and learned friend, the cost of the whole seventy Bankruptcy Commissioners was but from 21,000*l.* to 25,000*l.*, while that of the ten new Judges proposed to be substituted for them by the present Bill would be 40,000*l.*, thereby entailing an additional charge of at least 15,000*l.* per annum to the public. What answer would he make to phantoms of clerks and commissioners which his noble and learned friend had conjured up, to scare, if not himself, certainly those out of doors, as thus likely to cost the public 40,000*l.* per annum? Why, simply this—that his noble and learned friend's statement was without the shadow of a foundation—that it was, in fact, from the beginning to the end pure fiction. He would not then fatigue the House with a twice-told tale of his former calculations on this point, for he was confident that if his noble and learned friend had forgotten them for the occasion, many of their Lordships had not. He had, when explaining the features and details of the Bill, shown their Lordships, that so far from his plan adding 15,000*l.* a year to the public burthens, it would actually lessen them by more than that amount; that the saving would be somewhere about 20,000*l.* per annum. And this led him to another, if possible, still more groundless insinuation (for his noble and learned friend had not ventured upon a bold and tangible assertion) of his noble and learned friend—namely, that with reference to the funds from which the new Judges were to be paid. Strongly as the public felt, and justly too, on the score of additional expense, they felt still more strongly averse from the idea that Parliament should make free with the funds belonging to the suitors in Chancery: hence his noble and learned friend, with all that advocate-like one-sided adroitness,—all that *nisi prius* astuteness which he had often admired in Westminster-hall,—charged the framers of the Bill with designing to pay the ten new Judges out of the Suitors' Fund. From the beginning to the end there did not exist the shadow of a foundation for this assertion,—the pure creation of his noble and learned friend's fruitful, and, as in this instance, most cunning fancy. He (Lord Brougham) never said, that the new Judges were to be paid out of the Suitors' Fund; on the contrary, he most distinctly stated, that they were not to be so paid; and this explicit disclaimer of such a proposition was the only shadow of a foundation for his noble and learned friend's artful statement. Indeed, his noble and learned friend seemed to be as ignorant of the nature of the Suitors' Fund as he evidently was of the tendency of the Bill he was covertly endeavouring to defeat; for if he was not so, he would not have told them that the fund was similar in kind to that of unclaimed dividends. It was not; and for this simple reason,—if the Government made use of any portion of the unclaimed dividends, it did so on the guarantee that it was only as a loan, to be instantly repaid to the first *bona fide* claimant that presented himself. But no such use could be made of the Suitors' Fund (of which there were two species under the control of the Court of Chancery); and the Government could only apply that fund called the "Dead Fund" for defraying the charge of the machinery of justice, and this, of course, only by permission of the Legislature by Statute. But, said his noble and learned friend, there was no instance of any portion of the Suitors' Fund—be it the Dead Fund, or what it would—being thus applied to the payment of any of the officers of the Court of Chancery. A simple fact would show his noble and learned friend and their Lordships how ill-founded was this declaration. The charge of the Master's-office, the Vice-chancellor's office, and, since Mr. Pitt's regulation in 1798, the salaries of the Masters, 600*l.* a year each, were paid out of this fund; and if his noble and learned friend had attended to his former statements, even as much as a counsel attends to a Judge summing-up, or as a Judge attends to the thrice-refuted arguments of a counsel, his noble and learned friend would have known, that all the alterations which his Bill would effect, so far as the Suitors' Fund was concerned, would be, to restore to it the 6,500*l.* per annum which it at present contributed towards the charge of the Master's-office, showing that the assertion of his noble and learned friend was a most gratuitous and groundless—nay, in the teeth of fact—creation of his own fertile fancy. This was not all. The fund which he had alluded to as that which would be applied to the charge of the machinery of the Courts, was the Dead Fund—that is, the fund arising from the interest, simple and compound, of the Suitors' Fund; and no payment would be called for by his Bill at all affecting that fund. The next point to which he would advert was the insinuation of his noble and learned friend, of the needless number of the new Judges which the Bill proposed to appoint. It, said his noble and learned friend, was the first time that he ever heard of ten Judges being appointed to determine one branch of one portion of law; and he then indulged in some sneering comparisons between these offices and what he termed the younger as well as the elder brothers of the Trinity-house. Now, was it fair to thus attempt to stigmatize ten gentlemen about to be summoned to the discharge of very important administrative as well as judicial duties? and was it fair to insinuate that their number was far greater than their duties could require, without having inquired into those duties, or waited till the appointment had been completed, and the machine actually put in motion? His noble and learned friend had been very unlucky, both in the objections he had stated and in his manner of urging them, and he asked for delay to make up his mind on points that were clear and undeniable. And first with respect to the number of the Judges. His noble friend argued, that because fifteen Judges were all that were engaged in all the Courts in Westminster-hall, that therefore four or five ought to suffice for the intended bankruptcy jurisdiction. Now he (Lord Brougham) had, on a former occasion, explained at length the grounds on which he proposed that ten should be the *minimum* number of the new Judges,—had explained that he at the outset was anxious to have a less number,—to have but five if possible,—and that nothing but the unanimous conviction of, and after numerous conferences with, the most experienced Equity and Common-law practitioners, induced him to abandon his own small number, and agree that less than ten Judges would defeat the end he had in view in all his legal reform measures. He had originally proposed but five new Judges, as such of their Lordships as recollected his former statement must know he had already declared (though he did not make that proposition in a peremptory or dogmatical tone) and only conviction, the result of the demonstrations of experienced men, induced him subsequently to propose that the number should be ten. He did that after attentively considering all the reports since 1824, and after much consultation with all those who were best qualified to give advice on the subject. And rightly did the eminent men whom he had consulted contend, that less than ten would not suffice for the ends of justice; and amply and candidly would he then avow that they were right, and that he was wrong in proposing a less number; and, attached as he was naturally to his own proposition, he surrendered it at once when it was proved to be erroneous. The eminent lawyers, on whose counsels he thus acted, had before them the most extensive information on which to ground their opinions. They had one element—an important one—of their calculation, in the number of hours which the whole seventy Commissioners of Bankrupts usually devoted to their functions; and they had another, in the nature and amount of the business which should come before the new Judges. And here he must say, that when his noble and learned friend talked of fifteen Judges being sufficient for all the common-law business of the country, while the Bill asked for ten Judges for the business of one branch of one jurisdiction, he evidently overlooked, or was ignorant of, the extent and importance of the cases on which the new bankruptcy Judges would be called upon to decide. He forgot that their functions would not only be extensively judicial, but that they would also have to act as administrators and trustees in all bankrupt cases that occurred in London and forty miles around; and, as such, that it would not be easy to over estimate the amount and importance of their jurisdiction. He certainly was taken somewhat by surprise by his noble and learned friend on that occasion, though he should be prepared to meet him whenever he chose to openly object to the principle of the Bill. He repeated, that the present number of the new Bankrupt Judges was not fixed upon by himself; but, contrary to his own prepossessions on the matter, had been adopted by him as the result of his inquiries and conference with those most competent to offer advice on the subject; that the only end he had, or could have in view, in bringing forward the Bill, was to promote the interests of general justice; and that it involved no novelty of principle to warrant the indirect attack of his noble and learned friend. If their Lordships sanctioned his noble and learned friend's motion, the result would be, the instantaneous dismay and despair of the mercantile community of the city of London, whose petition, signed by 4,500 of the bankers and merchants of that City, all crying out unanimously for the abolition of the present Bankrupt Commissioners system, he had presented to that House; and though the success of that motion might carry delight and satisfaction to those interested in the emoluments and patronage of the present bankruptcy offices, it would be, as he had said, productive of despair in the minds of a most influential and important class of their fellow-subjects, and of the public at large. For these reasons, and to counteract the mischievous effect which his noble and learned friend's observations might create out of doors, he must oppose his motion.

Lord *Wynford*, in explanation, had only to say, that he did not intend by his motion to moot the principle of the Bill, but only to induce a careful and unhurried investigation of its provisions. Nothing that had fallen from his noble and learned friend had affected the objections on which he had grounded his motion for delay, for his objections remained unanswered. If he was in error as to the funds from which the new Judges were to derive their salaries, the error was not his own, but his noble and learned friend's, who failed, in his mind, to make matters much clearer. Besides, he had stated his reasons, be they valid or otherwise, for believing that the charge of the new Judges would be 40,000*l.* per annum, while his noble and learned friend had not condescended to favour them with his reasons for counterstating that the charge would be 15,000*l.* a-year less. As his noble and learned friend had not vouchsafed to give them more than mere assertion for his dissent to the motion for delay till the 15th of April, and as there was every ground to expect that Parliament would be sitting at least a month longer,—and as, above all, the present Bill had been altered in all its parts since first propounded by his noble and learned friend, he would take the sense of the House on his motion. He put it to their Lordships whether less than a month, the period of his motion, would suffice for a thorough investigation of its contents, and he put it to his noble and learned friend whether the jurisdiction of the Bankruptcy Courts was not essentially a common-law one, and whether, therefore, its administrators had any right to be paid out of the funds placed under equity control for strictly equity purposes.

The *Lord Chancellor* had only to repeat his disclaimer that the new Judges were not to be paid out of the Suitors' Fund, and his surprise that his noble and learned friend should persist in insinuating that they were to be so paid. He begged leave, moreover, to deny the correctness of his noble and learned friend's assertion, that the Commissioners of Bankrupts formed no part of the Court of Chancery, inasmuch as the connexion which subsisted between them and the judicature of that Court was, in his opinion, direct and obvious. Setting aside that consideration, however, he should merely add, that should his measure be adopted, the public would save 8,000*l.* a year, while not the smallest loss would accrue to the Suitors' Fund in consequence of that saving. If, under such circumstances, their Lordships should resort to the unheard-of course of postponing the next stage of the Bill for so long a period as an entire month, according to the suggestion of his noble and learned friend, they would thus, in the estimation of the public, affix a stigma on the measure which could not possibly be justified by any argument that had heretofore been urged against it.

The noble and learned Lord then put the Motion, "that this Bill be recommitted on the 15th of April;" on which the House divided, when there appeared—Content 19; Not Content 34—Majority against the Motion 15.

List of the Minority.

Dukes
Cumberland
Wellington
Marquises
Salisbury
Bute
Earls
Aberdeen
Rosslyn
Wicklow
Lords
Ellenborough
Beresford
Monson
Manners
Clanwilliam
Delawarr
Strangford
Rolle
Redesdale
Farnham
Kenyon
Wynford

The *Lord Chancellor* stated, in reply to a question from Lord Manners, that he had no objection to postpone the re-committal until that day week, if such a concession should meet the wishes of the noble and learned Lord who had opposed proceeding with the Bill.

The Duke of *Wellington* observed, that his noble and learned friend, the Chief Baron, would then, most probably, be absent on circuit, in which case they could not have the advantage of his assistance in the discussion.

The *Lord Chancellor* replied, that the House having already decided against postponing the re-committal of the Bill for a month, could not well consent to put their legislative capacity in abeyance, and make its exercise entirely depend on the presence or absence of any noble Member, how respectable soever the individual might be. Nevertheless, it so happened, that he personally desired the presence of his noble and learned friend, who professed, indeed, to be interested in the lunacy bill, and also in the third legal bill which he meant to introduce, and which he had abstained from pressing forward with the others in compliance with the Chief Baron's own wish; but his noble and learned friend had not yet expressed, to his knowledge, any opinion, either in public or private, against the measure now proposed; nor did he believe that the noble and learned Lord did intend to object to it. At least, nothing up to that day had been uttered by his noble and learned friend as far as he knew which would lead him to anticipate the opposition which it was now insinuated he had reason to expect.

The Duke of *Wellington* said, he had not formed any opinion on the measure, and therefore was not prepared to oppose it. All that he sought was, that a fair opportunity, and a reasonable length of time might be afforded for its adequate discussion.

Lord *Ellenborough* was of opinion, that his noble and learned friend, the Chief Baron, had certainly expressed a wish to be present at the discussion of the Bill, at one stage if not on every occasion when it should regularly come under the consideration of the House. It appeared to him, notwithstanding what had fallen from the learned Lord on the woolsack, that the Chief Baron did entertain considerable doubts as to the expediency of this measure, which he had described as containing little good that was at the same time new, while whatever it had of novelty was not good, but quite the reverse, and ought not to be adopted. Such being the opinion which, to the best of his recollection, his learned friend had already intimated, it was only fair that the House should be given an opportunity of hearing his sentiments on the details of the Bill, which were really of a very difficult and complicated character. If in the course of the fifteen days during which the noble and learned Lord himself had directed his attention to the subject, so many alterations had suggested themselves to his mind, was it not equally probable that other imperfections might attract the notice of noble Lords who enjoyed similar advantages of professional education? Lay Members were not competent to pronounce upon the merits of legal details, however capable they might be to decide upon the principle abstractedly; and it was consequently desirable that they should avail themselves of the advice of two of the ablest and most learned men who had ever held the seals of England, to whom they might refer, they being fortunately Members of their Lordships' House.

The *Lord Chancellor* said, he was most anxious that the present discussion should not go forth to the public as stigmatising this Bill with the censure of a noble and learned Lord who was not in his place to state his opinions for himself. The noble and learned Baron who had just spoken happened entirely to misunderstand what had been uttered by the Chief Baron, as the latter noble Lord had merely said that he had intended by his bill to alter the sittings of the masters in Chancery, and the mode of taking evidence, and referred to the third measure as that in which he was principally interested. If the discussion should not be taken until the termination of the Circuit, such a delay would amount to the recognition of a principle which might be carried hereafter to an extent that no one could undertake to limit. He would, however, inquire when the Circuit was likely to end; and if he found that the postponement of the last stage of the Bill for a few days longer would give the noble and learned Lord an opportunity of attending, he should have no objection to such an arrangement. Meanwhile he should only observe, that the noble and learned Lord had not yet on any occasion expressed himself hostile to the measure.

Lord *Ellenborough* apprehended that his noble and learned friend had intimated doubts respecting the propriety of the principle on which the Bill was founded.

Lord *Wynford*, said that the Chief Baron had not actually pronounced a decided judgment on this Bill; but he certainly appeared to incline to the opinion ascribed to him by the noble Baron who had just addressed their Lordships.

Bill to be re-committed that day se'nnight.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Monday, March 14, 1831.

MINUTES.] The Committee on the Londonderry (City) Election Petition reported, that Sir Robert Alexander Fergusson, the sitting Member, was not duly returned. A new Writ was accordingly ordered for the City of Londonderry.

Bills. Canada Lands, and Canadian Revenues, read a second time. For appointing Commissioners to continue the Inquiries concerning Charities; and for the Recovery of Charitable Funds read a first time.

Returns ordered. On the Motion of Mr. POULETT THOMSON, the foreign Salt imported into Great Britain and Ireland, in the years 1829 and 1830; stating the quantity and quality, and from what Countries exported.

Petitions presented. For Parliamentary Reform, by Sir A. HOPE, from Linlithgowshire:—By Mr. C. CALVERT, from the Parochial Society of St. George the Martyr:—By Sir J. MACDONALD, from Havant:—By Colonel LYGON, from Dudley:—By Mr. JOHN DUNDAS, from Richmond (Yorkshire):—By Mr. CURTEIS, from several Parishes in Sussex:—By Mr. M. A. TAYLOR, from Sunderland, signed by 5,000 persons:—By the LORD ADVOCATE, from Edinburgh, Perth Cupar, Montrose, Glasgow, Dundee, and from several other places in Scotland:—By Mr. JOHNSTONE, three from Dunfermline, and two from Linlithgow:—By Mr. R. GRANT, from two places in Norfolk, and from Cupar:—By Mr. LESTER, from Poole:—By the ATTORNEY GENERAL, from Nottingham, signed by 10,000 persons:—By Mr. BEAUMONT, from Wells, in Somersetshire; from three places in Northumberland; and from North Shields:—By Sir A. GRANT, from Alpington and Yelvenden. For the Abolition of the Corn Laws, by Colonel BAILLIE, from the Bristol Political Union; and from the Chamber of Commerce, for the Repeal of the Duties on Calicoes, and for the Reduction of the Duties on Sugar. Against the Evesham Disfranchisement Bill, by Colonel LYGON, from the Burgesses of Evesham. For the Repeal of the Union, by Mr. D. BROWNE, from Headford. For Amending the Law of Scotland as to buying Grain, by the LORD ADVOCATE, from the Merchants and Farmers of Kincardine, and from several other parts of Scotland; also, against the Renewal of the East-India Company's Charter, from the Chamber of Commerce for Forfarshire, and from the Merchants of Dundee; for the Repeal of the Stamp Duties on Procurators Certificates, from the Procurators of Perthshire and Kincardine; and against the Tax on Steam Boats, from the Tay Steam Packet Company. For the Abolition of the Duties on Sugar, by Sir R. BATESON, from Carrickfergus and Lisburne; and for the Abolition of Tithes, from Tamlaght Finlagan. Against any alteration of the Timber Duties, by Lord W. POWLETT, from the Shipowners of Sunderland and South Shields. Against the Duty on Soap, by General GASCOYNE, from the Soap Manufacturers of Liverpool; for the Repeal of the Disabilities to which the Jews are liable, by Mr. R. GRANT, from Portsea.

KILDARE-STREET SOCIETY.] Sir *Robert Bateson* presented Petitions from the Presbytery of Derry, in connection with the Synod of Ulster, and from the Landowners of Aughadowey, for the continuance of the Parliamentary Grants to the Kildare-Street Society.

An Hon. *Member* bore testimony to the utility of that society; he knew that it had done a great deal of good.

Mr. *O'Connell* did not mean to deny what the hon. Member stated, and, indeed, he had no doubt that instances of the utility of the Society had occurred in the north of Ireland; but the Catholics of that country complained bitterly of the grant. Those who supported the Kildare-street Society, however, never were favourable either to the political or civil rights of the Catholics, and might naturally support a Society which the Catholics hated. It worked well for those who agreed with its tenets; but the Catholics might justly claim a share of the public money, without its being made a condition that they must renounce their father's faith.

Mr. *Thomas Lefroy* supported the Society. The number of its scholars had much increased, even its Catholic scholars. In the last year there had been an increase of eighty-one schools, and 8,000 scholars.

Mr. *Hume* had presented many petitions against the Society, and knew that great dissatisfaction on the subject prevailed among the Catholics. They saw the public money given to an exclusive sect, and employed to promote exclusive objects. He trusted that some new arrangements would, therefore, be made, as to the grant, which, were it properly applied, would be sufficient to educate the whole necessitous population of Ireland. As it was now applied, it was a mere waste of public money.

Sir *Robert Bateson* had presented, he was sure, as many petitions in favour of the Society as the hon. member for Middlesex had against it. The petitions he had then laid before the House were signed by 7,000 persons. He knew of no instance of Catholics objecting to the Society—many of whom sent their children to its schools. He knew that they disliked the Bible being read in the schools without rule or comment; but it was not used as a school-book; it was read to them once a week. In his part of Ireland, the Society was deservedly very popular, for it had done a great deal of good. He believed its opponents could not cite one instance of its having been guilty of jobbing or proselytizing; but till they did, it was impossible to answer general and vague charges. He hoped the Government would not suffer itself to be misled by taunts, as it would have much to answer for, if it lent itself to the sham conciliatory system that was so much in vogue.

Mr. *More O'Ferrall* did not need to point out to the House, that this subject was of great importance to Ireland; which was proved by the number of petitions presented to the House. A liberal system might reconcile the people of Ireland to this Society; but if the present system were persevered in, he despaired of any good being effected by parliamentary grants. The system might be liked in Londonderry; but it was hated in Kildare. He had himself established a school by means of funds advanced by the Kildare-street Society, in which the Douay Testament was read; but the Society endeavoured to substitute for that a selection from the New Testament, and gave out that it had received the sanction of a Catholic Bishop. He was obliged, therefore, to cease his connection with the Society, and could not derive any aid from its funds for extending education. It had been too long the practice in Ireland to force the Bible on the attention of the people; which only generated animosity and distrust instead of promoting charity, peace, and confidence.

Mr. *Wm. S. O'Brien* believed that, under proper regulations, the grant might be most beneficial; at present, it was misapplied; and he trusted that his Majesty's Ministers would redeem their pledges on this subject, and do something to satisfy the people that their interests were not altogether lost sight of.

Sir *John Newport* stated, that a large portion of the people of Ireland were hostile to the Society, and as long as that was the case, it could do no good.

Mr. *M'Namara* attributed to the conduct of the Society much of the agitation and disturbance which existed in the county he had the honour to represent (Clare).

Mr. *Shaw* was anxious to bear his testimony to the good which the Society had effected; and it was impossible, he believed, to devise any plan better calculated to promote education in Ireland.

Petition laid on the Table.

Mr. *O'Connell,* on a Petition being subsequently presented against Slavery, reverted to this subject, and said, that the difference between him and hon. gentlemen was, that they wished the Catholics to be educated by Protestants, while the Catholics wished to educate themselves. The more violent Protestants, those who were indebted for their seats in that House to their hatred of Catholics, actually contended, that they were the fittest persons to educate the Catholics, and to have the disposal of the national funds, destined to the purposes of education. The Catholic prelates had petitioned the House against the Society, and he had presented not less than 150 petitions, and he had more to present. There was nothing the Catholics felt to be more degrading than the superiority assumed by the Protestants; and the present Government would forfeit the respect of Irishmen, if it suffered the aggravating system to continue.

Sir *Robert Bateson* wished also to make some further observations, but he was stopped by the Speaker, and desired to take some other opportunity than on the bringing up of a petition against slavery.

PARLIAMENTARY REFORM PETITIONS.] General *Gascoyne* presented a Petition, most numerously and respectably signed, from the Town of Liverpool, in favour of Reform. The petition, he stated, expressed the opinions of nearly 12,000 of the most respectable inhabitants of that great and opulent town, who had put their names to it, and it had affixed to it the signatures of the first Merchants and most respectable Bankers in Liverpool. He could not say, that the petition was in favour of the Bill which Ministers would introduce, as that Bill was not as yet before the House, but it was in favour of Reform generally, and the petitioners particularly called the attention of the House to the necessity of adopting measures for disfranchising the close boroughs, and transferring the right of Representation to the large and populous towns. He certainly thought, taking into account the immense load of business which devolved, necessarily, upon the Representatives of such a town as Liverpool, a circumstance with which he was well acquainted, having represented that town for upwards of thirty years, it might be worthy the consideration of the House whether it would not be advisable to give more Representatives to that town, The town of Liverpool paid more to the revenue in the year than all Ireland, and there were more houses in it rated at 10*l.* a-year, (the standard taken in the measure of the noble Lord who had introduced the Ministerial plan of Reform), than in Cambridge, Bedford, and Berks. To such a place, therefore, an increase in the number of Representatives might be a most judicious measure. The petitioners stated, that as far as they had become acquainted with the details of the measure of Reform which had been introduced by his Majesty's Ministers, it should have their full support. He was sorry to differ from his constituents with regard to that part of the noble Lord's Bill which went to settle the elective franchise, of which he disapproved. It was principally to the details of the measure of Ministers that he should give his opposition. He thought it might be very right to disfranchise some close and notoriously corrupt boroughs, and to transfer their franchise to the large towns, but he could not go the length of throwing sixty boroughs at once overboard. He agreed with those who thought that some Reform was necessary, but it was a different question whether the specific plan proposed by Ministers should be adopted or not. Whether that were adopted or not, he was sure that it would lead to some Reform before the end of the present year.

Mr. *Ewart* gave his warm and cordial support to the petition. The petition was in favour of the measure of his Majesty's Ministers, for the petitioners expressed their great satisfaction at its introduction, and their determination to give it their support. He knew well the respectability of all the parties whose names were signed to the petition. He believed his hon. and gallant colleague would bear him out in saying, that no petition had come from that town more numerously and respectably signed than this, during the long period he had represented Liverpool. He might be allowed to take the opportunity of saying, that he considered the measure of Reform proposed by his Majesty's Ministers, as one of the greatest boons ever offered to the country. It would tend, more than any other measure which could have been devised, to give stability to our institutions; the best security for which was, placing them in accordance with the spirit of the country, by a change like that now proposed to be adopted. Much had been said as to the opposition of Mr. Canning to Parliamentary Reform, but when Mr. Canning made that celebrated speech against Reform, which had been so often quoted, he said to some of his principal supporters in Liverpool, "Though I oppose Reform now, the day will come when Reform must be conceded."

Sir *E. Sugden* wished to know, as the petitioners were so strenuous in the cause of Reform, whether they lost sight of the necessity of some measure for preventing the excessive bribery which usually occurred at elections in Liverpool?

Mr. *J. Wood* said, that the measure introduced by his Majesty's Ministers would effectually prevent bribery there in future, by putting an end to the system of out-voters.

Mr. *C. Calvert* presented a Petition, most numerously and respectably signed, from the inhabitants of the borough of Southwark, in the Town-hall assembled, in favour of the plan of Reform brought forward by his Majesty's Ministers. The petitioners stated, that they would give that plan their cordial support, and they mentioned, that the proposed system of franchise which that plan went to establish was so similar to that which had been established in that borough for many years, that they were quite sure that the establishment of it throughout the kingdom would not be attended by any of those dangers which timid or interested persons had predicted from it. This petition was adopted at a general meeting of the inhabitants, and though the majority of them were in favour of the Ballot, they so cordially concurred in their approval of the measure of his Majesty's Ministers, that they altogether omitted to express their sentiments on that subject.

Sir *R. Wilson* supported the prayer of the petition. The example of the Borough, which the petitioners said justified the measure, was he thought extremely appropriate. He had been elected four times for the Borough, and he could safely say, that he never had endeavoured, in any improper manner whatever, to influence the vote of any one elector. He denied that the majority, or even that a great proportion of the voters in the Borough of Southwark, were in favour of the Ballot, and would repeat what he had before stated, viz., that though Ballot might do pretty well in other countries—the instances quoted, however, did not even bear that out—yet it would never do in this country. Indeed, he believed, that it had totally failed in other countries. The measure introduced by the Ministers should have his hearty and cordial support.

Sir J. Macdonald presented a Petition from the borough of Calne, in favour of the Ministerial plan of Reform.

Mr. *Hunt.*—I will take this opportunity of replying to a personal allusion which was made a few nights ago to myself, in the course of the Debate, by the hon. member for Yarmouth (Mr. W. Peel). The hon. Member thought proper to make some allusion, and I am led to believe good-humouredly and inoffensvely, to my trade or profession, or whatever else you please to call it. Now, if I had been present on that occasion, I would have risen and addressed the hon. member for Yarmouth as good-humouredly and inoffensively as he addressed me. I would have said to him—"Sir, the only difference between you and me is this—your father was the first person of your family who was a gentleman, and my father was the first gentleman of his family who was a tradesman."

First Fruits—Ireland.] Sir *John Newport* did not mean to intrude long upon the House, but he conceived the subject to which he meant to call the attention of the House, though not for the first time, to be of essential importance to the well-being of the Church of Ireland. The House, he believed, was well aware of the nature of the First Fruits, but what he contended for was, that they ought to be appropriated according to the beneficent intentions of the Crown. At the period of the Reformation, the First Fruits came into the hands of the Crown, and were part of its revenue, but, in the year 1710, in the time of Queen Anne, they were made over to the clergy, both in England and Ireland, for the building and repairing of Churches, for the purchase of glebes, and for the maintenance of the clergy when the parochial revenue was not sufficient. The clergy of Ireland were, about the same period, exonerated from the payment of the twentieth they were to pay the Crown, but the clergy of England were not released from the payment of a tenth that had been habitually demanded from them. The valuation of livings had never been high in Ireland, and the First Fruits were so small, that Parliament had frequently been obliged to make grants for that purpose for which if sufficient, they were destined. He believed, that under proper management, they would be sufficient, and as the burthen which they were meant to bear fell upon Roman Catholics and Dissenters, it was very necessary that the First Fruits should be made available to the utmost. The real cause of the insufficiency of the First Fruits, and of this burthen being so oppressively felt by the people, was, that the valuation of the First Fruits still remained the same as at first; so that now what was called First Fruits was scarcely more than nominal. Besides this, many parishes had never been valued at all; there were, in fact, 2,479 parishes in Ireland, and 467, or one-fifth had never been rated to the First Fruits, and 366, though rated, contributed nothing. For the ten years ending January 1821, the gross sum of the First Fruits in Ireland amounted to 3,752*l.*, and in the following ten years to 5,142*l.*, or in twenty years 8,894*l.*; and the expenses being 1,557*l.*, they really netted only 7,337*l.* The whole revenue of all the Archbishoprics and Bishoprics of Ireland, was in fact estimated at 3,177*l.* per year. The revenue of all the other benefices in the King's books was only estimated at 14,118*l.* while under the Tithe Composition Act, the tithes of three-fifths of the parishes of Ireland had been compounded for by the annual payment of no less than 326,000*l.* to the ecclesiastical incumbents, exclusive of their glebe lands. In consequence of the insufficiency of the First Fruits, Parliament had been repeatedly applied to, and for the sixteen years ending in 1823, had advanced no less a sum than 632,000*l.* for the benefit of the Irish Church. Since then, the average grants have amounted to very nearly 40,000*l.* a-year. The object of his Motion, was to ascertain if the First Fruits, properly levied, could not be made available to the service of the Church, instead of forming, as now, part of the emoluments of individual Churchmen. A late Chief Secretary for Ireland had stated, that not more than 1,400*l.* was ever granted at one time for building or repairing Churches. He was able to contradict that assertion, from the information he possessed. The contradiction was contained in a Letter which he would beg leave to read to the House. The right hon. Baronet accordingly read the following Letter;—

"*Lord Treasurer's, and Second Remembrancer's Office, Four Courts, Dublin.*

"Sir,—On reading a report of the proceedings on your motion, relative to the tax on Roman Catholics, on building, re-building, and repairing churches in this country, I was surprised at the reply of the Secretary for Ireland, wherein he stated, that there never was more than 1,400*l.* allowed or lent for building a church here, and then specifying the interest, &c. chargeable.

"The report of the Debate states you to have asked the hon. Secretary, 'Are you certain of this?' when he replied confidently in the affirmative. Now, Sir, from your asking the question, and being in some measure ruled by the answer, I naturally infer you lay a great stress on the amount of the sum so lent, and, of course, levied on the people. His assertion (if truly reported) is so contrary to the fact, and shews such a want of knowledge on the subject, that I conclude it will be acceptable information to you, to shew you, from unerring documents, that Mr. Goulburn is quite wrong as to the extent of the injury, to remedy which seems to be your earnest wish; and, as every other action of your public life is of a similar complexion, I feel pleasure in sending you a short abstract of the orders issued from this office, in which I hold a situation, to levy the amount of any instalment of any loan made by the Board of First Fruits to any parish for building, rebuilding, or enlarging or repairing any church in said parish, and this under the 15th section of the Act of George 4th, chap. 86. A blank form of the Bishop's or Archbishop's certificate (on which said order is grounded) of the twenty-one days' arrear of said instalment, I send you for explicitness, and in which you will be greatly surprised to see Mr. Goulburn's statement often more than doubled.

'8*th November*, 1825.

'First Fruits *against* Parish Tawney, County of Dublin.—Order to the Sheriff of the County of Dublin, to levy 151*l.* 8*s.*, being one instalment of 3,784*l.*, made by the Trustees and Commissioners of First Fruits, &c. in Ireland, for building a church. Kemmis,

'Solicitor to the Crown and First Fruits.'

'8*th November*, 1825.

'First Fruits *against* Parish Swords, County of Dublin.—Like order to levy 46*l.*, late currency, being one instalment of 2,500*l.* granted for rebuilding church in the said Parish.'

'8*th November*, 1825.

'First Fruits *against* the Parish of Aughrun, County of Galway—Like order to levy 20*l.*, being one instalment of 1,500*l.*, granted for the like.'

'8*th November*, 1825.

'First Fruits *against* Parish Roscrea, County of Tipperary.—Like order to levy 94*l.*, being one instalment of 2,350*l.*, for rebuilding a church in the said parish.'

'8*th November*, 1825.

'First Fruits *against* Parish of the Union of Roscre, and Kyle, Diocese of Killaloe County, Tipperary County, and Queen's County.—Like order to levy 188*l.*, being one instalment of 2,350*l.*, for building a church in the said parish.'

"This and the above order for building and rebuilding at one time will appear severe.

"The above are levied as absolute executions; the sheriff, on receiving the orders, gets the churchwardens and constables to assess, without ever summoning a person interested, and apportions it as to him may seem equitable and just, but apparently without control; and, so absolute is this order, that the most celebrated man we have, when High Sheriff of the County of Dublin, Mr. Latouche, the banker, was actually attached, through the neglect of his sub-sheriff, for not paying over the money immediately.

"The above extracts are as good as ten thousand to shew that the principle is at variance with Mr. Goulburn's assertion. From my hurry to send it to you, and being late when I thought of it, these are all I have time to send, but I will give, at any future time, such further information as is in my power."

He had stated on a former occasion that Mr. Shaw Mason, an active and conscientious individual who held the office of Commissioner for estimating the First Fruits of Ireland, had endeavoured to perform the duties of his office, and had applied for those sums which he thought were due. His conduct excited great alarm among the clergy; the clergy applied to the Government, and the Government, instead of supporting their officer, commanded him to desist, telling him he had no right to make the application, and threatening him with the loss of his patent place. The Government did this although Mr. Shaw Mason acted by the advice of one of the most eminent counsel in Ireland, he meant Mr. Allen. This was one of the rare instances of servants being censured for too well performing their duties. It appeared by returns on the Table, that the balance of loans to the Commissioners for the Church, in January, 1830, was 391,824*l.*, and of this, 142,780*l.* had been advanced for building Glebe Houses. In eighteen years, ending 1830, 1,381 ecclesiastical promotions had taken place, and the First Fruits of all their benefices amounted only to 7,000*l.* The number of parishes comprised in this promotion was 2,058, and of dignities 345; now the tithes of 1,208 of these parishes had been valued under the Tithe Composition Act, at upwards of

300,000*l.* According to his estimate the First Fruits in that period ought to have amounted to 660,000*l.* In the same period the parliamentary grants to the Church had been upwards of 600,000*l.*, and, in all, the Church had received in that time from the public, independently of its revenues, 860,000*l.* In his opinion the First Fruits, the real First Fruits ought to be made available for all the expenses of the Church. It was time that the wealth properly belonging to the State should be devoted to that purpose for which it had been intended, and neither the Consolidated Fund, nor parliamentary grants, nor local taxation, ought to be had recourse to for ecclesiastical purposes till the whole of the real First Fruits were appropriated as it was intended they should be. He believed that in the motion he was about to make, he consulted the interests of the Church establishment. If the clergy were acquainted with the signs of the times in which we live, they would be careful not to insist too pertinaciously on claims that were in opposition to the claims of the State and the poor. He had drawn up his proposition in such a form, he believed, as not to be liable to objections. He proposed to move an Address to the Crown, detailing at length all the facts which he had brought before the House, and which were connected with this subject, and praying his Majesty, in order to render these First Fruits efficient for the purposes for which they were granted, that he would direct a reference to be made to the Law Officers of the Crown, to ascertain if it were legal to make a new and complete valuation of the First Fruits, exempting from the payment all benefices of 100*l.* and under, in order, out of them, to make good deficiencies in the revenue for ecclesiastical purposes, so that they might no longer be defrayed by grants from Parliament, or by local taxation. The right hon. Baronet concluded by the following Motion.

"That an humble Address be presented to his Majesty, humbly to represent to his Majesty, that the Annates, or First Fruits, being the first year's income of every ecclesiastical dignity and benefice in Ireland, became, at the period of the Reformation, a part of the revenues of the Crown, as head of the Church, and continued annexed to the Royal revenues till the year 1710.

"That her Majesty Queen Anne did then, as an act of grace and favour to the Church of Ireland, by letters patent, confirmed by authority of Parliament, vest in trustees the produce of this branch of the Royal revenue, for the purposes of building and repairing churches, and other objects specially affecting the maintenance of the Church of Ireland, and did, at the same time, absolutely release the clergy thereof from the annual payment of 12*d.* in the pound out of the income of all ecclesiastical benefices, before paid to the Crown, although a corresponding payment was retained by the Queen, and still remains annually payable by the clergy of England out of their dignities and benefices.

"That it appears from returns laid before this House, that the gross amount of this royal grant, paid in to the Commissioners of First Fruits, during ten years, ending in 1830, has only produced the sum of 5,143*l.*, and after deducting an allowance for salaries and incidents of collection no more than 4,302*l.*

"That 467 of the dignities and benefices of Ireland, being nearly one-fifth part of the whole, have never been rated or valued for payment of First Fruits; and 366 more, though rated, do not contribute thereto, on account of the low rate at which they were valued in the reigns of Queen Elizabeth, King James, and Charles 1st., in which valuations the whole of the Archbishoprics and Bishoprics, more than twenty in number, are estimated at no more than 3,177*l.* annual value.

"That the entire amount of these valuations of the other benefices is 8,474*l.*; whereas under the Tithe Composition Act, the tithes of about three-fifths of these parishes have been compounded by an annual land-tax of above 300,000*l.* payable to the ecclesiastical incumbent only, exclusive of the glebe lands in his possession.

"That the deficiency created by this imperfect valuation has rendered the fund wholly inadequate to fulfil the objects of royal bounty, and been supplied by parliamentary grants in sixteen years, up to 1823, amounting to 630,000*l.*, the greater part of which being advanced as a loan for building churches, is from time to time repaid to the Commissioners from the produce of parochial taxation, levied on the occupying tenantry.

"We therefore humbly pray your Majesty, in order to render this branch of royal revenue, liberally appropriated by the Crown to salutary objects, specially connected with the maintenance of the Church of Ireland, efficient for their attainment, that your Majesty may be pleased to direct that a new and complete valuation of the property included therein be made, in such a manner as to your Majesty may seem meet, and that, exempting from payment under such valuation, all parishes not producing above 100*l.* the deficiency created by the present imperfect valuation may be no longer supplied by additional charge on the body of the people, either by parliamentary grant or parochial taxation."

Mr. Stanley seconded the Motion.

Mr. *Goulburn* said, it would be an ungrateful task to go at any length into a subject like the present before an unwilling audience. He was not sure that he very well understood the object of the right hon. Baronet.

Sir *J. Newport* said, his object with respect to small parishes was—if the law officers of the Crown declared that his Majesty had the power to order a new valuation—to propose that all parishes of a less annual value than 100*l.* should be exempt from payment of First Fruits,

Mr. *Goulburn* must nevertheless censure the course proposed to be taken by the right hon. Baronet, as unnecessary, not to say unconstitutional. What occasion was there for an address? He did not know why, as he presumed that his Majesty's present Ministers approved of this motion, they could not direct the law officers to make the necessary inquiries. The right hon. Gentlemen might do that of their own accord, and there was no occasion whatever to call on the Crown, by an Address of that House, unless the right hon. Baronet supposed that his right hon. friends would not do their duty. He thought the Motion was consistent neither with public advantage nor justice; he should resist the Motion. The right hon. Baronet appeared to think the First Fruits of a living were the entire first year's revenue. He denied this altogether. Even the Pope never claimed such First Fruits except from benefices to which the presentation was with the See of Rome, and even then he never demanded above half the annual value of the living. He must affirm, then, that the Annates never were the whole gross profit of any benefice. It was also an error of the right hon. Baronet to suppose that the Acts of Parliament which empowered Commissioners to appropriate the First Fruits gave any power to the Commissioners to ascertain the value of the First Fruits. The right hon. Baronet was also in error in thinking the Act of Henry 8th conferred the power of making a valuation with a view to ascertain the full annual value of benefices; the valuation was instituted only with reference to the First Fruits—a very different thing from the total annual value. It was true the Act of Twentieths (28 Henry 8th c. 14.) did give the power of ascertaining the annual value of benefices; but this was with a view to give the twentieths to the Crown not with reference to First Fruits. The valuation of First Fruits never was intended to have been regulated from time to time, as the right hon. Baronet had asserted. Queen Elizabeth, on coming to the Throne, resumed the powers which had been granted by Henry 8th (which Queen Mary had interfered with), and she specifically exempted from First Fruits benefices of a certain value. Now could it be supposed that she would exempt from the operation of this system, for ever, benefices which, at some future time, might prove extremely valuable, if the principle of ascertaining the amount of First Fruits, from time to time, had ever been contemplated? If any doubt existed as to the real law of the case, let it be submitted to the proper law authorities for their decision. Such was the course pursued by him when he held the situation which the right hon. Gentleman opposite now filled. He had submitted the point to the present Lord Chancellor of Ireland, and the present chief Baron of the Exchequer, two lawyers of the highest eminence. He would always contend in that House, that it would be a very great hardship on every incumbent to demand the yearly value of his benefice after he had resided on it for several years. The legality of such a proceeding had not been affirmed by any law officer; the opinion last given was hostile to such a course, and the practice of above 200 years, during which no such system had obtained, was decidedly against the proposition laid down by the right hon. Baronet. In conclusion, the right hon. Gentleman observed that it appeared to him to be very unfair, in arguing this question, to assume that the point of law would be given in favour of the right hon. Baronet's opinion, and then to point out the course which the Crown ought to take, supposing that assumption to be correct

Mr. *Leader* said, he felt greatly obliged to the right hon. Baronet, who had for so many years brought under the consideration of the House the commutation of tithes, the grievance of Grand Jury taxation, and the abuse of the system of First Fruits in Ireland. With respect to this last question, he had read all that the right hon. Baronet had said with respect to it, and he found this distinction between his former motions on this subject and the present—namely, that there was now brought forward a mass of information which had never previously been laid before the House, and which demanded the most serious attention. He was one of those who, all his life, held the opinion that a premium for residence ought to be given to the clergy; and therefore he would never agree to any measure that tended to spoliate them. But, though he still entertained the same opinion, he was nevertheless firmly convinced, that the First Fruits system called for alteration and amendment. He was sure, indeed, that a *bonâ fide* payment of First Fruits would go far to put down angry discussion in the 2,400 parishes of Ireland, and do more to uphold and establish the Protestant Church than any of the ill-timed efforts of the right hon. member for Armagh, or the hon. member for Oxford, to divert the attention of Parliament from this important subject. He held in his hand the return of the "sums applotted during the year 1827, by the several vestries of Ireland, under the head of parochial rates, specifying the articles for which such rates were imposed, and particularly distinguishing the sums allotted for rebuilding and repairing of churches;" and also a summary view, taken from official documents, of the comparative value of the First Fruits, tithes, and Church lands in Ireland, and the actual state of the Irish Church, up to the 1st of March, 1831. He asserted, without fear of contradiction, that by far the greatest part of the burthen imposed on the occupying tenantry and landowners in Ireland had been laid on for rebuilding and repairing churches, and this notwithstanding the Parliament of the United Kingdom had actually granted near 700,000*l.* for building churches in Ireland. He wanted to know what had become of this money, and how it had been applied? That sum was ample to build the churches which had been erected, without local burthens and the sum required for other parochial purposes was so insignificant, that a Catholic never need be taxed to pay one shilling for the maintenance of the Protestant Church of Ireland, if the First Fruits were fairly valued and fairly paid, and rendered unobjectionable by being collected by easier instalments than at present. The wants of the people, and the state of Ireland, would prevent this important subject being longer slightingly passed over, or treated with indifference or neglect. It appeared on the face of the returns of the parochial rates, that if the building and repair of churches were deducted from the gross amount, the tax would be inconsiderable. The sum required for other purposes was so small that it could and ought to be paid by the voluntary assessments of the Protestant parishioners. He could not see the justice of a few Protestant gentlemen assessing a Catholic people for the payment of their clerks and sextons, and repairs of their churches—when the Catholic Church set them the laudable example of paying its own servants, clerks, and repairs, and when, in truth, the sum required for this purpose was so small, that it might easily be provided for, and thus preclude the necessity of a Protestant vestry ever assembling in Ireland to tax a Catholic people. From the slovenly mode in which the parochial returns have been made up, it would be dangerous to attempt to state the precise sum which might be necessary for the payment of the parish-clerk sexton, and repairs of Protestant churches; but he was certain if the Board of First Fruits was compelled to embrace the alternative, either, to pay the parochial rates, or to hand over the First Fruits, it would pay the parochial rates. He had a Protestant church and Catholic chapel, and residence for the Protestant rector and for the Catholic clergyman, built on his own estate; and he had introduced a Protestant establishment into a part of the south of Ireland, where none ever before existed; he had served the office of churchwarden in an union of three parishes, 100 square miles in extent, and consisting of a population, almost exclusively Catholics, amounting to nearly 50,000 people. It would appear in page 115 of the Parochial Rates, No. 16, that the annual rate for these three parishes did not exceed 30*l.* a-year; and if there was an extra charge for making church-yards and burial-grounds, it was a charge made at the request of the Catholic parishioners themselves. In the north of Ireland, where Protestants, who pay the cess, lay it on, the cess is very light; but in the south of Ireland, where the Protestants levy and the Catholics pay, the reverse is the case—for instance, look in the parochial returns, to Derry;—the levy does not exceed 2,300*l.* for the year 1827; and look at Cork; why the levy is 7,000*l.* for the same year. In Derry diocess, there were forty-nine parishes, and in Cork diocess fifty parishes. He did not wish to take one guinea from the Protestant Church which properly belonged to it, but he could never consent for the sake of that church to its putting to its own uses the property which belonged to the Crown, or to its taxing the people to pay for matters for which funds were already provided. No man who knew the income of the Irish Church would contend that it was not amply endowed without its appropriating what belonged to the Crown and the people. He was prepared to go into detail on the subject but he had already thrown his information into a tabular form which he would read to the House. The hon. Member then read the following summary.

Summary View of the Comparative Valuations of First Fruits, Tithes, and Church Lands in Ireland.—Feb 1831.

1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7.			8.	9.			10.	11.	12.
Provinces.	Promotions from Aug. 1812, to Feb. 1831.	Dignities in said Promotions.	Parishes in said Promotions.	Dignities Taxed and Paying First Fruits	Parishes Taxed and Paying First Fruits	Amount of First Fruits.			Parishes Valued under the Composition Act.	Annual Amount of Tithe Valuations.			Parishes having Glebes annexed.	Acres in Glebe and See Lands on Promotions.	Acres belonging to Bishopricks
						£.	s.	d.		£.	s.	d.		A.	A.
Armagh	436	61	541	41	210	4,886	2	11	307	108,143	13	10	388	325,268	250,911
Dublin	338	84	528	79	103	3,143	14	3½	267	61,048	16	6½	197	71,687	53.578
Cashell	472	145	698	124	77	1,346	4	4	429	98,727	0	5	362	126,567	78,399
Tuam ..	135	55	291	46	15	364	14	8	205	32,848	17	8	91	82,839	119,133
Totals	1,381	345	2,058	290	405	9,740	16	2½	1,208	300,768	8	5½	1,038	606,352	502,021

N. B. Besides the Income under Composition and the Land, a sum of £.686,000 was granted to the First Fruits by Parliament for building Churches in Ireland.

It would appear by the foregoing summary—1st. That between the month of August, 1812, and the date of this return (28th of February, 1831), 1,381 promotions spiritual, comprehending the same number of benefices, have taken place within the several dioceses in Ireland. 2ndly. That the 1,381 benefices to which promotions have been so made, contain 345 dignities, including the Archbishoprics and Bishoprics, and 2,058 parishes &c. 3rdly. That 290 of the aforesaid dignities, and 405 of the parishes, have been taxed, and are paying First Fruits, to the amount of 9,740*l.* 16*s.* 2½*d.*; and that the remainder, consisting of fifty-eight dignities and 1,653 parishes, are either exempted from payment under the Statute of Elizabeth, or have never been taxed or put in charge. 4thly. That valuations have been made, under the Tithe Composition Act, in 1,208 of the above-mentioned parishes, to the annual amount of 300,768*l.* 8*s.* 5½*d.* 5thly. That 1,038 of said parishes have glebes annexed to them, amounting to 101,362 acres, and that the see or bishop's lands, on promotions occurring, amount to 504,990 acres. 6thly. That the total number of acres contained in both glebe and See lands amount to 606,352 acres. 7thly. That the total number of acres belonging to the several Sees in Ireland, with the exception of the dioceses of Down and Connor, Raphoe and Dromore, amount to 502,021 acres, the pecuniary values of which have not been officially ascertained. Such was the state of the Established Church in Ireland; and that was what the right hon. Gentleman described as a case that did not loudly call for inquiry. He was most anxious that the proposition of the right hon. Baronet should succeed, because, if it did, it would tend to the removal of the vestry system, which would be the first and best harbinger of tranquillity in Ireland. It was evident, in his opinion, that the Crown intended, and the Parliament contemplated, an actually efficient, full, and fair valuation, and *bonâ fide* payment of First Fruits. There was no Irish Clergyman who, if the fund were properly applied, and the amount made payable by lighter instalments, who would make objections to pay the First Fruits. It was admitted that there could be no better application of the fund than the lightening the burthen of the Catholic population, who had now the weight of two Churches: the one established and the other recognised, by law. Under all these circumstances, the time, in his humble judgment, was come, for Parliament to take up the question of inquiry, whether the trust which it had itself created was fairly and properly executed or not. The moment the discussion on this subject was terminated, it would be followed by a debate on the Army Estimates, in which the propriety of granting the sum of 1,000,000*l.* for the maintenance of the Army, Ordnance, &c. Yeomanry in Ireland would be considered and discussed. Since the Union, it would be found that nearly 100,000,000*l.* had been expended with no benefit to Ireland, and great injury to England, in supporting an immense military establishment in that country, and in building fortresses and barracks. Was another 100,000,000*l.* to be expended before the condition of the people was ameliorated, and they rendered tranquil? It was idle to contend that tithes and taxes and local cesses did not drive the Irish to despair, and into rebellion; they were the substantial grievances. A legitimate means was offered to the House of lessening most of these burthens and pacifying the people, and the House would not do its duty if it did not procure the First Fruits to be fairly valued and fully paid.

Mr. *T. Lefroy* said, it was only just, that a fair and proper provision should be made for the clergy, and he could not see why that useful and excellent class of men should be exclusively taxed more than any other body in the State. If they were to be thus taxed, why should not others be visited in the same manner? Why, for instance, should not his Majesty's Ministers be taxed for the building of public offices? or why should not military officers give up a year's pay to build their barracks? Why, he demanded, should the clergy be compelled to give up the value of their first year's promotion? Had they no families to support? Had they no expenditure to meet? It would, he believed, be found on inquiry, that the clergy would want their first year's revenue as much as any other body of men. As to the reasonableness of this measure, he would say, that it was one on which the House was not called on to act, and ought not to act: and he felt this the more strongly, because the law authorities of Ireland were opposed to the principle contended for by the right hon. Baronet, and had declared it illegal. It would be unjust, too, for the people ought to provide for the repairs of the churches. In fact, too, that was the law of the land. It would also be a gross innovation, for he was prepared to shew by a history of the First Fruits, from the time of Henry 8th to the reign of Queen Anne, a period of 300 years, that the present system had never been altered. In Queen Anne's time the subject had been frequently before Parliament, but Parliament never thought of doing that which was now solicited. He could bring many proofs that the Parliament never thought of taking the first year's full income as the First Fruits. Thus the annual value of the First Fruits had frequently been stated to Parliament, but it never took any means to procure a new valuation. If they went back to earlier times they would find, that by the 6th of Henry 4th Parliament denounced, in the most severe terms, the exaction of the full value in the amount of First Fruits, from the clergy; and the same feeling was constantly manifested, down to the time of Henry 8th. As to the valuation of the livings, for the purpose of ascertaining the amount of the First Fruits, the last made in this country was in the year 1292, and from that time to the period of Henry 8th there was no valuation: but the object in that valuation was not so much to see what was the amount of tenths and First-Fruits, as to ascertain what was to be transferred to the Crown. But it was not then pretended that the amount transferred was the first year's value of the living. When the First Fruits were transferred by Queen Anne, Commissioners were appointed here and in Ireland, for their collection; and the Lord Chancellor, or Lord Keeper, for the time being, was one of them; yet, though he must have known that the amount received was not anything like the annual value, we never find him issuing a Commission to ascertain what was the exact annual value. He was satisfied, that the full enforcement of the rule laid down by the right hon. Baronet would prove the ruin of the clergy; and he hoped that, if it was to be done at all, it should not be done by a side-wind, and at a moment when the law on the subject was at best exceedingly doubtful. Indeed, he conceived that it was wrong, in a discussion of this kind, to deliver a positive opinion on a doubtful point of law, which was done by the right hon. Baronet's proposition. If the clergy were to be taxed for the building of churches, let it be done gradually—let the tax be levied *de anno in annum*, and not all at once. When a property-tax was imposed on the people, it was levied in a gradual maner—no man was asked to give up his whole year's income on the moment. He could not conceive why the clergy more than the laity should be taxed in this manner. He did not see either, why the lay impropriator and the remainder-man, who has an interest in the lay tithes, should not be compelled to pay a tax for the repairs and erecting of churches, as well as the clergyman. The course proposed by the right hon. Baronet was certainly most unjust to the clergy of Ireland, than whom a more meritorious body of men did not exist. It was a fact, that within the last thirty years the number of the clergy resident in Ireland had been doubled, and that in the last fifty years there had been more churches built in that country than in the preceding three centuries. The adoption of the principles of these Resolutions would be, to take away from the Established Church in Ireland that which was guaranteed to it at the Union, and by several Acts of the Irish Parliament before the Union. It would be most unwise and impolitic, by such a course as this, to bring the clergy of Ireland to make comparisons between the protection afforded to them now, and what they had enjoyed under a local legislature.

Mr. *Stanley* said, that he should not have felt it necessary to offer himself to the attention of the House on this question, concurring as he did in the Motion of his right hon. friend, but for what fell from the hon. and learned Gentleman who last addressed the House. If he had not heard some of the concluding observations of the hon. and learned Gentleman, he should have thought that he had wholly misunderstood the question before it. The hon. and learned Gentleman, in the earlier parts of his speech, seemed to think that by these Resolutions his right hon. friend (Sir J. Newport) was calling on the House and the Crown to do an act which was violent and illegal towards the clergy of Ireland, in making a new valuation of all livings; whereas, in fact, the Resolutions, in a spirit of due caution, only called on the House to address the Crown to take the advice of its law officers as to the fact whether it had the power of making such a valuation. The hon. and learned Member was quite mistaken in supposing that this was a measure which would fall with great severity upon the poorer clergy of Ireland. Surely the hon. and learned Gentleman could not have heard what was stated by his right hon. friend, that in the event of the measure contemplated by these Resolutions being carried into effect, it was intended to exempt from it all livings not exceeding 100*l.* in value. The hon. Member had referred to the opinion of the law officers of the Crown in Ireland on a former occasion on this subject. Had that opinion been such as he seemed to think it, it would be presumption in him (Mr. Stanley) to question it; but he believed the question proposed to the law officers in Ireland on that occasion was very different from that now proposed to the law officers. It was not whether the Crown had the power of making a new valuation, but whether Mr. Shaw Mason, a patentee under the Crown, had the right to make such a valuation on his own authority. The two questions, then, were totally different. He was prepared to contend, that from the Act of the 28th of Henry 8th, it was quite clear that the whole of the First Fruits, the annates and twentieths, in full value, were vested in the Crown; and though the whole value of them might not have been exacted, still it was clear that a very considerable sum was derived from them; for upon a benefice becoming void, it was enacted that the King, having the First Fruits, should provide out of those funds an able priest to perform the duty of the living until the living was filled up. The hon. and learned Member had referred to the feeling manifested by Parliament on this subject in the time of Henry 4th; but it should be recollected, that at that period the First Fruits were paid to a foreign power, and not applied, as at present, for the support of our own Church. When the Crown had resigned those funds for the repairs of churches and improvement of small livings, it was not too much that Parliament should see that they were applied to the end intended. The payment of First Fruits could not be looked upon as a tax on the new incumbent. It was a condition on which he took a benefice, that a certain portion of it should be paid to improve the condition of his poorer brethren in the Church. The question at issue was, how far the first composition was final and conclusive. That was a point of law on which he did not feel competent to pronounce; but it appeared to him, that it would be very strange if a clergyman were warranted to bind his successors for ever. It would surely be more reasonable to suppose that the clergyman who made the composition bound only himself. Whether it was legal was another point, but most certainly there had been repeated valuations in Ireland subsequent to the Statute of Henry 8th. They had been made under letters patent twice in the time of Elizabeth, and after in the reign of James 1st. The hon. and learned Gentleman (Mr. Lefroy) could, then, with no shadow of reason deny the fact of these valuations. Further, he had no hesitation in saying, that should it be in the power of the Crown to order a new valuation of benefices in Ireland, it would be infinitely for the benefit of Ireland, of the Crown, and the Church, and would greatly help towards maintaining the Establishment in the plenitude of its rights without any odium. With this view he should feel highly gratified at seeing the First Fruits, of all benefices, exempting those not above 100*l.* in value, appropriated to the purposes of the munificent donation of Queen Anne. In conclusion, the right hon. Gentleman observed, that such a measure as he supposed his right hon. friend contemplated, as the result of these Resolutions, would tend very much for the advantage of the Church.

Sir *R. Peel* said, that he and his hon. friends were placed in a very embarrassing situation by this Motion. They did not object to the abstract proposition of referring the question to the consideration of the law-officers of the Crown; but they certainly had strong objections to affirming a whole string of Resolutions without being allowed any time for their consideration. He hoped his right hon. friend would in candour consider, that if they were to send the subject for the opinion of the Law-officers, they ought not to accompany it with declarations of the opinion of the House, which might tend to bias the opinion of those learned persons. The right hon. Baronet then read two of the Resolutions, and contended, that in addition to the recommendation that the opinion of the law-officers of the Crown should be taken, they contained a declaration of opinions which it would be much better to defer until that opinion was pronounced. There were statements of facts which ought not to accompany a dry question of law, about to be submitted to the legal advisers of the Crown. The course proposed on this occasion was, he conceived, altogether unprecedented.

Mr. *Stanley*, in explanation, said, that the facts stated in the Address were put forward as a ground why the House should agree to that part of it for referring the question to the opinion of the law-officers of the Crown. It was not intended, of course, that those facts should form any part of, or accompany, the case on which the opinion of the law-officers was to be taken. At the same time, as far as he was concerned, he was indifferent whether the parts of the Address which the right hon. Gentleman had read should be inserted or not.

Mr. *O'Connell* hoped the House would not allow the Resolutions before it to be frittered away by any special pleading. It was of the greatest importance to Ireland to know whether there existed a legal fund from which the churches might be repaired, and, if there were, whether or not it could not be so disposed as not to allow the expense to fall on the poor people who derived no benefit in any way, either in or out of the church. The present system of making the repairs, and building of churches in Ireland—a large portion of which ought to be borne by the revenues of the Church—fall on the people, the great mass of whom never went into those churches, was a great hardship in Ireland. He was surprised at what had fallen from the hon. and learned member for the University of Dublin, that by the common-law the burthen of building and repairing churches should fall on the people. This, he would venture to say, was not the common-law in England. By the common-law the revenues of the Church were divided into three parts—one was for the repairs of the church, the other was for the maintenance of the poor, and the third for the support of the clergy. Now, the whole revenue was absorbed by the clergy; and this was the greater hardship in Ireland, where the great mass of the people had so little connexion with the clergy. The hon. and learned member for the University of Dublin had said, that there had been more churches built in Ireland in the last fifty years than in the preceding three centuries; but that could not surprise any one who was aware that 630,000*l.* of public money had been voted for that purpose, besides the produce of the First Fruits. And how had they used these parliamentary grants? In some places they had bestowed gifts; for instance, to that poor man, Lord Oriel, they had given 2,000*l.* It was this doubling the number of churches that caused such outrages amongst the Irish peasantry, upon whom fell all the expense of them. Jobbing, also, amongst Protestant architects, and glaziers, and slaters, prevailed to a great extent. But that could not last if a fund really belonging to the Crown should be restored to it; and the only question of law that could be raised sprung, not from the words of the Statute, for they were clear and imperative, but from the uniformity of the practice in violation of the Statute. There could be no doubt the Crown had a good title to this improved fund. The present practice was highly injurious to the peace and tranquillity of Ireland, because it gave rise to great discontent in the Catholic body particularly, who were called on to defray almost the whole expense incurred in the erection and maintenance of churches for the few Protestant parishioners. This First Fruits' fund, too, was the cause of much jobbing and extravagance in the building and repairs of churches. The present system of First Fruits in Ireland was quite different to what prevailed in other countries. By the Statute of Henry 8th, every person obtaining ecclesiastical promotion was bound to give up the annates, or First Fruits, to the Crown, and the annates were described to be the revenues and profits for one whole year. By the common-law, the burthen of building churches fell upon the ecclesiastics themselves, and not upon the people. But what was the case now? Why, the Catholic people were taxed for this purpose, and were excluded from any control over the amount raised. He knew an instance of a parish in Ireland that of Joragh—where there were about 5,000 inhabitants, only twenty of whom were Protestants; fifteen of that twenty were water-guards, and the remaining five levied taxes on the rest of the population. He believed that the whole House was agreed as to the propriety of the first Resolution,—that no living under the value of 100*l.* should pay First Fruits; and he hoped the Resolutions would be allowed to pass, and that in future the rights of the Crown would be ascertained.

Sir *R. Inglis* objected to the Resolutions, because they assumed that the right to the First Fruits was in the Crown. He thought that if the case was submitted to the Crown-lawyers, joined with Resolutions of such a nature, their judgment was likely to be prejudiced. He trusted that the right hon. Secretary for Ireland would concur in the suggestion of his right hon. friend (Sir R. Peel) and withdraw the Motion, with the understanding that the case should be submitted to the law-officers of the Crown, without being encumbered by a declaration of the opinion of that House on the subject. The amount of assessments, of which the hon. and learned Member complained, was so trifling, being in some instances 2*d.* on the acre, and never more than 1*s.* 6*d.*, while the land let for twelve or thirteen guineas, that in this respect it was hardly worth contending about. If, however, the inquiry were to be pursued, it would only be prudent to refer the question of law to the legal advisers of the Irish Government, unmingled with any opinions.

Mr. *S. Rice* said, that if the law-officers of the Crown did their duty faithfully, as he was sure they would, all that they would have to do would be, to state their opinion as to the legal right of the Crown to the First Fruits, without any reference at all to the Resolutions of that House. The only question for the Crown lawyers to consider was, whether the Crown could or could not re-value the livings in Ireland. The last objection that could be urged against the Resolutions was, he thought, their novelty, because the subject had been already several times under the consideration of the House and he did not see that there could be any difficulty in adopting them. The hon. Member then referred to the observations which had fallen from the hon. member for the University of Oxford (Sir R. Inglis), respecting the low charge on the land in Ireland, and stated his surprise that that hon. Member, unacquainted as he was with the feelings of the people of that country, should have so expressed himself. No matter how low the tax might be, if it produced ill will and dissatisfaction it was injurious. He was sincerely attached to the Protestant Church; but was anxious to amend a system which occasioned perpetual heart-burning and discontent in Ireland; it was also a system most injurious to the

Church Establishment in Ireland, for it put it in a position little calculated to recommend it to those who dissented from it, when they saw that it was a cause of augmenting taxation. Great abuses, he observed, had prevailed in the building of churches in Ireland. Churches had been erected in remote parishes, where the Protestant part of the population was next to nothing; and although it might be pleaded, in justification of this, that they were necessary for the accommodation of the police and water-guards, he did not admit the force of this plea, or allow that it afforded a sufficient reason for levying a tax upon the parish. He congratulated his right hon. friend (Sir J. Newport) that the object which he had been so long endeavouring to effect, was now about to be accomplished.

Sir *R. Peel* explained. His object was, to have a reference made to the Crown lawyers, unaccompanied by any opinion of the House on the subject.

Mr. *Stanley* did not see any objection to that course.

Mr. *M. Fitzgerald* did not think that the right hon. Baronet's (Sir Robert Peel's) observations ought fairly to have been characterized as special pleading. He did not propose to enter into any special pleading; all special pleading was bad, but the special pleading of the House of Commons was abominable. He thought it desirable to have the opinion of the law-officers of the Crown on the subject; but, whatever their opinion might be, he hoped that the proceedings of Government, which seemed to have adopted the opinion of his right hon. friend (Sir J. Newport), would not prove abortive; but that, if it was decided that the Crown had not the right to re-value the livings in Ireland, that Government would come down to Parliament and obtain permission to re-value them. He was sure that such a proceeding was essentially important to the interests of Ireland, and calculated to strengthen the Protestant Establishment in that country.

Mr. *Crampton* said, he should offer no opinion on the subject before the House, for if the opinion of the Irish law-officers of the Crown were to be taken on the case, it would be improper and indelicate in him, being one of those officers, to offer any remarks on the subject.

Mr. *Wyse* was not of opinion, that because the rate on land was low, as had been stated by the hon. member for the University of Oxford, that therefore there was no grievance in it. The great body of the Catholics felt it to be a grievance to be taxed by a few Protestants; and if that practice had not led to outrage and disorder, then the whole history of Ireland was a lie. The grievance was one which was felt by nine-tenths of the population. A few days ago, a petition, signed by Protestants, had been presented, requesting that House to adopt nearly the same principles as were embodied in the present Resolutions, for the sake of maintaining the security of the Protestant Establishment; and it was on that very ground that he supported the Motion.

Mr. *North* considered, that the point proposed to be referred to the King's law-officers was one on which no reasonable doubt could be entertained. He had no doubt in the world that the Crown had the right to order a new valuation to be taken; but the question then to be considered was, whether the Crown had a right to take the First Fruits according to the new valuation or the old; and whether or not the words of the Statute of Queen Anne were to be extended to the new valuation.

Mr. *Stanley* here read the words of the Motion,—namely, that the law-officers of the Crown should inquire how far his Majesty had a right to re-value the livings in Ireland.

Mr. *North* said, he had no doubt that his Majesty might issue a commission for that purpose to-morrow.

Sir *C. Wetherell* thought the question ought to be submitted to the law-officers, unaccompanied by any Resolution of that House. He considered that there were three questions to be submitted to the law-officers;—whether the Crown had the power of ordering a new valuation to be made; whether the Crown would compel payment of the First Fruits; and whether, by the Act of Queen Anne, livings should pay First Fruits according to the re-valuation, or only according to their understood value at the time of the passing of the Act.

Mr. *Stanley* suggested, that it would be better if his right hon. friend would withdraw his Resolution, and allow him to substitute for it a simple Resolution to this effect, "That the opinion of the law-officers of his Majesty in Ireland be taken, how far his Majesty is now empowered to issue a Commission for the re-valuation of benefices in Ireland, with a view to the levy of First Fruits."

Sir *John Newport* expressed his willingness to agree to this suggestion, and withdrew his own Motion.

An address in the form proposed by Mr. Stanley was agreed to.

Customs' Duties' Acts.] On the Motion of Lord *Althorp*, the House resolved itself into a Committee upon the Customs' Duties' Acts. The noble Lord, in moving a Resolution relative to the duties on raw cotton, observed that the tax of five-eighths of a penny on raw cotton was intended to supply the place of a tax abolished on printed calicoes. He knew the objections to the tax on a raw material, but it really was difficult to find out a substitute. The raw cotton imported was about 240,000,000lbs., of this, 20,000,000 came from the East Indies, leaving 220,000,000 to pay the tax, which would accordingly yield, he believed, 572,900*l.* To this must be added 50,000*l.* saved in the collecting, making altogether 622,900*l.* From this he deducted the present *ad valorem* duty, amounting to 320,000*l.* which would leave 302,900*l.* Although the amount which he anticipated from this source would not altogether replace the loss of duty on printed calicoes, yet, looking at the reduction which had been made, and at the prosperous state of trade at present, he had no doubt that the produce of the revenue would be amply sufficient to meet the exigencies of the State. It was difficult for him to find arguments *à priori* to prove that a tax was good; but he had only to observe, that the present was but a substitute for a tax which had been taken off. He then moved, that it was the opinion of the Committee, that a tax of 5*s.* 10*d.* be charged upon every hundred weight of cotton wool, or waste of cotton wool imported from any foreign country.

Mr. *Hume* disliked the tax, and recommended the noble Lord to strike off 6,000 men from the army, and then he might dispense with it.

Mr. *Warburton* was of the same opinion, and was sure that the Reform Bill would give such general satisfaction that no army would be wanted at home.

Mr. *Goulburn* hoped nobody would suppose that this tax would be removed in a year or two, for whoever did, would find himself disappointed.

Mr. *George Robinson* expressed his sorrow to see trade hampered by taxes, particularly after so much had been said about free trade. It would be better, at once, to adopt a property-tax, to which the House must, at last, have recourse.

Resolution agreed to—the House resumed.

Colonial Trade Bill.] On the Motion of Mr. Poulett Thomson, the House went into a Committee upon the Colonial Trade Bill.

Mr. *Poulett Thomson* moved a Resolution, to the effect that the several duties, temporary and additional, named in the schedule submitted to the Committee, be imposed upon the articles therein specified.

Mr. *George Robinson* objected to the arrangement by which these duties were to be subject to modification at successive epochs, and proposed an amendment, that the scale of duties should be fixed and permanent from the date of the Bill, instead of being only temporary, as the right hon. the Vice-president of the Board of Trade had proposed.

Mr. *Hume* wished to know when the right hon. Gentleman opposite intended to bring the whole subject of the timber duties before the House for discussion, as he and others were determined to protest against the entire measure, and the principle of protection upon which it was founded?

Mr. *P. Thomson* said, that the scale of duties adopted was nearly the same as had been fixed upon in 1825, but of the effects of which there had not been an opportunity of forming any judgment, as their operation had been suspended by the Orders in Council. He wished the protection afforded by the proposed scale to be gradually withdrawn, so that it might be terminated in the year 1834. He considered that there would be, in the mean time, sufficient opportunity to estimate their expediency, upon which their re-enactment must depend, and if that should be found impolitic, to enable the parties interested gradually to change the employment of their capital.

Mr. *George Robinson* consented, at the suggestion of Mr. Hume, to take the sense of the House on his amendment at a future stage.—Amendment withdrawn.

Resolution agreed to—the House resumed.

THE MINISTERIAL REFORM BILL (ENGLAND).] Lord *John Russell* brought in a Bill "To amend the Representation of the people in England and Wales," which, on the motion of the noble Lord, was read a first time. It began "Whereas divers abuses have long prevailed in the choice of Representatives in the Commons House of Parliament." The noble Lord then rose to propose that it be read a second time on Monday, and said, that there were one or two observations which he had to make on the present occasion. One of the boroughs which he had enumerated in the list of those which it was proposed should, for the future, return only one Member to Parliament, did at present, he found, return only one Member, and not two. This borough was Bewdley, which would, therefore, remain as at present. He had omitted also to state, that it was intended, in one or two instances, that certain large suburbs should be joined with the towns to which they belonged. Thus Chatham and Stroud would be added to Rochester; Sculcoates to Hull; and Portsea to Portsmouth. He had also omitted to state an arrangement which it was proposed to make with regard to another town. This was Devonport, in the neighbourhood of Plymouth. It was proposed that Devonport and Stonehouse should be joined, and send two Members to Parliament, leaving Plymouth as it was at present. It was also proposed that the right of suffrage should be extended to the whole parish of Halifax and the suburbs, which contained 100,000 inhabitants, and to give them the right of returning two Members. He was not aware that there was any thing else in the Bill different from the statement which he had already made to the House. He begged to move, that the Bill be read a second time on Monday next.

Mr. *H. Drummond* begged to know when the Scotch Reform bill would be introduced.

The *Lord Advocate* said, he should wish to introduce that bill to-morrow. In point of fact, the bill was ready now, but there were certain schedules yet to be attached to it.

Sir *G. Warrender* hoped that the second reading of the Scotch bill would not be fixed for the same day as the second reading of the other bill. It was highly desirable that they should have a separate day for the second reading of the Scotch bill.

Lord *Althorp* had no objection to the second reading of the Scotch bill being fixed for a different day.

Motion agreed to.

SUPPLY.] On the Motion of Lord Althorp the House went into a Committee of Supply.

BRITISH MUSEUM.] Mr. Bankes moved that a sum, not exceeding 14,451*l.* should be voted to defray the expenses of the British Museum.

Mr. *Jephson* complained that the public were not sufficiently accommodated in the library and reading-room department. Those were closed on a Saturday, which, he conceived, was not necessary. As the subject had been referred to last Session, he wished to ask, whether any alteration would be made in the attendance of the officers of the Museum?

Mr. *Bankes* said, it was necessary for cleanliness, and in order to preserve regularity of arrangement, that the library should be closed one day in the week. He believed the Museum was open to the public as many hours as any other institution of a similar description. In fact, he had inquired, and found that the attendance at the Museum was greater than the attendance a similar institutions at Paris.

Sir *John Wrottesley* complained, that though he was most anxious to visit the library of the Museum, he never had the opportunity. Saturday was the only day which Members of Parliament had to spare from their public duties during the Session, and on that day the library was closed. Although cleanliness was a good thing, that might be done on a Monday as well as Saturday. He would rather that six-pence or a shilling should be paid for admittance; and then, he was sure, the public would have easier access.

Mr. *Warburton* saw no reason why the reading-room should not be open on Saturday, though it might be necessary to keep the other rooms closed on that day.

Mr. *Hume* acknowledged the utility of the British Museum. The only question was, whether it might not be rendered more useful? He was sorry to perceive that the number who visited the establishment had greatly diminished. Instead of 112,000, 127,000, and 132,000, the number which, it appeared, had visited the Museum in former years, the number last year had fallen down to 68,000. He thought the Museum ought to be open on a greater number of days. Besides holidays it was shut up on Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Saturdays.

Mr. *Jephson* suggested, that the catalogues were too expensive. Catalogues of a cheaper description would certainly be an improvement.

Mr. *Wilks* said, it appeared that only 1,890 persons visited the reading-rooms in a year. The average could not be above fifty persons in a week. It would be satisfactory if these rooms were thrown open on a Saturday, and the number was too limited to produce any serious inconvenience.

Sir *John Wrottesley* called for a distinct pledge from the hon. member for Dorsetshire that the reading-room should be open on Saturday. If that pledge was not given, he should divide the House.

Mr. *Bankes* said, the trustees were anxious to comply with every request they could. He could assure the Committee, that the day the library was closed was not an idle day, as all the officers of the establishment were employed that day. As the other trustees must be consulted, he could not pledge himself as the hon. Baronet called on him to do; but, as far as his recommendation went, it should be in favour of the suggestion of the hon. Baronet.

Sir *John Wrottesley* hoped, when the Report was brought up, that the hon. Member (Mr. Bankes) would be able to give a distinct answer.

Vote agreed to.

ARMY ESTIMATES.] Mr. *C. W. Wynn* then came forward to propose the remaining Army Estimates. He moved that the sum of 376,111*l.* 7*s.* 6*d.* be granted to defray the expenses of the charge for recruiting and other miscellaneous expenses, for his Majesty's Land Forces.

Colonel *Davies* objected to the large amount of the Army Estimates. The Government was pledged to economy, and when the Committee found an increase of 250,000*l.* in the Army Estimates, he thought his Majesty's Ministers were bound to give better reasons for the increase than they had done. If the Army Estimates were referred to a Committee, he pledged himself to prove that a large reduction might be made in the expense, without impairing the efficiency of the military establishments. The present Secretary at War was not a heaven-born Minister; and, with all respect, he must tell him, that he was profoundly ignorant of all matters connected with the army. The right hon. Gentleman had never spoken, he believed, on an army estimate, until he was appointed Secretary at War. It was too much the case in the present Ministry, and others, to put gentlemen into offices, for political purposes, without considering how far they were fitted to fill those offices. With the exception of the Secretary for Foreign Affairs (Lord Palmerston), and perhaps one other person, there was no one in the Cabinet, who, if orders were given to march, would know whether he should put out his right or his left leg foremost. As the late Ministry and the present were both pledged to keep up the establishments, he should not divide the Committee; but he protested against the amount, as unnecessarily large.

Lord *George Lennox* suggested, that the riding establishment at St. John's Wood, was considered by cavalry officers to be an unnecessary expense, and one that might be got rid of without detriment to the public service. The dépôt at Maidstone was also unnecessary, and ought to be removed to Chatham.

Sir *Henry Hardinge* was not a cavalry officer, and should not, therefore, give any opinion for himself; but he happened to know, that the present Commander-in-chief was impressed with the great utility of the riding establishment; and he believed that the noble Lord had not given a correct account of the prevalent opinion of cavalry officers.

An Hon. *Member*, as Colonel of a cavalry regiment, felt himself called upon to express an opinion in favour of the riding establishment, which, he contended, was of great use, because it gave an uniform character to the riding throughout the service. It would be more beneficial, however, he thought, but for the parsimony of the Government, which prevented proper discipline from being enforced at the establishment at St. John's Wood.

Mr. *C. W. Wynn* observed, that he had no doubt the gallant officer (Col. Davies), who had made such strong remarks on his ignorance of the duties of his office, would have filled that office himself with more advantage to the country than he could pretend to do; and as the office was likely soon to become vacant, it was to be hoped his Majesty's Government would not overlook the merits of the gallant Colonel.

He was certainly of opinion, that a man of very moderate abilities might, if he chose to take the trouble to give attention to the subject, very easily, and in a short time, master the knowledge required for the situation which he had the honour to hold. With regard to the riding establishments, he confessed that he formerly entertained great doubts as to the propriety, and even the expediency, of continuing them up to their present extent; but officers of the very highest authority in these matters, even up to the Commander-in-chief, had expressed themselves to be in favour of them; and it was certain, also, that they had produced the greatest good to the cavalry, by introducing an uniform system of equitation into all horse regiments.

Mr. *Hume* remarked, that so long as this country continued to act on the policy which had for many years been her guide—that of interfering with the foreign continental powers—it was not possible that her present military establishment could be reduced to any great extent. He had ever been much averse from this system of interference in the settlement of foreign Powers, and he now condemned most decidedly the intervention by this Government in the affairs of Belgium. He was disposed to predict that the consequence would be, either England must withdraw from all interference in the affairs of that State, which she would do with disgrace, or that, if she persisted in her present policy, the inevitable result would be a war. With regard to the Estimates now before the Committee, he considered it utterly needless to cavil at small sums; he looked forward to a period when a reduction in their amount of one million would be effected, and that period, he trusted, was not far distant.

Mr. *Irving* professed himself a friend to ships, colonies, and commerce. He contended, that this country would never have been able to have maintained her station and dignity amongst the family of European Powers, had she not acted on the system which the hon. member for Middlesex now so strongly condemned—that, namely, of maintaining herself constantly in a condition ready for war. He, for one, highly approved of the preparations which had been made for hostilities, and would have been glad to see those preparations carried on, on a scale still more extended, for England would thereby do more than could be done in any other manner to preserve that peace in Europe which it was the interest of every Power to maintain. He trusted, therefore, that the best interests of the country would never be sacrificed to any sordid and unworthy motives of economy. He was disposed to think that, if any man in the country had done more than another to depreciate the importance and to undervalue the resources of England, the hon. member for Middlesex was that man. He rejected the sordid economy recommended by that hon. Member, which had only reference to matters of pounds, shillings, and pence, instead of taking into account the great and leading interests of the country. He denied that there was any such unusual distress as had been represented to that House, for he was inclined to believe, that it was not greater at these times than it had been during former periods of her history.

Mr. *Warburton* observed, that the hon. member for Bramber had paid a high compliment to the hon. member for Middlesex, in attributing to him the attention which the House now fixed on the pounds, shillings, and pence of the country; for he had, in doing that, only called their attention to matters which it was one of the most important duties of that House to examine most carefully into. He entirely coincided in the opinion of the hon. member for Middlesex, and in the observations which had fallen from him, with respect to the interference of this country with foreign European States.

Mr. *Hume* was surprised to hear an English merchant, like the hon. member for Bramber, utter such a sentiment, as that financial matters were unworthy of attention. What was it led to our present load of debt, and to the continued extravagant expenditure of years, but the votes of the hon. member for Bramber, and the hon. Members professing similar principles, who filled that House, and who supported the Minister of the day in all his extravagance? He would tell that hon. Member that he (Mr. Hume) had never underrated the resources of this country; on the contrary, he had always complained of the misrule and the mismanagement by which those resources had been ill-applied and misdirected; and he had always contended, that if that misrule were once removed, the country was fully able to right itself.

Mr. *C. W. Wynn* said, the House had already agreed to the number of men voted for the year, when it might have been proper to discuss the policy of the measure; but on that vote, which was for the contingencies of the service, such a discussion was misplaced.

Resolution agreed to.

Mr. *C. W. Wynn* then moved, that a sum not exceeding 124,522*l.* 8*s.* be granted to his Majesty, to defray the charge of the General, Staff, and Medical Officers, in Great Britain, Ireland, and Foreign Stations, excepting the East Indies. The right hon. Gentleman stated, that his noble friend, the Secretary of State for the Colonies, had directed his attention to the Staff in the Colonies ? and he hoped, before the end of the year, to be able to make a large reduction.

Colonel *Davies* thought, that a great reduction might still be made in the Foreign Staff, and especially in that of North America. In the Ionian Islands, too, considerable saving might be made under that head.

Mr. *C. W. Wynn* thought that some reductions in the Staff in the Canadas might hereafter be made. Inquiries were then making upon the subject.

Sir *H. Hardinge* defended the vote, and thought that none of the General Officers could be dispensed with in the colonies. The appointments were chiefly conferred upon those whose length of service entitled them to the gratitude of their country.

Mr. *Hume* expressed a hope that the time was near when those Governors would not be allowed to draw their military pay together with their civil allowance as governors. The utmost extravagance prevailed in those departments. As an instance of it, he would state, that the Commander-in-chief in England received nine guineas a day; while the Commander-in-chief in Canada received the same sum, though he had nothing to do in comparison, and had extra allowances. The country ought not to be put to the expense of one shilling for the military establishment of the Canadas; and it was well known that this was the sentiment of the Canadians themselves. The establishment of that colony was scandalously extravagant. He objected also to the extravagance of having four Adjutant-generals, and four Quarter-master-generals, at head-quarters in England in time of peace. But the whole was a system of extravagance, against which he protested in the strongest manner, but which, he hoped, would be done away in better times, when pounds, shillings, and pence, were more attended to.

Resolution agreed to.

Mr. *C. W. Wynn* then moved, that the sum of 103,897*l.* be granted for allowances to the principal Officers of public military departments of Great Britain and Ireland.

Mr. *Hume* thought the vote exhibited an instance of pure extravagance, for in 1796 the whole of this head of expenditure did not exceed 46,000*l.*

Sir *H. Hardinge* said, that the number of clerks had been reduced since the war from 109 to 60, and he defied the hon. member for Middlesex to show that the business of the war department could be conducted with a smaller number.

Mr. *C. W. Wynn* said, that no new appointments had taken place for four years, and the numbers had been reduced as low as possible.

Resolution agreed to.

The sum of 12,420*l.* was voted for medicines and surgical materials for the land forces without remark.

Mr. *C. W. Wynn* then moved, that the sum of 33,855*l.* be voted for the charge of garrisons at home and abroad.

Mr. *Hume* considered this as merely a vote for sinecures. Many of the garrisons had not a single gun, or one implement of war; and as parliamentary influence was soon to be at an end, 20,000*l.* out of this sum might be saved. He should watch narrowly if any of these governorships became vacant, and if Ministers filled up the places by new appointments he should know what course to pursue.

Sir *H. Hardinge* hoped that these places could not be reformed, for the noble Lord who had brought forward the measure of Reform would find that the Finance Committee had acknowledged them to afford the best means of rewarding meritorious services.

Colonel *Sibthorp* approved of what had fallen from the gallant Officer, and could not support the opinions of the hon. member for Middlesex.

Mr. *Warburton* wished to know what public services had been performed by the governor of Dartmouth for the 174*l.* a-year he received.

Sir *H. Hardinge* admitted that this appointment was objectionable. The place had, however, been held by one family for twenty years, but when it became vacant, a different character of appointment would be established. The argument upon this place had been repeated till it had become threadbare.

Mr. *R. Gordon* disapproved of the appointment. It was not conferred upon a deserving military officer, it was a mere sinecure.

Mr. *G. Robinson* thought that the island of Placentia presented a similar instance of an objectionable appointment.

Mr. *C. W. Wynn* said, it was not the duty of his office to go through a justification of every department.

Mr. *Hume* exclaimed—" Yes, it is."

Mr. *C. W. Wynn* could not possibly go through the services of every individual who filled these situations. It was a part of the prerogative of the Crown to fill them up, and nothing could be worse than to teach officers to look to that House for a reward of their services.

Mr. *Hume* was surprised at the truly unconstitutional and objectionable language of the hon. Member. It was the prerogative of the Crown to grant appointments; but it was for that House alone to say whether it would pay the salaries.

Mr. *C. W. Wynn* acknowledged that the House had the power of determining if the situations should exist; but if they did exist, it was the prerogative of the Crown to fill them up.

Mr. *Beaumont* advised the Committee to put off this discussion till they had a reformed Parliament.

Mr. *Robert Gordon* said, that the governor of Dartmouth had no duties whatever to perform.

On this vote the Committee divided when there appeared, For the grant 95; Against it 19 — Majority for Ministers, 76.

The grant of 5,627*l.* for the Military College at Sandhurst was agreed to after Mr. Hume had protested against the propriety of continuing a salary of 1,000*l.* a year to the governor.

The House resumed.

Boundaries in America.] Mr. *G. Robinson* moved an Address to his Majesty for the production of the Papers relative to the dispute between this country and the United States of America, with respect to the boundary-line between the English Colonies in North America, and the United States, and for the production of the decision of the king of Holland upon this subject, which had been referred to his arbitration. The hon. Member stated, that it was generally understood that that sovereign had lately decided the question, and that the United States refused to abide by the verdict of the arbitrator.

Lord *Palmerston* opposed the Motion, on the ground that the transaction was yet incomplete. He must state to the House, that the papers could not, in the present state of the transaction, be safely granted.

Mr. *G. Robinson* said, that he was convinced the fact was, that the decision had been unfavourable to the United States, and that the Government had been weak enough to allow it to be referred back to the United States. He should not press his Motion.

The Motion negatived.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Tuesday, March 15, 1831.

Minutes.] Bills. The Royal Assent given to the Calico Duties' Bill, the Mutiny Bill, and Marine Forces Bill. The Poors' Settlement Bill was read a third time, and passed. The Irish Population was committed.

Petitions presented. By Lord King, from Bilton, and two other Parishes in Gloucestershire; from Wareham, and several Parishes in Norfolk, praying for a Commutation of Tithes; from St. Luke's, Middlesex, for the Removal of the Metropolitan Police; and from Waterford, for the Repeal of the Duty on Sea-borne Coals. For Reform, by the Earl of Radnor, from a Parish in Lanarkshire:—By the Earl of Rosslyn, from the Borough of Dysart, Fife: —By the Duke of Norfolk, from Leslie, in Yorkshire: By the Earl of Rosebery, from a Borough in Linlithgowshire:—By the Marquis of Bute, from Swansea. By the Earl of Chichester, from the Landholders and others of the eastern Division of Sussex, complaining of the Distress of the Agricultural Classes, and praying for Relief. Against Negro Slavery, by the same noble Earl, from Brighton, Newhaven, and Lewes, and Welmington, in Sussex:—By the Marquis of Downshire, from Carrickfergus and Lisburne:—By Lord Carberry, from Congregations of Wesleyan Methodists, and of other Protestant Dissenters:—By the Duke of Northumberland, from the Shipowners of Newcastle, against an Alteration of the Timber Duties. By the Earl of Westmorland, from the Borough of Kirkby Kendal, against the Punishment of Death for Crimes against Property.

Reform.] Lord *Suffield* presented a Petition from a hundred in the county of Norfolk, praying, first, for a Reform in Parliament; secondly, for an alteration of the Poor Laws; thirdly, for the adoption of the plan of Mr. Ruthven in that respect; fourthly, for a commutation of Tithes; and fifthly, for applying the Church Revenues—one third to the repair of churches, one third to the maintenance of the poor, and one third to the payment of the officiating Clergy. In this last prayer he did not concur. In presenting this petition, he took the opportunity of stating, that the plan of Reform proposed by his Majesty's Ministers met with his unqualified approbation. He had heard persons who were interested in boroughs and borough influence declare, that they felt grateful to his Majesty's Ministers for having, by this measure, relieved them from the odium and obloquy to which that species of influence subjected them; and if such persons, who were to lose valuable and beneficial interests by the measure, so highly approved of it, and felt so grateful to Ministers, how much more deep was the obligation under which the rest of their Lordships lay to his Majesty's Ministers, for having freed them from that odium and obloquy which they, as part of the aristocracy, shared with those having interest in boroughs, without having any of the advantage. He himself had no such influence, and felt grateful to the Ministry for being freed from the obloquy, by a measure which could not fail to be extensively beneficial to the country. He had always been averse from that species of influence, and yet he had been subjected to his share of the discredit which it attached to the aristocracy generally.

The Marquis of *Lansdown* presented a Petition in favour of the Ministerial plan of Reform, from the Steward and Corporation of the borough of Calne, in Wiltshire. He did not mean at that time to enter into details of the measure, but there was one consideration personal to himself connected with this petition, on which he was desirous to say a few words. He was himself a member of that Corporation, and the petition was that of the whole of the Corporators. They stated that the measure proposed by his Majesty's Ministers met their highest approbation, as they had long been of opinion, and still retained that opinion, that the elective franchise ought to be extended to householders paying a certain rent; and that they were persuaded that the effect of this measure would be, to produce a good feeling throughout the country. It might not be out of place to observe, that this was a Corporation which, under any influence that had prevailed there, had never been sold or purchased; and, he might add, that he himself had not more than four houses in the borough which paid so much as 10*l.* rent. His Lordship presented Petitions to the same effect from Glastonbury, in Somersetshire, from Auchtergaven, in Fife, from the Incorporated Wrights, Masons, Coopers, Glaziers, &c. of Edinburgh, who stated that they were interested in the present monopoly of the Elective Franchise; but that they gladly surrendered the privilege for the benefit of their fellow-citizens.

PRESCRIPTION.] Lord *Tenterden*, pursuant to notice, introduced his Bill for shortening the period of Prescription in respect of claims for tithes, and certain other cases, and to lessen the impediments to the transfer of real property created by outstanding terms and judgments. His Lordship observed that their Lordships were aware that the time of legal memory or prescription extended so far back as the reign of Richard the 1st, but it was often impossible to trace a right or a title so far back and the Judges were often obliged to tell Juries that they might presume that it existed as early as that period, because there was proof of its extending so far back as to afford some ground for the presumption. But this was an uncertain method, liable to mistakes and abuses, for different opinions might prevail among the Judges, as to what were good grounds for the presumption. In truth, the presumption might be defeated by matter of fact, and by a legal opinion, which made it open to many doubts. Sometimes, when things were claimed by grant, and the law generally held, that prescription was founded on some grant, and that grant could not be established, it was customary to presume the existence of the grant. This was another source of doubt. It seemed to him, therefore, much better to fix by law a much more limited period, to the extent of which distinct proof must be given. This would be more reasonable and less uncertain. The Bill which he introduced was divided into distinct parts. The first part related to claims of profits arising out of land, such as rights of common; and as to such rights, his Lordship proposed that they should not be defeated where uninterrupted enjoyment for sixty years could be proved, even where the right could be established only for thirty years, and its commencement could be shewn; he meant, that it should not be defeated merely by proving the commencement, unless it was also proved that the commencement was illegal. The second part related to what in law were entitled easements, by usage enjoyed by one over the lands of another; and as to these, he proposed that they should not be effectually challenged where an uninterrupted enjoyment for forty years could be proved. The third part related to ancient lights and their obstruction. As to these, also, Judges were often obliged to leave it to Juries, to presume that they were ancient lights. It was, in his opinion, preferable to fix the period of twenty years by law; for which period, if uninterruptedly enjoyed, they were to be secure from challenge unless originally enjoyed by contract or agreement. The fourth part, and what perhaps would be reckoned the most important part, was that which related to tithes. At present, under the maxim of *nullum tempus occurrit ecclesiæ*, moduses in lieu of tithes could be challenged and set aside, unless they could be proved to have existed or presumed to have existed so far back as the time of legal memory. But there again the doctrine of presumption was resorted to; and it was much better that some reasonable time should be fixed, up to which positive proof of the existence of the modus should be required, and at which, if the proof was given, the modus should be unchallengeable. He proposed to apply to modusses the principle he had first stated, and he would make evidence of the enjoyment of land for thirty-years without the payment of tithes sufficient to establish the right to exemption, or to pay a modus as the case might be, unless a contrary practice could be distinctly proved at some antecedent time, and he proposed, where the evidence extended to the enjoyment for sixty-years, to make the right absolute and indefeasible unless contract or agreement, as in the other cases, could be established. He was himself most sincerely attached to the Clergy of the Church of England, and should be very ungrateful if he were not; but it was better for them as well as for others, that some reasonable time should be fixed by law as to these matters. He had felt much difficulty in settling, to his satisfaction, the time at which the prescription should begin to run against the different persons interested, and some might think the end of three years from the passing of the Act too short a period, and others might think it too long. He had, however, fixed on three years, and the Act was not to extend to any action or suit already depending, or which might be, begun within three years. He had introduced provisions to save the rights of persons *non compos*, of infants, married women, persons absent beyond the seas, &c., during the period of their incompetency to urge their claims. The Bill also made some beneficial alterations in the mode of setting out the claims on the record. Another subject to which the Bill applied was what were called terms for years in conveyances, and it was proposed that a certain period should be fixed—two years, for instance—from the time after they should be satisfied, at which period they should be held in law to be passed and gone, without any formal surrender; and as to terms attending the inheritance, and which the owner of the inheritance might at any time call on the termors to surrender, it was proposed that the owner should hold the inheritance perfectly purged of them. He had availed himself of the suggestions of the late Law Commissioners, where he thought them suitable to his purpose.

The Bishop of *Bristol* was anxious that the contest about moduses should be put an end to, but it was of the last consequence that full notice should be given to parochial incumbents as to the time in which the prescription began to run, and that ample time should also be afforded them to assert their claims. The clerical incumbent stood in a different situation in this respect from the lay impropriator, for the former was often negligent in the prosecution of his claims, from a desire to avoid differences with his parishioners, and especially with those to whose patronage he might have been indebted for his living.

The Archbishop of *Canterbury* was satisfied that the noble and learned Lord was actuated by no unfriendly disposition towards the Clergy of the Established Church, and that he would take care to avoid any violation of their property. He should have been more alarmed if such a Bill had come from less high authority, and begged to be understood as not pledging himself either one way or the other till he saw the details. He agreed with his right reverend brother, that it was desirable that the clerical incumbent should have ample notice and time to prosecute his rights. He suggested to the noble and learned Lord also, to consider if a more summary mode of proceeding might not be adopted in regard to the claims for tithes.

Lord *Tenterden* only wished the Bill to be read now a first time, when it would be printed, and stand over till after the recess for the consideration of professional persons, and those who felt themselves interested, to see how far the provisions of the Bill were sound in principle and susceptible of execution. As to the suggestion of the very reverend Prelate, he had engagements which prevented his forming a plan of that description; but if a proper one were proposed by any other of their Lordships, he would be ready to assist and to support it.

The *Lord Chancellor* said, he could not allow the question to be disposed of without expressing his great admiration at the able and luminous manner in which the noble and learned Lord had brought forward the measure, and which, he had no doubt, in that part which related to the Church, would finally receive the approbation of those among the lay and clerical orders whom it affected. He would not follow his learned friend in the details of the Bill, but he was anxious to declare that, in his opinion, a more large or substantial measure of legal reformation had seldom been propounded. It required professional knowledge to be aware of all the evils attending the present system of prescriptive rights, and it required professional knowledge to understand the great importance of the Bill, and the advantages it would bestow when substantially adopted by the Legislature, and passed into a law. The part which the most reverend Prelate, and the right reverend Prelate, commented upon was certainly the most important of all; but he could assure the House that some parts of the Bill respecting terms of years, or what were called outstanding terms, were not of much less importance. The measure, in his opinion, proposed a most salutary amendment of the existing law in that respect, and it tended to the lopping off of much chicanery, by which preferences were given or obtained in cases of encumbrances on real estates, and to the extinction of a most expensive legislation. The Bill performed a great good with respect to those outstanding terms, and to that practice known in the Court of Chancery by the name of squeezing out certain encumbrances, by one encumbrancer catching hold of another, which was, notwithstanding, a mere ghost or shadow unexpired, which had been satisfied, though not formally surrendered. This correction of the practice of squeezing out encumbrances was a part of the Bill almost equally important with that which related to the property of the Church. He agreed with his excellent noble and learned friend in the principle of the Bill, and he only thought it right that time should be afforded to those whose interests were affected by it to examine it in detail, in order that the House might have the benefit of both ecclesiastical and professional opinions. Undoubtedly there were points touched on by the right reverend Prelates which called for much attention, and he agreed with them that it would be very hard to let a person suffer who had allowed his rights to slumber, not from any symoniacal consideration, but from an honourable feeling; for it was not probable that a person who had received a good living would turn round on his patron, and give notices which might have a doubtful appearance. He would not occupy their Lordships with any further observations, but he could not avoid saying thus much in order to avoid the appearance of neglect to the measure of his noble and learned friend, and he would conclude by wishing it all possible success.

The Earl of *Fife* objected to the inquisitorial powers given in bankruptcy cases, and made several observations on the tendency of Lord Wynford's Fraudulent Debtor's and Law Expenses Bills, and remarked, that under the former of these Bills, a man who was called fraudulent because he was unfortunate, might be, coffined up in a narrow cell of a prison, till nothing remained but bones, and till the flesh was rotten. He was proceeding with these observations, when he was called to order by

The *Lord Chancellor*, who observed, that it was a rule in law that there must be an end to litigation, and it was a rule in legislation that there was an end of debating when a measure was passed. The bills to which the noble Earl alluded were not then before the House, and it was therefore, manifestly irregular to debate them at that time.

The Earl of *Fife* then said, that he would take another opportunity of calling their Lordships' attention to the subject.

The Bill read a first time.

SUB-LETTING ACT.] Lord *Melbourn* gave notice, that he meant on Friday to present a Bill to their Lordships to Repeal the Sub-letting Act.

Lord *Carberry* asked, whether it was the intention to repeal the whole Bill or only a part?

Lord *Melbourn*: It was intended to repeal the whole Bill, but by no means to depart from the principle. The intention was, merely to make some alterations in the mode of accomplishing the object of the Bill.

Lord *Carbery* replied that the explanation was perfectly satisfactory.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Tuesday, March 15, 1831.

MINUTES.] Bill. Roman Catholic Charities', read a second time.

Returns ordered. On the Motion of Mr. C. W. WYNN, the number of Houses in the Towns in Wales, specified in Schedule F of the Reform Bill, assessed at 10*l.*, 20*l.*, 40*l.*, and upwards, with the Population of the same places, according to the latest Returns:—On the Motion of Mr. S. RICE, all Writs of *Capias ad Respondendum* issued for service forth of the Courts of King's Bench, Common Pleas, and Law side of the Court of Exchequer, in Ireland, for three years, ending 20th January, 1831; all Writs of *Subpœna* to appear and answer, and to elect and hear judgment, issued forth of the Courts of Chancery and Equity side of the Court of Exchequer, in Ireland, for a similar period, each Return shewing the number issued in each year respectively; all articles imported into, and exported from this country, and brought into consumption, of Silk, or silk mixed with other materials, wholly or in part made up; distinguishing them under their proper heads and quantity thereof; all raw, thrown, and manufactured Silks imported into, and exported from this country, and brought into consumption, from January 5th, 1830, to January 5th, 1831; distinguishing the different descriptions of silk and raw silk from waste, knubs, and husks, and the countries from whence imported, with the amount of Duty paid thereon; the amount of Drawback paid on the exportation of British silk manufactured Goods, for the year ended January 5th, 1831; distinguishing the amount upon stuffs or ribbons of silk only, upon stuffs or ribbons of silk and cotton mixed, and upon stuffs or ribbons of silk and worsted mixed; all foreign manufactured Silks permitted to be imported without payment of Duty, for the purpose of undergoing some process of manufacture or printing, &c., on condition of being afterwards exported, in the year ended January 5th, 1831; and distinguishing the different descriptions of silk; the total quantity of raw and waste Silk, entered for home consumption in Great Britain and Ireland, in each year from 1814 to 1828, both years inclusive; distinguishing the quantity of raw from waste, including knubs and husks in each year, and stating also the annual quantity of raw and waste separately, on an average of three periods of five years each, namely, in the five years 1814 to 1818, of the five years 1819 to 1823, and of the five years 1824 to 1828, and stating the rate of Duty paid in each year on raw and waste, including knubs and husks, separately; the quantity of raw and waste Silk entered for home consumption in Great Britain and Ireland, during the year ended January 5th, 1830; distinguishing raw from waste, including knubs and husks.

Petitions presented. In favour of the Reform Bill, by Mr. HODGES, from Cranbrook:—By Mr. LITTLETON, from Hanley and Shelton:—By Mr. EGERTON, from Stockport:—By Mr. KEMP, from Lewes:—By Mr. HUGHES HUGHES, from Tain:—By Mr. DUNCOMBE, from Horsington:—By Mr. TALBOT, from Bridgend and Swansea:—By Lord HOWICK, from Alnwick. In favour of the Vote by Ballot, by Lord HOWICK, from Stockport. By Mr. O. GORE, from the Procurators of Brechin, against the Stamp Duties on their Certificates. In favour of the Vestries Bill, by Mr. HOBHOUSE, from St. James's, Westminster, St. Giles-in-the-Fields, St. Martin's-in-the-Fields, and St. George's, Bloomsbury:—By Mr. Alderman WAITHMAN, from St. Pancras, signed by 5,000 persons. Against Tithes, by Mr. GRATTAN, from Wicklow:—By Sir WM. INGILBY, from Northope. In favour of the Cotton Factories Labour Limitation Bill, by Mr. HOBHOUSE, from Macclesfield:—By Mr. LITTLETON, from Disley:—By Mr. WM. DUNCOMBE, from Bradford. Against the Alteration in the Timber Duties, by Mr. B. CARTER, from Portsmouth:—By Mr. Alderman THOMPSON, from Glasgow:—By Mr. W. DUNCOMBE, from Whitby. Complaining of Distress in the West Indies, and praying Relief, by Mr. Alderman THOMPSON, from Merchants interested in the West-India Trade in Liverpool. Against Grants to the Kildare-street Society, by Mr. OWEN O'CONNER, from Navan, and several Parishes of Roscommon. For the Repeal of Excise Duties on Cottons, by Mr. LITTLETON, from Brookside; for the Repeal of East-India Company's Charter, from the Chamber of Commerce and the Staffordshire Potteries; and against the Registry Bill, from the Attornies and Solicitors of the County of Stafford. For the Abolition of Slavery, by Mr. KEMP, from Dissenters at Lewes. For the Repeal of the Duty on Coals, by Mr. W. DUNCOMBE, from Selby; from Wetherly, for the Repeal of the Assessed Taxes.

PETITIONS FOR REFORM.] Mr. *Ormsby Gore* presented two Petitions from Carnarvon and Oswestry, in Wales, in favour of Lord John Russell's plan for Reforming the Representation in the House of Commons. Though he was of opinion that there existed a necessity for introducing some alteration in the present election of the House, he was not prepared to go the length which the Bill of the noble Lord went, for parts of it would, if it were carried into effect, go a great way towards rendering the Constitution of the country insecure, and consequently, these parts were dangerous in the extreme. The disposition that now prevailed in Wales favourable to Reform, was entirely caused by the healing measure, as it was called, of 1829, which was passed in opposition to the opinions of every man in that part of the country, and was there considered as violating the Constitution established in 1688.

Mr. *C. W. Wynn* had been requested to support the prayer of these petitions, which he could not conscientiously do, because he thought the measure would not produce the beneficial effects the petitioners anticipated.

Petitions laid on the Table.

Mr. *Bonham Carter* presented a Petition in favour of the Reform Bill, from the Mayor, Aldermen, and Burgesses of the borough of Portsmouth, who expressed themselves greatly in favour of the Reform Bill before the House. He also had another Petition to present on the same subject, from the inhabitants of Farlington and Widley. To both of these petitions he was happy to give his most cordial support, particularly to that from his constituents, the Corporation of Portsmouth, which had done itself great honour by petitioning in favour of the Bill. The hon. Member also presented a Petition from the Ship-owners and Merchants of Portsmouth, against the contemplated alterations in the Timber Duties.—Petition to be printed.

Mr. *Hobhouse* presented a Petition, signed by 1,160 of his constituents, Householders and Inhabitants of the Parish of St. George's, Westminster, in favour of the Reform Bill brought in by his Majesty's Ministers. The hon. Member said, he had great pleasure in being able to state, that his anticipations with regard to the popularity of the measure introduced by his Majesty's Ministers had been more than realised amongst his own constituents; and he thought he might safely add, that the measure was most pleasing and satisfactory to all classes of reformers. The hon. Member also presented a similar Petition, agreed to at a meeting consisting of upwards of 800 persons, parishioners of St. Margaret's, Westminster, and observed, that the petition came from the parish in which the House of Commons was situated, and the inhabitants of which, from their proximity to the House, may be supposed to be best acquainted with the necessity which existed for reforming it. Amongst the names appended to that petition was that of Jeremy Bentham, and he understood the petition was signed by a great number of the most respectable inhabitants of this populous parish.

Sir *F. Burdett* said, that the unanimity which prevailed amongst the Reformers on the subject of the measure introduced by Government, was the best proof that those persons were not actuated by the wild and visionary schemes which the enemies of all Reform ascribed to them. All they wanted was a fair and just control over their Representatives in that House. The fact of the unanimity he had alluded to was sufficient also to falsify the aspersion thrown on Reformers, that they could never be got to agree with each other on any measure. If there was anything wanting to show that the proposed plan was effectual as a measure of Reform, it was found in the fact, that it was sanctioned by the integrity and wisdom of Jeremy Bentham. He found the name of that illustrious man attached to the petition, which was at once a guarantee of the soundness of the measure, and of the uprightness of those who proposed it.

Petition to lie on the Table.

Mr. *Edward Ellice* presented a Petition from the working classes of Coventry, in favour of the proposed plan of Reform, which he conceived was highly creditable to them. Some allusion having been made as to the effect of the proposed measure on the weavers and operatives of Coventry and Preston, as soon as the report of what had been said on that subject arrived in Coventry, a hand-bill was distributed, stating the fact, and, within five or six hours, the petition he held in his hand was signed by them. He understood that no freeman in the City of Coventry refused to sign his name to the petition—so anxious were they that the privileges they exercised in voting for Representatives should be extended to others. He was bound, however, to state, that he had also another Petition to present, signed by Masters and Apprentices in Coventry, praying that their rights might be protected. With that exception, he believed there was no feeling against against any part of the Bill, throughout the city of Coventry.

Mr. *Fyler* bore testimony to the respectability of the petitioners. The manly and temperate way in which the petitioners came forward to give up their own privileges for the public good, proved that those very men ought to have the right; and if justice did not demand it, those men, he thought, ought not to be deprived of their privileges. He was a moderate Reformer, and could not think the democratic influence would acquire too much sway as long as one-fourth of the county Members in that House were, as at present, the sons and brothers of Peers. He was apprehensive that, if the proposed measure passed in its present form, the landed interest would have more power than it now had.

Mr. *Hunt* said, he had been asked to support the petition, which he did most cordially. The Reformers of Coventry were in favour of the Ballot, and had sent him a petition to present on the subject; but it was his duty to state, that when the plan proposed by Government was made known to them, they appeared to consider it as an effectual measure of Reform, and had intrusted their petition to one of their own Members, asking him to support it.

Mr. *Ellice* wished to say nothing as to the merits of the petition transmitted to the hon. member for Preston; but there were not one-third of the signatures to that petition which were to be found to the petition now presented.

Sir *Robert Peel* said, that he could not misunderstand the delicate reference made to him by the hon. member for Coventry. He had referred, not to the town of Coventry, but to the class to be found in that town and other manufacturing towns. He said, it was not wise to deprive those men of the elective franchise who at present exercise it in Coventry and Preston; and it did not appear that the petitions now presented gave a positive contradiction to that opinion. Those who possessed the right of voting at present, were secured in the enjoyment of that right during their lives, and were not unfavourable to the Bill; but those who had only an inchoate right petitioned against the measure. Their language was, in effect, "in your Reform measure protect us." As reference had been made to what fell from him, he thought himself called upon to make this observation, without having any intention of exciting unnecessary discussion.

Mr. *Ellice* said, the petitioners were strongly in favour of the Bill; they only objected to that part which went to disfranchise them.

Mr. *Hunt* said, that when he was in Coventry, the whole town was with him in the market-place; and, when he asked their opinion on the Ballot, the whole multitude held up their hands for it.

Mr. *Fyler* denied that the whole city of Coventry assembled in the market-place when the hon. member for Preston visited it. There were not above forty or fifty persons present, and those not the most respectable.

Petition to lie on the Table.

KILDARE-STREET SOCIETY.] Mr. *Owen O'Conor* on presenting Petitions from the united Parishes of Roscommon and Killivin, from the Parish of Boyle, the Parish of Tassanagh, of Aughrim, of Kilhimad, and Taumna, said—Sir, I hold in my hand, Petitions from the Roman Catholic Inhabitants of several Parishes in the County of Roscommon—that county for which I have the honour of being a Representative; those petitions are very numerously and respectably signed. They all complain of an unequal and improper distribution of the funds granted to the Kildare-street Society, for the education of the poor in Ireland, and they pray that the allocation of any sum which shall be granted in future for this purpose, shall not be intrusted to that Society. The petition from the inhabitants of the united parishes of Roscommon and Killivin is very short, and well deserving the attention of the House. I think, Sir, I may say without fear of contradiction, that there is no peasantry in Europe more anxious for instruction than the peasantry of Ireland, and that it was never in the contemplation of the Members of this House to withhold from the Catholic portion of that peasantry an equitable share of the sums granted for the education of the poor in that country; yet the petitioners complain that certain resolutions have been adopted by the Kildare-street Society, which, being contrary to the principles and tenets of the religion they profess, debar them from the advantages they expected to derive from those grants. I, however, confidently hope that his Majesty's Ministers will make such arrangements as will prevent any future complaint on the subject. My own feeling is, that a fair proportion of any sum granted in future for this purpose, should be given to the Roman Catholic Bishop and Clergy in every diocese in Ireland; being fully persuaded that they will dispose of it in the manner best calculated to attain the object for which it is intended. I also hold a Petition from the Roman Catholics of Navan, in the County of Meath; it is to the same effect as those I have already mentioned from the county of Roscommon, and I, therefore, beg leave to present it along with them, without any comment more than to solicit the attention of the House to the great interest which the people in every part of Ireland take in this subject.

GALWAY FRANCHISE.] The hon. Member further said, I hold in my hand another Petition, signed by nearly 100 of the Protestant Inhabitants of the village of Monlough, in the Wardenship of Galway, praying that this hon. House would grant to the Roman Catholic Mercantile and Trading Classes of that Town the same right of Franchise as Protestants enjoyed in it. I am delighted to find that the inhabitants of every religious persuasion in that almost Catholic county, live on terms of amity and friendship towards each other, being for several years convinced that religious dissensions have been ruinous to Ireland, and that no country where they exist could prosper. This petition refers to Acts of Parliament, and is, consequently, much more explanatory of the wishes of the petitioners than any statement of mine; I therefore will, with the leave of the House, read it.—The petition was read. It stated,

That prior to the enactment of the penal code, the mercantile and trading classes of Galway, without distinction of religion, enjoyed the right of elective franchise, as appears from the uniform usage of the corporate body during a period of nearly four centuries, by all its ancient laws, charters, and muniments, by the respective articles of capitulation entered into in 1652, and 1691, and by the following Resolution:—

"Resolved, that the several Trades and Corporations of the County of the Town of Galway are part of the commonalty thereof, and such are entitled to vote for Members to serve in Parliament."—*Irish Commons Journal*, vol. iii, folio 66.

That the Roman Catholic mercantile and trading classes having been excluded from the corporate body by an order of the Irish Privy Council, made in 1708, and subsequently disfranchised by an Act of the Legislature, for the purpose of maintaining the Protestant rights, a Statute was enacted in the year 1717, giving to the Protestants the right of the elective franchise. Thus, in effect, securing and continuing to members of that religion a right of which the Roman Catholics have been formally deprived.

That the Protestant portion of the community have thus continued, from the original foundation of said body, to enjoy said right up to the present day, without a shadow of impeachment as to the just exercise of franchise; but notwithstanding such uninterrupted enjoyment of the privilege, and although the disqualifications generally affecting his Majesty's Roman Catholic subjects have been repealed, yet, contrary to the gracious intention of Royal and Legislative munificence, the Roman Catholic mercantile and trading classes of Galway have not been restored to the elective franchise as enjoyed by them before the enactment of the penal code, and as exercised at the present day by their Protestant fellow-citizens.

That the necessity of equalizing civil rights, by extending to the Roman Catholic the right of the Protestant, is the more apparent by reason of the present state of the Church of Galway, consisting of a Warden and Vicar, who by charter, 5th of Edward 6th, are *annually* appointed by the Protestant freemen, and that said Protestants *being the only resident constituent portion of said body*, it is essential to the well-being of the community, to the interests of religion, and the welfare of the Church, that the least infringement should not be allowed upon their rights, which would inevitably tend to throw the annual election of the clergy out of the hands of the parishioners into those of absentees.

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your honourable House will be pleased to accord to the Roman Catholic mercantile and trading classes of Galway, the same right of franchise as is now enjoyed by the Protestant.

Petition to be printed.

Reform Bill for Scotland.] The *Lord Advocate* said, that he rose, pursuant to his notice, to introduce the Scotch Reform Bill into the House. On the Motion that it be read a first time,

Mr. *Charles Douglas* observed, that as there would be other opportunities of discussing the merits of the Bill, he was willing to acquiesce in the present stage.

Mr. *Hume* called the attention of the House to the state of the public business, which was such as to render it impossible that all the petitions in favour of Reform could be presented unless some arrangement were made. He had himself a great number of petitions to present, and it was highly important that the House should be made acquainted with the enthusiasm which was felt by the people respecting the measure. Under these circumstances, he should move that Saturday be set aside for receiving such petitions.

Colonel *Sibthorp* said, he had also some very important petitions to present, which, he hoped, he should have an opportunity of laying before the House.

Lord *Althorp* admitted the necessity of making some arrangement, but he hoped that, by receiving petitions at a late hour, they would be able to avoid interfering with the relaxation which they must all feel was so necessary to the Speaker on the Saturday.

Mr. *Hunt* proposed, that the time for receiving petitions should be extended to seven o'clock.

Mr. Alderman *Waithman* thought, that six o'clock would be late enough to answer the purpose.

The *Lord Advocate* said, that it was his intention to move the second reading of the Scotch Reform Bill on Friday week, as the other bill would be read on Monday. He would, in submitting the Motion, not only state its general scope, which was already known, but its particular details.

Bill read first time.

The *Speaker* wished to observe, with respect to the receiving of petitions, that, if a greater latitude could be granted as to time, it would do a great deal towards absorbing the large amount of petitions which had accumulated in the hands of hon. Members. The attempt to overcome the difficulty by such means would not preclude them from setting Saturday aside for the same purpose, if, upon experience, it should be found to be necessary. He thanked the House for the consideration which it had manifested towards him, but he was always ready to sacrifice his own convenience to his public duty, nor did he feel that he had a right to do otherwise. Besides, he feared that if Saturday were set aside, no Members would attend except those who had petitions to present.

THE SHIPPING INTEREST—TIMBER DUTIES.] Mr. Alderman *Thompson* rose for the purpose of presenting a Petition, respecting which he had given several days' notice, regarding the proposed alteration in the Timber Duties, and complaining thereof. The petition was agreed to at a public meeting, one of the most numerous and respectable he had ever attended during the five-and-twenty years he had been connected with the city of London. It consisted of the merchants of the City, and of the shipowners connected with the port of London. At the meeting, the important subject was discussed with that talent and that freedom from political feeling which was extremely gratifying, and to which many hon. Members of that House, present at the meeting, could bear testimony. It was well known that England was the only country that imported timber to any considerable extent, and that previous to the year 1809 the importations to this country came all from the Baltic. But in that year considerable difficulties began to be felt in procuring the usual supply of Baltic timber, owing to the ports of the North of Europe having fallen under French influence; the consequence was, that every possible encouragement was held out to import Canadian timber, and protection being continued by duties after the ports of the Baltic were opened, the consequence was, that the importation increased up to the year 1821. In that year a Committee of this House sat upon the subject, and recommended an alteration of the duties. The Canadian timber, at that period, paid a duty of only 2*s.* 6*d.* per ton, whilst that from the Baltic paid 3*l.* 10*s.* The Committee recommended that the duty on Baltic timber should be reduced to 55*s.* per ton, and that on Canadian timber should be raised to 10*s.*; and upon this footing the trade had been carried on ever since. In the last year, 600,000 loads of timber had been imported from Canada, whilst the exports to that colony exceeded 2,000,000*l.* sterling in value, while the whole trade to the countries in the Baltic from which timber was brought, did not exceed 600,000*l.* The particular advantages of the trade, too, were evident, from the fact that this country had never been previously in the habit of receiving from the Baltic more than 400,000 loads. In this trade, then, with Canada, a very large amount of British capital was gradually embarked, until at last there came to be engaged in it 440,000 tons of shipping, and not fewer than 22,000 seamen—little short of the number now engaged in the Royal Navy of England. This trade was exclusively carried on with British capital, and nearly 1,500,000*l.* had been embarked in erecting saw-mills, and other works in Canada, necessary to the preparing of timber for exportation. It was, of course, to be expected, that such a state of things as that must have great influence upon the general trade of the country; it was, therefore, obvious, that no steps ought to be taken with reference to it, unless upon the most mature and deliberate consideration. It was also worthy of observation, that a large emigration took place to the Canadas. In the period to which he referred, no fewer than 250,000 persons emigrated to Canada from the United Kingdom; and in the last year the number amounted to 30,000. It was, then, the duty of the House to look at what might be the situation of persons sent out under the sanction, and through the encouragement of the Legislature. It was well known that the winter was longer there than in our climate; and it was also known, that the emigrants were, for the most part, engaged during the winter in the business of preparing the timber for the English market. It would be, therefore, most unjust to deprive the emigrants of that which they were entitled to expect; and the Canadians long settled in the country, of advantages, for the preservation of which Great Britain was responsible. Besides that, nothing could be more impolitic than to remove the barrier which Canada presented to the advancing encroachments of the United States, which might lead to serious consequences in the event of another American war. It was said, that the proposed alteration was introduced with a view to the improvement of the Revenue, and that it would effect an improvement to the extent of 600,000*l.* If this were to be the case, instead of 600,000 loads, there must be an importation of 750,000 loads of timber, and Canada, he calculated, would lose, at least, an export of 350,000 loads out of the 600,000 which she now exported. There could be no expectation of an increased trade with higher duties. It was true, that the shipping interest had increased or improved in the last twelve months, but this would be a fatal blow to its prosperity. Supposing the Revenue should be increased by 600,000*l.*, he really thought that such a sum was not worthy of consideration, as compared with the disadvantages which must result from the proposed change, such as the loss to our shipping, the injury to our colonial subjects, and the advantage to our rivals, and possibly our enemies. It was a mistake to suppose that the shipping now engaged in that trade could be turned over with facility to the coasting trade—they being for the most part vessels from 500 to 750 tons. He might be told, that the Canadian timber was the inferior article—that it was worth only 3*l.* 10*s.* a ton, while the Baltic timber was worth 5*l.* or 5*l.* 5*s.* But it should be recollected that there were a variety of purposes to which Canadian timber might be applied, and for which it was quite as fit as any that could be found; but in a different state of things, if the alteration of the duties should be persevered in, the people of this country would be compelled to use Baltic timber at 5*l.* a ton, for which Canadian at 3*l.* 10*s.* would answer fully as well. He especially intreated the House to turn its attention to the immense amount of shipping and of seamen which would be thrown out of employment by the destruction of the trade with Canada. In the Baltic trade they might rest assured that no British ships would be employed. Prussia and Norway could build vessels for about 7*l.* or 8*l.* a ton, and thus evidently become most formidable rivals in the trade of this country. The fact was, that he believed, that the eyes of Ministers were beginning, though late, to be opened, for they felt very sore on the subject, and they went the length of expressing displeasure against the Governor of a colony for merely writing a pamphlet, exposing the real state of the case. Another thing to be recollected was, that the Legislature was anxious to promote emigration to Canada; and at present, in consequence of the ships employed in the timber trade not finding cargoes to carry out, the expense of passage was not above 6*l.* a head, whereas it would be upwards of 20*l.* This would be a great check to emigration. He would only, in conclusion, say, that the Ministerial plan had created great alarm among all persons connected with the Canada trade. The hon. Member moved that the petition be brought up.

Lord *Althorp* said, it was his intention to bring the question of the timber duties on on Friday next, when he should state the grounds on which the measure proceeded. It would be more convenient to take the discussion upon that occasion than at present.

Mr. *Sadler* said, the House ought to be disfranchised, and would no longer deserve the name of a British House of Commons, if it ceased to attend to the interests of our ships, colonies, and commerce. He wished Ministers had consulted practical men, and men interested in the subject, before bringing forward their proposition.

Sir *M. W. Ridley* would refrain from entering at length into the subject after the observation of the noble Lord. He must say, however, that he agreed with the meeting of shipowners in opposing the proposition of Ministers, the effect of which must be to destroy the Canadian timber-trade, and that part of our commercial marine embarked in it.

Mr. *Attwood* said, he had lately urged on the House to relax, in favour of the present Petition, those recent regulations by which they had, in fact, very much closed their doors against the petitions of the people; and he was satisfied that the importance of the document which had thus been brought before them would be thought fully to justify its admission. That document lost none of its importance on account of the grievance the petitioners complained of having been inflicted by measures depending in Parliament, and having been heavily increased by the extraordinary manner in which these measures were suspended. If, indeed, the Bill proposed by the noble Lord were one of merely financial regulation, the postponement of its operation until October, as he had proposed, might justify the House in postponing its decision; but, if the petitioners were right, who viewed the Bill, not as a measure of revenue regulation, but as carrying with it the entire ruin of numbers amongst them, and the extinction of a part of the commerce in which they were engaged, then the suspense in which the Ministers now held them, regardless whether this ruin were to be inflicted or not, could be little alleviated by the grace of postponing its execution till October. The Ministers had now consented to bring their measure to the decision of the House on Friday next, and he should yield to those rules which obstructed debates on petitions in not then entering into any details; but even then he thought it necessary to enforce on the consideration of the House what was the real character of the measure on which they would on Friday have to decide. Previous discussions were useful, and indeed necessary to the advantageous consideration of every question involving a variety of interests, and nothing could be more inconvenient than for the House to be called on to decide on such a question after a long and desultory debate, in which were presented to its view, perhaps for the first time, many of the grounds on which its decision must rest. Such discussion was particularly necessary on this question, because, in fact, the real character it bore had never yet been brought into view. His Majesty's Ministers had presented the question to the House only in its least material features, and had kept out of view altogether the real grounds on which, he was satisfied, the House would form its decision, rejecting from consideration those motives which seemed alone to have guided the Government. How, he desired them to consider, was this measure of duties on Canadian timber brought before them? Five weeks back, in his budget, the noble Lord, the Chancellor of the Exchequer proposed to raise 750,000*l*. a year, but he would take 600,000*l*. by a tax on timber, not, as he told them, a fit subject of taxation; but why it was unfit, or why Canadian timber was less or more fit than other timber, he said nothing. In this state the noble Lord left the question, till it was taken up some days afterwards by the right hon. the Vice-president of the Board of Trade. He carried their views a stage further. This, said he, is a measure by which the Exchequer will gain 600,000*l*. a-year by a tax on timber; but a farther benefit will also accrue,—for the consumers of the article taxed will pay no part of that tax; they will get timber cheaper after the tax is laid on than before. And thus the question stood before the House on this showing of the Ministers. All interests were to be gainers; the Government would get 600,000*l*. without the people being called on to pay the money; and this the House were left to ascribe, if they pleased, to the dexterity of the new Chancellor of the Exchequer, who, aided by the science of the Vice-president of the Board of Trade, had been able to apply new rules of art to the exhausted resources of the country, and to cause money to flow into the Exchequer, which they did not drain from the pockets of the people. From this visionary prospect, the petition his hon. friend had presented, for the first time aroused them. The mystery was made evident; the money which the Exchequer was to get, and the people not to pay, was to be paid by a part of the people. The shipowners, timber-merchants, and colonists of Canada, were to be made to yield 600,000*l*. to the revenue by the sacrifice of their capital and commerce to Russia. That was the real state of the case, and the moment it was presented to their view, they would discard altogether the calculations and theories of the Ministers of the Crown; they would have to consider nothing of how much the Government was to gain, or how much the consumers of timber were to gain. The agricultural interest, said the right hon. Vice-president of the Board of Trade, knew how much they would gain by his scheme, and how much they would save by having foreign timber at a cheaper rate, to build barns and outhouses with. He (Mr. Attwood) disclaimed all personal hostility to that right hon. Gentleman; he did willing justice to his talents, though he approved of few of his measures. These considerations were as nothing when it was proposed to sacrifice the interests of one part of the community to the rest. The first point was, if the sacrifice were voluntary. If not voluntary, then what was the right by which the House was called on to adopt that course? Were there no Acts of Parliament to protect this interest—no system of conduct, from which protection was to be implied; and if so, that implied faith bound the country, when the question was between a great government and one of its distant colonies, or indeed any class of the community, as strongly as though it was fortified by the letter of a thousand Acts of Parliament; and in default of both, they would have to inquire whether they could sacrifice their merchants, without a violation of that universal principle of all governments, which binds the first faith of every country to the protection of the property of its citizens. It was on grounds like these that the House must decide the question. In detail he would then discuss none of them; but even then there was one consideration he thought desirable to bring under their view. The House ought not to consider the question of protection to this timber trade, without the full recollection of the circumstances under which it was first established, and that it was to meet a great emergency, and a great necessity—it was to guard against consequences arising from the hostility of Russia—that this capital was invested, which it was now proposed to sacrifice to Russia. In 1809 it was, when the northern Powers of Europe joined those of the south, west, and east, against this country and its institutions, that the country called for the resources of our northern colonies, and our merchants invested their capital in compliance with that call. The union of Russia with the continental league struck, or was thought to strike—for he cared not whether men might now deny that danger, which was then believed, and which he now believed—a heavy blow on the resources which supplied the strength of the navy. It was to guard against that blow, to renew those resources, to reserve that right arm of power, which his hon. friend, the member for Newark, beside him eloquently said had wound round the brow of the country a wreath which could never fade—that arm which smote their enemy in every sea—that they had resorted to the aid of the Canadian colonists, and that their merchants had invested the capital which now it was proposed to sacrifice—but never, he trusted, without all these circumstances being gravely considered. Could it be believed that the nation then contracted no obligation of protection to this capital? Were they to believe that these emergencies were never again to arise; or was that the period when they were to blink opinion, with the state of Europe before them, in horrible convulsion and change, but establishing, in every form, whether of anarchy or despotism, one uniform evidence of hatred and hostility against the present institutions of this country? Of those facts, and of those grave considerations, his Majesty's Ministers appeared by their measures to know and to consider nothing. They thought alone of the emptiness of their Exchequer—of applying new maxims of financial and commercial reform, which they had drawn at second hand from the book of the hon. member for Queen's County (Sir H. Parnell), to an exhausted system of taxation; and were bringing their miserable supply to the Exchequer, without being sensible that they were carrying into the colonies, perhaps, the convulsions of Europe—were encountering the hazard of giving the Canadas to America, and trusting the navy to the faith or friendship of Russia. The House, he trusted, would proceed on different views; and would on Friday decide this question, as one that involved the faith and the honour of this country, as well as those principles on which must depend the security of our colonial power.

Mr. *Sykes* was disposed to follow the advice of his noble friend, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, to abstain from entering into the discussion at the present moment. But he must take this opportunity to contradict the assertion of the hon. Member who spoke last, as to the existence of any pledge on the part of this country towards Canada, with respect to the timber trade. So far from there being any pledge on the subject, whenever a pledge was demanded, it had been refused. He thought the true way of benefitting our shipping interests was, to endeavour to extend them in eveey direction, by removing all unnecessary burthens; and then he was sure no country would compete with us. It was just that we should support the interests of our colonies, but not separately from, or in opposition to, our other interests. He never would endeavour to foster one interest at the expense of the whole community. But he should be able, when the discussion took place on Friday, to demonstrate that the support which we had hitherto extended to th shipping and colonial interests, had cost the country upwards of a million a-year.

Mr. Alderman *Waithman* thought the shipowners had made out a strong case against the noble Lord's proposition, but that was scarcely necessary to convince him of its impropriety. From the first moment he had heard of the scheme, he disapproved of it. The Canadas took from us manufactured goods to the amount of 2,000,000*l.* sterling yearly, while the Baltic States took scarcely any thing from the English market. In fact, the amount of our exports to those countries did not exceed 600,000*l.* and four-fifths of that was cotton twist. Yet it was now proposed to deprive Canada of the advantage of the timber trade, and transfer it to Norway.

Mr. *Charles Douglas* said, that he had a Petition to present on the subject which had been agreed to at Glasgow, the prayer of which resembled that presented by the hon. Alderman. He coincided completely in the views taken by the petitioners and the Members who supported the petitions.

Mr. *Schonswar* was apprehensive that the measure would create dissatisfaction, and he for one must give his cordial support to the petitioners.

Mr. *Hart Davis* was also intrusted with a Petition to present against the measure, which he thought calculated to cause inconvenience and mischief, and which, on the behalf of his constituents, he meant strenuously to resist.

Mr. *Shaw* said, he had been intrusted with a Petition of a like description to that presented by Mr. Alderman Thompson, from the shipowners of Dublin, who, although aware that it was not intended to extend the measure to Ireland, on account of its poverty, yet as shipowners they felt disposed to make common cause with the shipping interests of this country. The petition expressed an opinion that the plan of the Chancellor of the Exchequer would have the effect of annihilating the Canadian timber trade, and throwing out of employment all the tonnage at present engaged in it.

Mr. *Ewart* agreed in principal with the noble Lord, but differed in some degree from him as to the extent to which he (the Chancellor of the Exchequer) seemed disposed to carry the measure. At present he would content himself with observing, that the tonnage connected with Liverpool, which was engaged in the Canadian trade, amounted to 130,000 tons, while that employed in the Baltic trade did not exceed 18,000,—a fact sufficient in itself to show how much more important than the Baltic was the Canadian trade to the town which he represented.

Mr. *Warburton* said, that the complaints which were made by the shipping interest were but reiterations of those made in 1821; while the fact was, that the timber trade with Canada since that time had increased in the proportion of eight to five. It was then said, that the trade would be ruined by the proposed alteration; in fact, it had flourished more than ever. When he remembered that the exports to Canada, amounting to 2,000,000*l.* were chiefly in consequence of the canals and public works that were going on there, and to pay the expenses of the government, while the value of the timber imported only amounted to 500,000*l.* he could not think that their timber trade was of so much importance to the country as was pretended.

Mr. *George Robinson* supported the prayer of the petition, which related to the vital interests of the country. If the Government were to proceed on the principle of allowing sugar, and corn, and timber to be brought into this country from the places where they were grown cheapest, it would soon ruin every establishment and every interest in the country. If the timber trade did take a million a year from the country, if it did cost annually that sum, that was nothing compared to the advantages which the trade afforded us. In 1829 that trade employed no less than 1,611 ships, and to build and man and equip them, employed a great deal of labour. If it could not be shown that the present rate of duties and the trade which was to be destroyed afforded great advantages to the country, by the labour it set in motion, he should be ready to give up the whole question. He was sure that it could be shown, and he was ready to meet any hon. Member on that ground. The proposed alteration would inflict a serious injury on the whole Canada trade, and as the hon. member for Bridport admitted, it would destroy the half of the shipping engaged in it. He was not so much astonished to hear the hon. Member make that admission, as to hear the noble Lord, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, on the night he brought forward his Budget, calmly and plainly admit that his plan might put out of employment the half of the shipping engaged in that trade —that was just the half of 1,611 ships, and of 20,000 seamen to be put out of employment. He thought the duty of Government was to protect and preserve, but it was in this instance only destroying the best interests of the country. Where else could they find employment for so many ships and such a number of seamen, and by what other means could all the great interests which depend on the employment of ships and seamen be remunerated for the losses they would suffer? It was intended also to encourage the Northern Powers of Europe, those very Powers which in 1807 we had sent a large expedition to destroy. The present trade with Canada was altogether a British trade, under the control of the British Government, and he must protest against breaking that up to make us again exclusively dependent on Powers that had been our enemies, and might be again. He was surprised to hear the hon. member for Liverpool support the proposed measure, though he confessed he did not understand the reasons which the hon. Member gave for it. Did the hon. Member know how important the present trade was to Liverpool? In 1821 there were 218 ships connected with this trade in the port of Liverpool; and in 1831 the number had increased to 321, carrying 106,000 tons. By the altered system, the lumber trade would be destroyed,—a trade which was of the first importance in clearing and peopling the colonies. If the Chancellor of the Exchequer should be successful on Friday (and he hoped that he would not), he (Mr. Robinson) would not be content with one night's debate on the subject, because the measure, in his opinion, would strike at the security of this country as a maritime nation. He would contest and oppose the measure at every stage.

Mr. *W. Whitmore* observed, that those who opposed this measure formed a class who never looked to the advantage of the people, but, by somes trange sort of anomalous reasoning, believed that they should be better able to pay the National Debt by being obliged to purchase every thing at as dear a rate as possible. Now he was a friend to the opposite system. He wished to have cheap sugar, cheap corn, and cheap timber, and therefore he would import those commodities from those places where they might be most reasonably obtained. Looking to the country at large, it appeared to him, that the greatest injury was inflicted by those monoplies, which were called protections, but which ought to be considered as destructions.

Lord *George Lennox* was of opinion that the proposed measure would ruin one-fifth of the shipping interest; it would strike at the prosperity of our country and excite great discontent in the colonies.

Mr. *Goulburn* observed, that the petition from the city of London ought to give rise to some doubts in the mind of the noble Lord as to the policy of this measure; but, until he heard it explained more in detail he would forbear from giving any decided opinion with respect to it.

Mr. *B. Hoy* said, it appeared to him that the proposition involved the violation of much vested capital, and the destruction of a most useful class of men. If it were determined to benefit the consumer, it ought not to be done at the expense of the shipping interest.

Lord *Loughborough* said, that his constituents complained that this measure would occasion the total destruction of their property, because they could not find employment for the shipping which they had now engaged in the Canada trade, in any other pursuit. The Vice-president of the Board of Trade had stated, that this measure was a boon to the landed interest. But the right hon. Gentleman knew little of the landed interest of England if he believed that that interest wished to derive any exclusive benefit or advantage (and he did not think it would be an advantage) which was given at the expense of the other interests of the country.

Mr. *P. Thomson* never meant to say that this was a boon to the landed interest in particular. He said that it would be a boon to the country generally.

Mr. *Hume* said, that those who opposed this measure seemed to think that the prosperity of the country depended upon the employment of a certain number of ships. Now, what was the object of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, in bringing forward this measure? Why, to benefit the consumer generally; and this he did too when he relieved the country from the oppressive tax upon coals. Was it not desirable that they should have better wood for building in this country than they could get from Canada? In addition to supplying the country with a better commodity at a cheaper rate than at present, it would place a considerable sum in the

Exchequer, and he could not conceive that such a circumstance ought to make the Commons of England reject it. The measure would, he believed, be useful to the general community.

Lord *W. Powlett* did not concur in the opinion of the hon. member for Middlesex. They had expended 6,000,000*l.* on Canada, and merchants had, in consequence, invested much capital there, which would be overthrown by this measure.

Sir *F. Burdett* thought, that the present discussion was unnecessary, as the question would be regularly introduced on Friday. But he could not help observing, that the reason which had just been given for continuing in the old course, was the most extraordinary he had ever heard. They were told, that because they had expended 6,000,000*l.* to encourage the colonists of Canada, they ought still to support a system which was injurious to the general interest of the country. He had no objections to colonies, but, like the hon. member for Middlesex, he could not approve of buying their attachment by the immense annual sacrifices which were involved in this unnatural protection. In his opinion a better system ought to be adopted, and the present system of management might with great propriety be entirely altered. Under the present state of things, we were compelled to purchase bad timber to support a certain interest. To alter that system might be very inconvenient to those who were maintained by it; but all that they could do was, to let those persons down as easy as they could. This indifferent timber was absolutely forced into the building of ships, and of houses, and much mischief resulted from it. He would recommend that the system should be removed altogether, even if the country was called on to pay a sum of money to the shipping interest.

Mr. *Keith Douglas* asked, whether the hon. members for Westminster and Bridgenorth were prepared to dissolve the connexion between the colonies and the mother country. Why the hon. member for Bridgenorth said he would procure sugar, corn, timber, &c., at as cheap a rate as he could in any place, and the hon. Baronet seemed to participate in his sentiment. That was the policy which they would adopt. There was evidently a specious reason, at least, to suppose, that if they had their free will, they would make it part of their policy henceforth to dissolve the connexion with the colonies; but that was a sort of policy which he never could approve of. He was sure too, if the hon. member for Bridport looked carefully into the report of the Committee of 1821 he would find no support in that for his arguments.

Mr. *S. Wortley* said, it appeared to him that the measure proposed by Government was founded on principles different from those stated by Gentlemen near him, and therefore he differed from them. There was no intention to destroy the interests either of the colonies or of the shipowners. No two interests could be more intimately connected, and if any measure were proposed that seemed likely to overturn either, he would strenuously oppose it. He thought, that in the course of the argument, much misapprehension and misconception had prevailed; and on a future occasion he would point out, and perhaps correct, those erroneous impressions. But he must say, that before the measure was distinctly submitted to the House, they were not in a proper situation to discuss it. His principal objection was to the time at which the measure was proposed. He denied that this measure would inflict injury to the extent which had been stated; but he did not mean to say that it would not, in some degree, be productive of injury; because no great change like this could be effected without causing injury. If the noble Lord had taken another opportunity for proposing this measure, he thought that he would have done better; because, just at the moment when they were opening the West-India trade to other countries, which for years had been closed to all but the North American colonies—it was hard at such a time to impose an additional duty on the commodities they sent to the English market.

Mr. *Hunt* said, a petition from the City of London, for the protection of the interests of a certain class of men, had given rise to a debate of several hours. Thousands of petitions had been presented from the people, praying for relief, and in consequence the noble Lord proposed to take off a large duty on coals, which would be most useful to the community,—and to lay the tax on timber, which would fall on wealthy commercial men. He was very glad to see a tax taken from the shoulders of the poor, and laid upon those who could best afford to bear it. He was the more pleased on this occasion, because many of the influential men who now petitioned the House had, twenty-five years ago, employed themselves in supporting and upholding that system which placed them and the country in its present situation and compelled the Chancellor of the Exchequer to declare that he could not remove taxes from one portion of the community without placing them on another.

The Petition to be printed.

Diplomatic and Consular Pensions.] Mr. *Gisborne* said, that in moving for the documents of which he had given notice, he did not mean merely to confine himself to that point, his object being to draw the attention of the House to the state of the law with regard to diplomatic and consular pensions. In 1782 this subject was, for the first time, brought under the consideration of Parliament, by the Act for regulating the Civil List, and by that Act the Civil List pensions were then limited to £90,000. There was in that Act this clause, "Whereas, it hath been usual that persons who have served the Crown in foreign Courts, have, after the expiration of their service, at his Majesty's pleasure, received such proportion of their former appointments as to his Majesty hath seemed expedient: Be it enacted,—that nothing in this Act contained, relative to pensions, shall be construed to extend to such allowance, either in present or in future, provided the said persons do not severally enjoy some place or other profit from the Crown, to the amount of the pension usually allowed in such cases; provided that the list of the said pensions shall be laid, in the manner before mentioned, before Parliament." The law remained in this state until 1810, when another measure was passed amending the former Act as far as related to diplomatic pensions. The Act of 1810 contained this important clause. "And whereas it is expedient that the said Act (22 Geo. 3rd c. 82, A. D. 1782) should be amended, so far as respects pensions to persons who shall have served the Crown in foreign Courts after the expiration of their services: Be it therefore enacted,—that no pension or allowance shall be granted to any person for, or on account of, having served the Crown in foreign Courts within less than ten years from the date of his first appointment in such service, during which time he shall have served not less than three years, and no such allowance shall exceed 2,000*l.* per annum; and every such allowance shall abate if such person shall be appointed to any civil office or employment under the Crown of equal or greater amount, and shall also be subject to a proportionate abatement if the value of any such office or employment should be less than the amount of such allowance as aforesaid: provided always, that before any such pension or allowance shall be granted, the person in whose favour the same shall be granted shall be not less than thirty-five years of age; and his Majesty's Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs shall transmit to the Treasury a certificate under his hand that such person has not, within such ten years, declined serving as a foreign Minister, except for sufficient cause, in any rank or station equal or superior to that in which he had last served, which certificate shall be recited in the grant of such pension or allowance." Those restrictions, though not strict enough in his mind, were thought to be too strict by the Ministers of the Crown; and in 1811 they brought in a Bill, to exempt from the provisions of the Act of 1810 all persons who, previous to the passing of that Act, had served the Crown in foreign parts. The reason assigned was so curious, that he would take the liberty of reading the clause to the House: "Whereas the provisions of the said Act (Act of 1810, 50 Geo. 3rd., c. 117) hereby amended, do, in terms, extend as well to persons who, previously to the passing of the said Act, had served the Crown in foreign Courts, as to those who might serve after the passing of the said Act. And whereas such persons who, previously to the passing of the said Act, had served the Crown in foreign Courts may have engaged in such employment upon the faith of the usage with respect to the grant of allowances by his Majesty after the expiration of their services, which is recited and confirmed in the Act of the 22nd year of his present Majesty (Act of 1782): Be it therefore enacted,—that the provisions of the said Act hereby amended shall have no application to persons who, previously to the passing of the said Act, had served the Crown in foreign Courts; and that nothing in the said amended Act contained shall be construed in anywise to alter or affect the said Act of the 22nd of his present Majesty, so far as respects the grant of allowances by his Majesty to persons who, previously to the passing of the said Act, had served the Crown in foreign

Courts." It seemed that those who were affected by the Bill of 1810 thought it very hard that they should serve ten years before they were entitled to those large allowances of 2,000*l.* or 1,500*l.*: and they could not conceive why three years service was not quite sufficient. The hon. Gentleman said, he meant to make no attack upon individuals; it was the system which he considered bad; and he thought that some reduction ought to be made in the charges paid under the head of diplomatic pensions. The result of the state of the law which he had described was, that we had five pensioned-off ambassadors from the Ottoman Porte, of whom three were exempt from the provisions of the Act of 1810, and who received larger pensions than that Act permitted. We had three pensioned-off from St. Petersburgh, every one of whom escaped the provisions of the Act of 1810; two from Wirtemburgh, two from Madrid, two from Lisbon, two from Sweden; and, on the whole, though there were only nineteen diplomatic persons in actual service, who received 3,000*l.* per annum and upwards, there were twenty-eight retired diplomatic persons who received, on an average, above 1,000*l.* a-year each as pensions; and, out of these, there were twelve who received upwards of 2,000*l.* a-year, each of whom twentyone years after the passing of the Act of 1810, was still exempted from its provisions, by what he must call the unworthy means, as well as pretences, by which the Act of 1811 was obtained from the Legislature. The annual expense of our diplomatic relations with the Ottoman Porte was now 20,967*l.*, without any consideration of outfit, or of any salaries which are less than 1,000*l.* per annum each. He considered that very extravagant. He asked the House, whether such a state of things could exist under a reformed Parliament? He contrasted the emoluments of ambassadors and governors of colonies; the former of whom were sent to pleasant places, and mixed in agreeable society, were well paid, and allowed retiring pensions; while the latter were sent out to countries which it was not very desirable to inhabit, did not receive such high salaries as ambassadors, and upon retiring received no superannuation allowances. The hon. Member concluded by moving "That an humble Address be presented to his Majesty, praying him to direct to be laid before the House,—Returns of the date of the pension granted to each of those persons who are included in a Return of this Session (p. 35) intituled 'Civil and Military Offices,' and who are stated to receive pensions for Diplomatic and Consular services:—Of the date of the first and every subsequent appointment of each person therein included, and of the length of his actual service in each such station, respectively:—Of all other diplomatic and consular pensions not included in the above-named paper, which Return shall specify the names of the parties receiving such pensions, the date of the pension, and of the first and every subsequent appointment of each such person, with the time for which he shall have actually served in each appointment."

Lord *Althorp* had no objection to the production of the return moved for; but observed, that he looked upon these pensions as a sort of half-pay, which it was to the interest of the country to provide, in order to induce those persons whose diplomatic talents might be productive of advantage to the country to make the diplomatic service a regular profession. Whether or not those pensions were too great, was another question. It was true, that ambassadors were sometimes sent to agreeable places, but it should be remembered that they incurred great expenses, and he did not think that it would be good policy in the country to discontinue altogether the payment of the pensions.

Mr. *Hume* was of opinion that it would be a far better plan to give no retiring pensions to ambassadors. The United States gave no pensions to their ambassadors, and he was not aware that that country ever stood in need of able Ministers to manage its affairs in other countries. Besides, these pensions had not had the effect of securing to this country the services of men of ability, for it was not the rule to give consular appointments to men of talents, but to men of powerful connexions, whose support it was the interest of Government to gain. He wished to know whether the recommendation of the Finance Committee of 1828, that the amount of these pensions should be confined to 40,000*l.*, had been complied with?

Mr. *Goulburn* thought that the recommendation of the Finance Committee had been uniformly adhered to. With respect to the American Consuls, he had an opportunity of learning, that they themselves complained that the salaries allowed them were inadequate for their decent support at the Courts of foreign Powers.

Mr. *Lennard* said, the recommendation of the Finance Committee had not been complied with, for at the commencement of the present reign 46,000*l.* was proposed to be voted as a permanent provision for retired alllowances. He considered the salaries paid to British Ambassadors too high; and thought that men of great diplomatic ability might be obtained at a lower rate.

Mr. *Goulburn* said, that the recommendation of the Finance Committee was, that the amount of pensions should be gradually reduced until it fell as low as 40,000*l.*, and though 46,000*l.* was proposed to be applied to that purpose, yet the recommendation of the Finance Committee had been complied with, because the same was in the course of reduction.

Mr. *Lennard* stated, that the sum of 46,000*l.* was proposed as a permanent provision.

Motion agreed to.

UNION OF WICKLOW.] Mr. *Grattan* rose to move for a copy of the memorial to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland from the parishioners of the Union of Wicklow. The hon. Member adverted to the numerous preferments which were held by Archdeacon Magee, the incumbent of the Union, which he stated gave him a very large income. He had to complain of the contradictory statements respecting the value of the living, which had been made by the Archbishop of Dublin, in his report to the Privy Council of Ireland. He declared it to be worth only 909*l.* a year, while Archdeacon Magee, at a meeting of the parishioners of the Union, had declared it to be worth 2,255*l.* He thought that when the memorial was produced, the House would be able to ascertain what measures could be taken to reconcile the unhappy difference existing between the Archdeacon and his parishioners. He said, that the question was not one of Catholics against Protestants, nor ought the House to regard it as any attack on the Church. The hon. Member concluded by moving for a copy of the Memorial presented by the parishioners of Wicklow to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland.

Mr. *Shaw* did not rise for the purpose of offering any opposition to the production of the memorial moved for by the hon. member for Wicklow, but having seen a copy of that memorial, he must protest against the correctness of its statements, and he thought he could briefly explain to the House the misconception out of which the complaint of the memorialists seemed to him to have arisen. The parish of Wicklow consisted of four chapelries, and was divided into prebendal, or large, and vicarial, or small, tithes, though the prebend is a sinecure, held altogether independent of the Union now in question, and incapable in law of being episcopally united to it. The Union to which the Archbishop of Dublin's report related was the Vicarage of Wicklow, and the small parishes, Drumkey and Kilpool, and the value of these united, instead of exceeding 909*l.* a year, was considerably lower than that sum, being about 500*l.* This Union, as well as the Prebend of Wicklow, had been held for many years by a Clergyman who was in embarrassed circumstances; his preferments were under sequestration, and it was from the written return of his sequestration (the original of which he had seen) that the Archbishop took the value, extent, and particulars of the Union. It was unprecedented that an Archbishop under these circumstances should employ a professional valuator, and he resorted for information to the person who had been interested in making the value as high as possible, and in point of fact, he returned a much higher value than was necessary for the object of the Union, though not as high as the entire value, including the Prebend. He did the same as to the Glebe Lands, all of which with the exception of the eight acres returned by the Archbishop, were attached to the Prebend. Now, as to the policy of this Union, supposing it a new question, the vicarage and the two parishes as he (Mr. Shaw) stated, were worth about 500*l.* a year and the present incumbent kept four Curates at 100*l.* each, and which, allowing for deductions of collectors, would leave him about 50*l.* a year out of this Union; there were besides three churches in the Vicarage; and, none in either of the small parishes, so they would be insufficient to maintain an incumbent and church of themselves, and therefore it would appear highly expedient to unite them with the vicarage of Wicklow—and also desirable (to say nothing of the principle of sinecures, which he was not defending) under existing circumstances that this Union should be held by the Prebend of Wicklow, in order that, out of the large income attached to that sinecure, he might support the Curates and expenditure necessary for the whole Union. As to the complaints against Archdeacon Magee, it was alleged that he had been exorbitant in his demands; but how did the facts support this allegation? When he received this preferment, he had a valuation made of the tithes he was entitled to, and it amounted, including the entire preferment, to 2,300*l.* For this he was willing to accept 1,500*l.* a year as compensation, and had never asked for more than 1,600*l.*; and he further offered, if the parish did not agree to the composition, to take 1*s.* instead of 2*s.* in the pound compared with the value of the ground, his strict right, and to let the maximum value of the ground be taken at 3*l.* an acre, whereas a considerable part is worth 6*l.* Then as to the charge of his claiming tithe upon some lands which had not paid tithe before, it was a question as to a very small extent of land, depending not between him and any poor parishioner, but between him and the Corporation of Wicklow. The claim for glebe lands was a question between him and Lord Fitzwilliam. With respect to the other preferments mentioned by the hon. Mover St. John's, in Dublin, is of very inconsiderable value above the curate's salary, but it confers a vote in the Chapter of Christ Church; and the Archdeaconry of Kilmacduagh is a sinecure of small amount, and from which Archdeacon Magee has as yet not received a shilling. It is situated in the county of Clare, and the hon. member for Waterford knew that it was not very easy to collect tithes there. He knew many of the individuals who signed this memorial, and they were of the highest respectability; they did not profess to speak from their own knowledge, and he (Mr. Shaw) believed the real explanation of the circumstance was, that they received their information from a curate of one of the parishes, himself, he believed, a respectable and talented clergyman, but suffering under the bitterness of some disappointment, arising, as stated by the Archbishop of Dublin, out of a misconception of a conversation held with him upon the subject of this Union.—Under all the circumstances, he could not but lament that it had been thought advisable to bring a matter of this nature before the House, when it admitted of an easy explanation between the parties themselves; more particularly, as he was satisfied that the very respectable individuals who had signed the memorial, had not been actuated by any hostile or invidious feeling to the Established Church of Ireland. He could not, however, help regretting that so inappropriate a period had been selected for the purpose of making this complaint, when the distinguished Prelate against whom a charge of unfairness was insinuated, was suffering under severe indisposition, and at a moment when organised opposition was taking place in many parts of Ireland to the payment of tithes—which, if successful as to them, would be found equally applicable to rents and every other claim of right—when, if he might use the expression, it had become rather the fashion of the times to be weary of our ancient institutions, and when especially the Irish branch of our Established Church was much reviled by its opponents, but whose clergy, he could boldly affirm, were, taken as a whole, as enlightened, as zealous, and as eminently pious a body of ministers as belonged to any religious order in existence. The Established Church was, no doubt, subject to those defects which are indispensable from every human institution, but withal, he believed it in his conscience to be one of the best and surest pillars of the State, an honoured and an acknowledged instrument of an authority paramount to all human institutions for checking infidelity, and all its train of evils, and for promoting true religion and all its accompanying blessings, throughout the land.

Mr. *C. W. Wynn* lamented that this subject had been brought forward, and he also lamented that any grounds had been given for complaint. He considered, however, that such an accumulation of preferment as Archdeacon Magee was loaded with, was a great scandal and a great injury to the Church. The hon. and learned member for Dublin (Mr. Shaw) had said, that the livings joined to the vicarage of Wicklow were only worth 200*l.* a year, as if that were not a sufficient income to support an incumbent. He knew many men of exemplary character and good education, who performed the duties of ministers for no higher a remuneration than 100*l.* a year. He thought that persons who held preferments ought to be resident, and he was sorry to be obliged to declare, that due regard had not been paid to the interests of the Church, and of religion, by those whose especial duty it was to provide for both.

Mr. *O'Connell* did not doubt the legality of the proceeding which had been brought under the consideration of the House, but he hoped it would make the House understand how the system worked in Ireland, and how much irritation it gave rise to. It appeared from the statement of the hon. member for Dublin (Mr. Shaw) that Archdeacon Magee did not hold the living in Dublin for the purpose of attending to the duties of the office, and looking after the wants of his flock, but merely for the purpose of possessing the privilege of having a voice in the Chapter. He did not think it proper that gentleman should hold so many livings. He was already in possession of two livings before he was put into possession of that of the Union of Wicklow, from which it appeared that he received at least 1,500*l.*, and gave at most 500*l.* to the curates who did all the duty. He was paid, therefore, 1,000*l.*, for doing nothing. What right had he to that when the people were suffering from great distress? At any rate, the Archdeacon ought not to receive any more than 500*l.* from the Union of Wicklow, and the remaining 1,000*l.* should be applied to the relief of the parishioners.

Mr. *Shaw*, in answer to what had fallen from the right hon. Member, the Secretary of War (Mr. C. W. Wynn), stated, that he had not said that the reason for uniting the two parishes, Drumkey and Kilpool, to the vicarage of Wicklow, was the insufficiency of the income to support an incumbent: but that there was no church in those parishes, and therefore no duty could be performed in them, unless they were joined to the vicarage.

Mr. *Goulburn* was well aware of the difficulty of arguing the question of tithes, because it always sounded harshly to take the tenth potatoe from the poor man, but it was a small contribution from a great many, to support a most meritorious class of men. He was not disposed to take the character of the clergy of the Church of Ireland from the hon. and learned member for Waterford. Considering all circumstances the Union was most desirable, and there was no pretence for stating that the Archbishop of Dublin had made any statements to the Privy Council of Ireland which were not founded in fact. So far from undervaluing the livings, he had overvalued them.

Mr. *Grattan* said, if the livings were undervalued, the statements of the parishioners were most false. He was happy, however, to believe, that the time had arrived when no more faculties would be granted for unions.

Mr. *Lefroy* vindicated the character of the Archbishop, and said, that upon inquiry the conduct of that right rev. Prelate would appear unimpeachable. He saw no ground for the interference of the House, and he was sorry to see in it a disposition to vilify and condemn the clergy of the Irish Church.

Mr. *Hume* said, that the hon. Mover had not brought forward the subject with the view of vilifying the character of the Archbishop. The hon. Member who spoke last seemed inclined to defend what was a tissue of abuse. The Church of Ireland was a tissue of abuses from first to last, whatever hon. Members might say. There were parishes without churches or resident ministers, the inhabitants of which consisting chiefly of Catholics, were called on to pay large sums to the members of the Established Church. If that were not an abuse, he did not know what the word meant. The clergy of Ireland were actuated only by a desire to acquire money, instead of attending to their religious duties. He thought that the time had come when the Irish Church must be remodelled, and no man be allowed to receive a shilling who did not perform efficient duties.

Mr. *S. Rice* said, he could not concur with the unqualified censure which the hon. Member had passed upon the members of the Irish Church. At the same time he thought the case which had been brought under the consideration of the House, had been properly so brought.

Mr. *Hume* admitted that some of the members of the Irish Church discharged their duties in the most praiseworthy manner.

Mr. *Wyse* said, that if any ill-feeling prevailed against the Established Church in Ireland, it was owing to such circumstances as had been brought under the notice of the House that evening.

Motion agreed to.

PRIVILEGES OF THE HOUSE OF COMMONS.] Mr. *C. W. Wynn*, in rising to move for the appointment of a Select Committee "to consider how far it may be expedient to relax the exercise of the privileges of this

House, respecting the imposition of pecuniary penalties for offences," said it was not his intention to occupy the time of the House. There was no one of its privileges, which he considered should be held more dear, or one which they owed it to their constituents to maintain more inviolably, than that of reserving to themselves the right of originating any change or alteration of money clauses of bills, which was among the most ancient privileges of the House, and one which he should be sorry in any degree to surrender. At the same time, however, it could not be concealed that, the assertion of that privilege had, in some instances, been carried to an extreme, and especially as regarded the imposition of fines meant as a punishment. The consequence had been, that no bill for the regulation of the criminal law could be originated in the other House of Parliament. This was extremely inconvenient; for the time of that House was so much occupied with Government measures, and other bills of the utmost importance, that it had not time to consider the alterations in our criminal laws which it might be wise to adopt. The House of Lords, on the other hand, adjourned at a very early hour every day, because it had no business before it. The object of his Motion, therefore, was, to ascertain by a Committee, if so much of that privilege might be relaxed, as would enable the other House of Parliament to originate, or to alter and amend any criminal laws. It was, however, a matter of too much importance to be decided upon hastily, and without due consideration. Instead, therefore, of bringing forward a direct motion on the subject, he had preferred to move for the appointment of a Select Committee to consider of the propriety of abating that privilege.

Mr. *Hughes Hughes* hoped, the right hon. Gentleman would pardon him for saying, that the terms in which his notice was couched, so inadequately conveyed an idea of what he intended to propose, that hon. Members around him, like himself, were entirely ignorant of the object contemplated by the right hon. Gentleman. In his opinion, there were few bills which might not properly originate in the other House of Parliament; any clauses by which penalties would be imposed, might be left for insertion when the bills came down to that House; a course which had been adopted in the bill relating to the building of churches.

Mr. *Spring Rice* was of opinion, that if any one system could be more defective than another, it was that of introducing a measure in one place, and leaving something else to be added to it in another. With respect to the Motion, he would only observe, that the House ought not to hold out on a matter of form where the public good might require that that form should be abandoned.

Mr. *Stuart Wortley* did not oppose the present Motion; but he wished to observe, that the House of Lords had already the power of originating criminal laws, leaving the penalty clauses to be added by this House.

Mr. *C. W. Wynn* said, the originating of bills in the other House, and leaving them to be completed in that, was a very inconvenient and a very improper course. Under these circumstances, he trusted that his Motion would be agreed to as it stood.

Mr. *Hume* wished to see the Motion so worded, as at once to direct the attention of every hon. Member to its real object.

The *Speaker* stated, that the Motion appeared to him perfectly intelligible. He knew of no privilege possessed by the House, with respect to the imposition of penalties, except that which excluded the House of Lords from any participation in originating them.

Motion agreed to, and Committee appointed.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Wednesday, March 16, 1831.

MINUTES.] Bill. The Irish Population, read a third time. Petitions presented. By the Earl of MANSFIELD, from Landholders of the County of Clackmannan, in Scotland, and from the Distillers of Scotland, for a Repeal of the Malt Tax. In favour of Reform, by Lord DACRE, from Chesham:—By Earl GREY, from a District of the County of Carlow:—By the Earl of RADNOR, from Mirfield and Marlborough. By the same noble Earl, from Aylesbury, and two other places, for a Repeal of the Malt Duties; and from Charing, in Kent, against the infliction of the Punishment of Death for crimes against Property. By the Marquis CAMDEN, from Roscommon, in Ireland, praying for the Extension of the Elective Franchise to Roman Catholics in the same manner as to Protestants. By Earl GREY, from Mayo, for a Revision of the Grand Jury Laws. By the Earl of ROSEBERY, from Steam-Boat Owners of Edinburgh and Stirling, against the proposed Tax on Steam-Boats.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Wednesday, March 16, 1831.

MINUTES.] Bills. The Sugar Duties, read a first time. The Waterloo Bridge New Street, read a second time. The Canada Lands, and Canada Revenues, read a third time.

On the Motion of Sir J. Newport, the Nineteenth Report of the Commissioners of Judicial Inquiry in Ireland, on the subject of the Prerogative Court there, was referred to a Select Committee, and the Committee appointed.

Returns ordered. On the Motion of Mr. Guest, the Population, according to the census of 1821, of each County in England and Wales; shewing against each County the annual value of real property and of income, respectively, upon which the Property-tax in 1815 was assessed:—On the Motion of Mr. Alderman Wood, the Duty charged on Hops grown in the United Kingdom in 1830; distinguishing the old and the new duty, the several districts, and the amount of duty charged in each district respectively; the total number of statute acres of Land in the United Kingdom, under the cultivation of Hops in the year 1830; distinguishing the number of acres in each parish, and in each collection; the quantity of Hops exported from the United Kingdom to foreign parts, in the year ending 5th January, 1831; distinguishing the countries to which the said Hops have been exported; also, British from Foreign growths, and the quantities to each country respectively, and the date of the year in which the said British Hops were grown; also, an account of the quantity of Hops imported into the United Kingdom from foreign parts, to the same period, and distinguishing the countries from which the said Hops have been imported, and quantities respectively; the total number of barrels of Beer exported from England and Scotland to Ireland, and from Ireland to England and Scotland; distinguishing the number of barrels so exported to each kingdom, from 5th January, 1830, to 10th October, 1830; the total number of barrels of Beer exported from England, Ireland, and Scotland, to foreign countries; distinguishing the said countries, and the quantities to each country respectively; and also, each Kingdom from which the said Beer was exported, with the amount of Drawback paid thereon, from 5th January, 1830, to 5th January, 1831; the quantity of all the different sorts of Beer made in Great Britain, from 5th January, 1830, to 10th October, 1830, stated in barrels, the rates of Duty per barrel, and the total amount thereof; the number of barrels of strong, table, and intermediate Beer, chargeable to the Duties of Excise, brewed in Great Britain, from 5th January, 1830, to 10th October, 1830; distinguishing the number of barrels brewed within the limits of the chief office, and within each of the several collections, particularizing the quantity brewed by public brewers, licensed victuallers, intermediate brewers, and retail brewers in each collection, and shewing the quantity of Malt used in each collection in making such Beer; also, the number of Brewers, Retail Brewers, Licensed Victuallers, and Intermediate Brewers, in Great Britain; distinguishing the number of each, within the limits of the chief office of Excise, and in each of the several collections, and setting forth the number of Licensed victuallers who brew their own Beer, from 5th January, 1830, to 10th October, 1830; the number of Brewers, Licensed Victuallers, and persons licensed under the Act "to permit the general Sale of Beer by retail," in the United Kingdom; distinguishing the number of each within the limits of the chief office of Excise, and in each of the several collections, and setting forth the number of licensed victuallers, and of persons licensed to sell Beer by retail, who brew their own Beer, and shewing the total quantity of Malt used for the brewing of Beer by such parties respectively, and particularizing the quantities used by brewers, licensed victuallers, and persons licensed to sell Beer by retail, in each collection, from 10th October, 1830, to 5th January, 1831; also, the total number of gallons of proof Spirits of the manufacture or distillation of the United Kingdom, that paid Duty for home consumption, in each kingdom, in each year, from 5th January, 1828, to 5th January, 1831, the rate of Duty per imperial gallon at proof, and the total amount of Duty at that rate for each kingdom, and shewing the total number of imperial proof gallons of such Spirits, and total amount of Duty thereon for the whole United Kingdom, for each of these years; the total number of proof gallons of Rum, Brandy, Geneva, and all other foreign spirits that paid Duty in each kingdom, in each year, from 5th January, 1828, to 5th January, 1831; the rate of Duty per imperial gallon at proof, and amount thereof; and total number of gallons of all kinds, and total duty thereon, for each kingdom; and total number of gallons of each kind, and total duty thereon; and total number of gallons of all kinds, and total duty thereon, for the United Kingdom, in each of these years; also, the amount of Duty paid on Wax and Spermaceti Candles, from 5th January, 1830, to 5th January, 1831; the amount of Duty paid on foreign Wax, imported in the last three years; also, the number of Bushels of Malt charged with Duty, and the amount of the Malt Duty, between October and January, 1829, 1830, and 1831, and the whole quantity of Malt made between 5th January, 1830, and 5th January, 1831.

Petitions presented. In favour of the Ministerial plan of Reform, by Mr. Alderman Wood, from St. Botolph, Aldgate; Cripplegate Within, Cripplegate Without, Bishopsgate, and Langborne Wards:—By Mr. C. Dundas, from Hungerford and Haddington:—By Mr. O'Connell, signed by 3,000 persons, from Drogheda:—By Mr. T. Dundas, from the Mayor and Corporation of the City of York:—By Mr. Alderman Waithman, from the Livery of London in Common Hall assembled; from the Parish of St. Dunstan; and from the Inhabitants of the Artillery Ground:—By Mr. C. Tyrrell, from Stowemarket:—By Mr. Strutt, from Belper, Swanwick, Dugfield, Holbrook, Heage, and Lea, Derbyshire:—By Lord Morpeth, from Sheffield, signed by 13,000 persons in two days; from Huddersfield, by 7,500; from Leeds; from the Freemen of York, resident in Leeds; from Whitby; from Bradford, Eccleshill, and Tadcaster:—By Mr. Hodges, from Chatham, Tenterden, Aylesford, and Gouldhurst:—By Mr. Webb, from the Mayor and Common Council of Gloucester:—By Lord Loughborough, from Dysart:—By Mr. Payne, from Chipping Norton:—By Mr. Guest, from Merthyr Tydvil. By Mr. Alderman Waithman, for the Repeal of the Coal Duties, from the Ward of Bishopsgate; for a Duty on foreign Cordage, from the Rope-makers of the Port of London; and in favour of the Vestries Bill, from St. Pancras. By Mr. W. Patten, from Wigan, against the Renewal of the East-India Company's Charter; also, a Petition from Warrington, with between 11,000 and 12,000 signatures, in favour of Reform, but requiring the Vote by Ballot. By Mr. Campbell, several from the Hebrides and the Western Islands of Scotland, complaining of severe Distress, and praying against the Removal of the Duty on Foreign Barilla; and from Dunoon, against the proposed Duty on Steam Navigation. For a Reduction of Taxes and a Commutation of Tithes, by Mr. C. Tyrrell, from Benshall:—By Mr. Guest, from Newcastle (Glamorgan):—By Sir W. Guise, from Berkeley:—By Sir W. Foulkes, from Middleton and North Walsham. By Lord Morpeth, from the Grand Jury Sessions of Wakefield, praying that the Assizes might be held at that Town; and from Guisborough, in favour of the Local Jurisdiction Bill. For Abolishing the Punishment of Death for Crimes against Property, by Mr. Briscoe, from Ashford and Charing; and from certain persons confined in the Marshalsea, against the Bill to prevent Debtors defrauding their Creditors. In favour of the Grants to the Kildare-street Society, by Mr. Sergeant Lefroy, from Moydow, Roscommon:—By Mr. Maxwell, from the Clergy, Gentry, and Freeholders of the County of Cavan:—By Mr. Shaw, from the Inhabitants of Donegal, in the County of Donegal. By Mr. O'Ferrall, from Navan, against the Grand Jury Assessment. By Mr. Maxwell, from the Clergy and Inhabitants of Ballymachugh, Cavan, praying for a General Fast. By Mr. Shaw, from the Shipowners of Dublin, against the new Timber Duties:—By Lord M. W. Graham, from Dumbarton:—By Lord Loughborough, from Kirkaldy:—By Sir G. Clerk, from Shipowners of Leith. For the Repeal of the Union, by Mr. O'Connell, from the Parish of Munchin, Limerick; and from the Lathmakers and Shipwrights of Dublin:—By Mr. O'Ferrall, from the Tradesmen of Athy. By Sir R. Ferguson, from the manufacturers of Stockport, in favour of the Bill for regulating the Hours of Work in Cotton Manufactories.

PETITIONS IN FAVOUR OF REFORM.] Sir *Ronald Ferguson* said, he had to present Petitions in favour of the Bill now before the House, for effecting a Reform in the Representation, from Haddington, from the Incorporation of Hammermen in the borough of Dundee, (who stated, that though this Bill would deprive them of certain rights, still, as it would produce great practical good, they would willingly resign those rights), and from the Royal burgh of Kinghorn. It was (the gallant general said) a sufficient answer to the observation, as to "corporation robberies," which had been made some evenings since by the learned member for Boroughbridge, to state, that the corporations in Scotland were generally in favour of this measure.

Sir *C. Wetherell.*—Do not those corporators take oaths to defend those corporate rights, which they now wish to abrogate?

Sir *Ronald Ferguson.*—I do not know what oaths they have taken; but if they have taken such oaths, the sooner they break them the better.

Mr. *O'Connell.*—Those persons cannot have taken any oath that can bind them to oppose the law of the land—to set themselves in array against an Act of Parliament. When that which they swore to defend was removed by law, the oath they had taken ceased to operate.

Sir *C. Wetherell* said, he could not remain silent when he heard so jesuitical a definition of the obligation of an oath, as that which had just been given. He could not allow such a demoralizing principle to go forth unnoticed. He knew very well, that if the law removed a previously existing right, he who had sworn to defend it was absolved from his oath, because that which he had sworn to defend no longer existed; but no man was justified, when no law of abrogation had been passed, in taking steps, of his own accord, to subvert a right which was in full force. It had been understood in this country, up to the present time (and it would continue so to be understood until men's consciences were reformed as well as the Constitution), that a man who took an oath to defend certain privileges, violated that oath when he attempted to overturn them.

Mr. Alderman *Wood* was perfectly convinced, that the learned Gentleman did not know anything about the oaths which were taken to support corporate rights. So far as the preservation of the right to elect mayor, sheriffs, &c., was concerned, an oath was taken; but were individuals, on that account, to be prevented from stating their opinions, when a system of Reform was proposed—were they to be told, if they expressed that opinion, that they had violated their oaths?

Sir *Ronald Ferguson* said, he believed that in these corporations no oath was taken, except to be faithful to the public good. These petitioners, he maintained, were not abandoning their corporation rights. The corporations would remain, with respect to their privileges, as they were at present; but those individuals wished no longer to be self-elected bodies. He here wished to state, that he was instructed by his constituents to contradict the assertion made by the learned member for Boroughbridge, on a former evening, with respect to a naked woman having been paraded through the streets of Nottingham, as the representative of the Goddess of Reason, some years ago. He was informed that no such circumstance had occurred.

Sir *C. Wetherell* said, he never asserted that a naked woman was paraded through the streets of Nottingham; but that a strumpet, representing the Goddess of Reason, and dressed in a particular manner, was carried about seated on a chair; which was the fact. He begged leave to observe, that he had not obtruded himself upon the attention of the House on this occasion. The challenge had come from the gallant General, who had coupled his name with the presentation of a Scotch petition. He had, he was aware, used strong language, when he heard the gallant General say, that "the sooner a body of individuals broke their oaths, the better." It was the gallant General, and not he, who was accountable for his warmth; and he would say, that if he again heard similar observations, he would not hesitate to use equally strong language in repelling them.

Sir *Ronald Ferguson* assured the hon. and learned Gentleman, that, in referring to him, he had not the least idea of offending him, or of exciting his irritability. He admitted that he had, perhaps, gone too far, when he said the sooner these oaths were broken the better.

The *Attorney General* said, that the learned Gentleman was misinformed as to the exhibition of a female, representing the Goddess of Reason, at Nottingham, during the election in 1800. It was stated to him that no such thing had occurred. He must also observe, that the petitioners had not violated their oaths.

Sir *C. Wetherell* insisted, that such an exhibition as he had alluded to did take place at Nottingham in 1800. Why, he had himself sat in the chair in which the representative of the Goddess of Reason had been carried. He could explain the circumstance. The Committee appointed to try the merits of the election for Nottingham, in 1800, sat in the Court of Chancery, and the chair to which he had referred, ornamented with ribands, &c., was produced before that Committee. It was afterwards placed in a corner of the Court, and the individual who then addressed the House, had actually sat in it.

Mr. *O'Connell* said, that if the definition given of the obligation of an oath were, as the learned Gentleman asserted, "jesuitical," the answer which had been given to it appeared to him to be "bigotted," and he by no means wondered at that circumstance, when he recollected the quarter from which it came. Those who would willingly deprive their fellow-men of their best rights, would not, of course, hesitate to use libellous expressions. He, however, had long been accustomed to treat such expressions with perfect indifference.

Petition to be laid on the Table.

IRISH BANKRUPTCY LAWS.] Mr. O'Connell having presented a Petition from an individual, complaining of the operation of the Irish Bankruptcy Laws,

Mr. *Hume* asked the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Stanley), whether it was the intention of the Government to redeem the pledge given last Session with respect to these laws; and whether it was their intention to assimilate the laws of England and Ireland, on the subject of Bankruptcy?

Mr. *Stanley* replied, that he had quite enough on his hands already, and he did not think himself bound by all the pledges of the former Government; but he believed the Bankrupt-laws were under the consideration of the Irish Attorney General, and that some measure on the subject would be brought in as soon as possible.

Mr. *Lefroy* said, he had lately had some conversation with the Solicitor General for Ireland on this subject, and could say, that it was the intention of that hon. Gentleman to propose the assimilation of the laws of England and Ireland.

Mr. *Hume* said, that every Session there was promising, but never performing. He had expected something better.

Mr. *Rice* suggested to the hon. member for Middlesex, whether it would not be better to wait a little while, to ascertain the extent of the alterations about to be proposed in the Bankrupt-laws of this country, before they attempted to alter those laws for Ireland, otherwise they might alter this year, only to alter more extensively the next. He was, however, as much in favour of the principle of the alteration as the hon. Member himself.

IRISH VESTRY ACT.] Mr. *O'Connell* presented a Petition from a Parish in Ireland, against the Irish Vestry Act, and took occasion to observe, that the new bill, introduced by the right hon. Gentleman opposite (Mr. Stanley), so far from being an improvement, was merely an alteration of details, which were a matter of indifference, while, in everything that was really important, it aggravated, to a most painful extent, the mischiefs which the Irish complained of, and which formed the continual source of uneasiness and discontent.

Mr. *Stanley* denied that the bill was open to this imputation, as the hon. Member would find, when he had examined it attentively, for he could not believe that he had done so, when he heard such observations respecting it. He conceived, however, that the proper course would be, to discuss the principle when they came to the second reading, and he would not, therefore, enter into its details on the presentation of a petition.

Mr. *S. Rice* said, that the object of the bill was, to throw the burthen on the property of the landlords, and take it off the poor tenantry. That was the intention of the bill, and of its framers, and if they had not succeeded, the hon. Member could exert himself when the Bill came into Committee, to make it effective for that purpose.

COAL TRADE OF THE PORT OF LONDON.] Mr. F. Lewis moved for leave to bring in a Bill to alter and amend the Laws affecting the importation and sale of Coals in London, and the districts adjoining.

Mr. *Bell* took that opportunity to ask the noble Lord (Althorp), whether it was his intention to make any distinction between the duty laid on the exportation of small and large coal?

Lord *Althorp* replied, that it was the

intention of Government to propose a duty of 2*s.* on small coal, and of 3*s.* 6*d.* on large coal.

Sir *J. Newport* wished the hon. Gentleman would make his Bill general, so that the people might receive all the advantages intended for them by the late repeal of the coal duties.

Mr. *F. Lewis* must decline acceding to the right hon. Baronet's wishes; what he had undertaken was quite enough for an unsupported individual like himself to perform; and were he to extend his Bill, in conformity to the suggestion of the right hon. Baronet, he should only mar his own object.

Mr. *Hunt* hoped, that no compensation would be given to the meters, who were parties to the most dishonest transactions; and he trusted that they were now to be got rid of.

Leave given.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Thursday, March 17, 1831.

MINUTES.] Bills. The Churches Building, read a third time.

Petitions presented. In favour of Reform, by Lord DURHAM, from Old and New Brentford, and from Ealing:—By the Earl of RADNOR, from Ramsgate, Market Lavington, and West Lavington:—By the Duke of RICHMOND, from Joseph Sparrow. By the same noble Duke, from the Clergy, &c., of Hailsham, Sussex, praying for a Repeal of that part of the Beer Act, which allows Beer to be drunk on the premises. By Lord CALTHORPE, from the Clergy and Churchwardens of Bristol, for additional facilities for the Building of Churches; and from the Clergy and Churchwardens of Kingston-on-Hull. By the Marquis of LONDONDERRY, from the Chamber of Commerce of Londonderry, for an inquiry into the misapplication of Funds by the Corporation of Londonderry; from the Newtownards, for the Abolition of the Duty on Sugar produced by free labour.

BREACH OF PRIVILEGE — CASE OF LIEUTENANT WOODCOCK.] Earl Grey moved, that Lieutenant Thomas Woodcock, who had written a letter to Lord Farnham, which was considered as a Breach of Privilege, be called to the Bar.

The *Lord Chancellor* asked the Deputy Usher of the Black Rod, whether Lieutenant Thomas Woodcock was in attendance, and was answered in the affirmative. His Lordship having given directions, Lieutenant Thomas Woodcock was called in and placed at the Bar. Mr. Courtney came to the Bar, and showed him a letter, and the Lord Chancellor inquired whether that letter, addressed to a noble Peer of this House, was written by him?

Lieutenant Woodcock replied, that it was, and that the signature and address were his.

The letter was then read, and the substance was, that the writer had observed in *The Sun* Newspaper of the 22nd of February, a report of some remarks made in the House by Lord Farnham, on the conduct of the writer, in having encouraged the populace of Ireland to resist the payment of tithes — that the half-pay Lieutenant of Dragoons mentioned by the noble Lord, must have applied to him—that the accusation was a base and false one, and that the writer demanded that the noble Lord should give up the author of the calumny, or that he himself must be held responsible; that the writer owed the noble Lord no account of his actions, but that he could prove that he had not encouraged the populace on the occasion mentioned to resist the payment of tithes, but that, on the contrary, he had persuaded them to disperse without disturbance.

The *Lord Chancellor*:—Have you anything to say in justification or excuse of your conduct, in writing that letter?

Lieutenant Woodcock replied, that he had nothing to say in justification, as he was now satisfied that it admitted of no justification. By way of excuse and apology, he had to say, that the letter was written and sent to the noble Lord in a moment of irritation, occasioned by the imputations on his character, and without being aware at the time that it was a Breach of their Lordships' Privileges; and that he had since sent a written apology to the noble Lord, with which he hoped the noble Lord was satisfied.

The *Lord Chancellor*:—You must withdraw; but remain in attendance.

Lord *Farnham*:—The apology which has been made to me is full and ample, and perfectly satisfactory. I have, therefore, nothing to say or propose, as far as I am personally concerned. As to the matter of your Lordships' privileges, I leave it in your Lordships' hands.

Earl *Grey* observed, that there could be no doubt that this was a manifest Breach of the Privileges of the House, and their Lordships were indebted to the noble Lord (Farnham) for bringing the matter before them. But, as the noble Lord had stated that an ample and satisfactory apology had been made to him, and as an apology had been made to the House, and the error ascribed to a momentary irritation, on account of an imputation on the writer's character, it did appear that their Lordships ought not to proceed with more severity than in similar cases. In 1810 a precedent had occurred, which was exactly in point. In that year, a Colonel Ross and a Mr. Alexander Maxwell had committed a similar Breach of Privilege. They were brought to the Bar of the House, and stated, that they had acted from an erroneous impression, and without any intention to violate the privileges of the House, and apologised for what they had done. The House, on that occasion, resolved, that the writing in that case was a Breach of Privilege; and secondly, that, in consideration of the apology made, and the offence having apparently proceeded from inadvertence, they should be reprimanded by the Lord Chancellor, and discharged. This was the slightest degree of notice that could be taken of the present case. He moved, therefore, first, that the Letter in question was a Breach of the Privileges of the House, second, that Lieutenant Thomas Woodcock be called in and reprimanded by the Lord Chancellor, and then Discharged.

The Resolutions were agreed to, and Lieutenant Woodcock was again brought to the Bar.

The *Lord Chancellor* said to him: Thomas Woodcock, this House, after due consideration had in this matter, has resolved that the letter which you sent to a Peer of Parliament, relative to words supposed to have been spoken by him in his place as a Peer of Parliament, is a manifest Breach of the Privileges of this House. That letter contains expressions and insinuations, both express and implied, which, if permitted to go unnoticed and uncensured, would make Peers of Parliament liable to be questioned out of the House for words spoken in it. The privileges of Parliament are given by the law and constitution of this country for the benefit of the people, and they are not merely the privileges of Members of Parliament on their own account, but the privileges of the subjects of the realm; and if the noble person to whom the letter was addressed had neglected to bring the matter before the House, he, as well as you, would have been guilty of a Breach of Privilege, and have tarnished the honour and dignity of this House. It is absolutely necessary, in order to preserve the freedom of Debate in Parliament, that no Member of Parliament should be questioned out of it for whatever he may say in it, and if matters of this kind were suffered to pass without notice, there would be an end to the dearest, the highest and most important functions of the House. But as you have made an apology to the noble Lord, with which he is satisfied, and as you have apologised to the House, and flung yourself on its mercy, this House, tempering justice with mercy, and considering that you have been brought from a great distance, and necessarily put to great expense and inconvenience, has resolved that you be merely censured and reprimanded by the Lord Chancellor, as I hereby do reprimand you, and then discharge you from your attendance.

THE LORD CHANCELLOR AND THE KING'S GUARD.] The Marquis of *Londonderry* took that opportunity of calling the attention of their Lordships to an occurrence which, in his mind, deserved as much of their notice as the business which had just occupied them. They had just reprimanded a military person for having disregarded their privileges: and standing, as he did, in the situation of one attached to the same profession, he felt himself called upon to sustain the military authority, which had been as he understood, infringed, on a late occasion, by a noble Personage then present. He would, therefore, call upon his noble and gallant friend, the Commander-in-chief, to state whether there was any foundation for a statement which had appeared in the newspapers, and by which it would seem that the authority of his gallant friend had been treated with very little ceremony. Their Lordships must see how necessary it was that military orders should be upheld, and that no individual, however high his station, should be permitted to contravene them; and he was sure that, when it was alleged that the first law-officer of the country had broken through that authority, some explanation was due, and would, he had no doubt, be given. It was not too much for him to say, that the first law-officer of the State had no more power to break through the regulations imposed by military discipline than any other person. He would not trouble the House with further details, but state, that the Lord Chancellor had been charged with forcing his way through the King's guard on the day of the last Drawing-room. From the statement that had appeared in public, it would seem that all regard to military form was cast aside; but he had no doubt the statement was overcharged, for it was, in his opinion, impossible for the noble and learned Lord to have acted in so violent a manner. It so happened, however, that he had been informed of the circumstance by a noble friend of his, who was in part a witness of the transaction, and, in consequence, he had made further inquiries; from all which he collected, though there might be exaggeration in the accounts that appeared in the papers, there was no doubt of the main fact, that the King's guard had been forced by the Lord Chancellor. In order, therefore, that their Lordships should be in possession of the facts, he would ask his noble and gallant friend three questions—first, whether the King's guard had been forced by the Lord Chancellor, on the day of the last Drawing-room? Second, Whether that arose from mistake, or from a misconception of the orders given to the guard? Third, Whether the officer whose guard was forced had been put under arrest, or had satisfactorily explained his conduct? He hoped his noble friend would give the House and the country an explanation of the circumstances, as he was sure their Lordships were as deeply impressed with the necessity of maintaining the military discipline of the armed force, as they were of upholding the privileges of their House.

Lord *Hill* said, that he had no difficulty in giving the explanation required by his noble friend. In the first place he must state, that in the year 1815, an order proceeded from the late King, relative to the arrangements to be observed in the Parks on the occasions of his birth day, which order was still in existence; and it was in particular commanded that no carriage should be allowed to pass through the Horse Guards on days of ceremony. On the day of the late Drawing-room, the officer in command gave the proper orders to the non-commissioned officer of his guard, and a corporal was stationed outside the gate to prevent any carriage driving in. Several carriages had been stopped in the course of the morning, and when the Lord Chancellor's carriage came to the passage, the corporal held up his hand to the coachman to keep back; but the horses' heads having got inside the gate, the sentinel laid hold of the reins, and prevented further ingress. The Lord Chancellor then, as he understood, inquired why he was detained, and, being informed that the soldier acted by orders, he desired to see the officer of the guard; and when the officer appeared, he first inquired did he know him. The officer replied, that he believed he had the honour of speaking to the Lord Chancellor. The Lord Chancellor then inquired why was he detained? and the officer informed him, that no one but the Speaker of the House of Commons had the privilege of going through with the exception of the Earl of Shaftesbury, who had obtained leave for that particular day. The Lord Chancellor having asked, was he to understand that he could not go through, and being answered that it was not possible, said, then "we must go back," on which the officer waved his hand to the sentinel to let go the reins, and the coachman, who, it was supposed, had not heard the last observation of the Lord Chancellor, whipped his horses, and passed through the gate before he could be stopped. He had taken care to see the officer who had been then on duty, and the corporal and soldier, and to make inquiries into the subject, and he was bound to say, that after the fullest investigation, he came to the conclusion that the officer was not to blame, and that the corporal and soldier had both fulfilled their duty, and he was quite satisfied, from his communication with the noble and learned Lord himself, that the Lord Chancellor had no idea whatever of forcing the guard.

The *Lord Chancellor* said, that he must feel grateful to the noble Marquis for having called on his noble friend for the explanation which he had just made to their Lordships; but in the first place he should say, that he had not been aware of the comments that had been made on his conduct with regard to this transaction until his particular attention had been lately called to it. He must, at the same time, be allowed to mention that he wished the noble Marquis had chosen any other day but this for the discussion of such a subject, and that he, at least, had entered upon it without connecting it with that reprimand, which he, as Speaker of their Lordships' House, had just delivered, in obedience to their commands. He saw no reason why this case should be put in converse to the other, and because a military attack (which, by the way, the other was not) had been made on the privileges of the House, it should be held forth that an attack had been made by a civil functionary, a Member of that House upon the military. It was thus he had been put on his trial by the noble Marquis—not at the Bar, certainly, but on the Woolsack; but he must tell the noble Marquis that there was no more comparison between the two cases than existed between any of the two most opposite things in the world. Still he could not be otherwise than obliged by the noble Marquis having drawn forth the clear and explicit statement of the noble and gallant Lord, and he had little more to do than to confirm the statement of his noble friend. He could assure their Lordships, that no one in the world thought less of the state and pomp of the office which he held than he did. The observances of that state and pomp were to him certainly the most irksome and the most oppressive parts of his public duty; and it was not from any foolish wish of passing through the Horse Guards, instead of going round by Piccadilly and down Constitution-hill,—though, indeed, this was the way he should have preferred, if time permitted, inasmuch as he would have attained a little more air and exercise—that he had ordered his carriage to the Horse Guards. But the fact was, he had been sitting in the House the greater part of the day, having made a great effort to bring to a conclusion the hearing of a cause which had been long protracted, in which one of the parties was in distress, and in which it was, therefore material to save expense; and he had extended his sittings for an hour longer than he intended, in order to keep down an expense to that partly of 80*l*. or 90*l*. But, as the time approached when he ought to be at the Drawing-room, he thought he should greatly shorten the road if he ordered his carriage to go through the Horse Guards. He should mention that he had before gone through the Horse Guards on the occasion of the Queen's Drawing-room; and when he was stopped, on the occasion in question, he supposed it was done by mistake. On being told too by the officer of the guard, that only the Speaker of the House of Commons had permission to pass, he observed, it was very extraordinary that the same privilege should be denied to the Speaker of the House of Lords. The officer then said, that Lord Shaftesbury also had the privilege for that day; and when he heard that, he was confirmed in his opinion that the whole arose from a mistake—for he might mention, as their Lordships had been occupied on the subject of privileges, that his noble friend was only Chairman of the Committees, and he concluded that his noble friend was not the person to whom the accommodation, which he thought was meant for the Speakers of both Houses of Parliament, was intended. The officer, however, satisfied him that there was no mistake, and he then said, that he must turn back. He would now mention a circumstance which he had been compelled to withhold from the noble Marquis when he had the kindness to inform him of his intention to bring this matter before the House, which was, that he had given orders to turn back, but he supposed the footman had not communicated them on the instant to the coachman—and certainly he was never more surprised in his life than when he found his coachman had taken him through, and he was in the Park before he could pull the check-string. Certainly, he then thought it would have been ridiculous to have turned back, as the mischief had been done by the mistaken zeal of his coachman, who had acted upon his former peremptory orders to make as much haste as possible. He had, in his conversation with the noble Marquis, taken the whole blame upon himself, being desirous to save the man; and he could only assure their Lordships, that he was the last person, either in or out of the House, to set an example of placing military discipline at defiance, and that he was far from entertaining the idea of forcing the King's Guard. He did not, indeed, well see how he could do that single-handed, even with the aid of the Mace and the Purse. English guards were not to be forced by the one, nor to be bribed by the other—and far be it from him to make the attempt. Nothing could be more foreign from him, than to sanction the breaches of any of the orders of his late or his present Majesty; and he entertained too high a regard for, and was too well aware of the necessity of maintaining military discipline, to attempt to violate it. He had only to add, that nothing could have been more correct than the conduct of the officer who commanded the guard—and he must also say, that the corporal and the soldier behaved with strict propriety.

EXPLANATIONS.] The Earl of *Fife* presented a Petition from Banff, for Parliamentary Reform. He would take advantage of that occasion, to correct a mis-statement which had appeared in some of the public prints, of what had fallen from him on a former occasion. He was represented as having disapproved of the measures of legal Reform brought forward by the noble and learned Lord on the Woolsack. This was an error. So far from disapproving of the bills brought under their Lordships' consideration by that noble and learned Lord, he cordially approved of them, regarding the noble and learned Lord as one pre-eminently competent to effect those improvements in our laws, which the growing intelligence, and the growing liberty of the people required. His censures were intended to apply to two bills, which had passed that House under the auspices of the noble and learned Baron opposite, (Wynford) as he conceived them to involve principles seriously affecting the liberty of the subject. One of those bills,—the Suits in Common Law bill,—went in degree, to interfere,—indeed dispense, with that safeguard of liberty, Trial by Jury; and the other, the Frauds on Creditors' bill, would place the most dangerous power in the hands of creditors. By the law as it stood, the creditor had, under certain circumstances, the option of redress between the person and the property of his debtor; but the noble and learned Lord's bill would give him a power over both, which no wise and liberal-minded man could, as it struck him, regard without horror. He regretted that bills so constitutionally objectionable should have passed that House *sub silentio*, and that, too, in the presence of those competent from their professional habits, to hold them up to the House in their true colours. The laws of arrest for debt, as they now stood, were an anomaly which called loudly for amendment; and either their Lordships should forego their own privileges of personal exemption, or they must equalize more than at present the relations in which they and their less wealthy and less privileged fellow-subjects stood with respect to creditors.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Thursday, March 17, 1831.

MINUTES.] Bills. The Churches Building, read a first time. The Sugar Duties, read a second time. The Interpleader, Witness Examination, Prohibition and Mandamus, and Arbitration (Lord TENTERDEN's Bills), committed.

Returns ordered. On the Motion of Mr. WILKS, that the Churchwardens of every Parish, and the Chapelwardens of every Chapelry in England and Wales, at the time of finally settling their respective accounts for their year of office, commencing at Easter, 1830, and ending at Easter, 1831, do prepare an account, shewing the total amount of Money received by them as such Churchwardens or Chapelwardens for such year; distinguishing the monies received from any church-rate or chapel-rate, and from any estates or funds applicable towards the repairs of such churches or chapels, and from and out of any poor-rates, or other public monies in aid or instead of such church or chapel rate, or for any mortuary, or burial fees, and for any pews or sittings in such churches or chapels; and also, the total amount of Money expended by them in that year; distinguishing in the account of monies expended, the money paid for the repairing the church or chapel, and for any furniture and ornaments thereto, and for and about the worship of Almighty God therein, and for any salaries to clerks, sextons, or other officers, and for any other church purposes; and that such churchwardens do, as soon as may be, transmit such account to the Clerk of the House of Commons, with any observations that may be thought necessary.

Petitions presented. For Reform, by Mr. HODGES, from Ramsgate, Hawkhurst, and Deal:—By Mr. HUNT, from Kidderminster and Foston:—By Mr. J. MARTIN, from Tewkesbury:—By Mr. LEGH KECK, from Castle Donnington, Market Harborough, and Loughborough:—By Mr. EVANS, from the Borough of Leicester, signed by 7,000 persons; from Melton Mowbray; and from Sileby, in Leicestershire:—By Lord STANLEY, from Tiverton:—By Mr. CURTEIS, from Maxwell Town:—By Mr. JAMES JOHNSTONE, from Dumfermling. Against any Alteration in the Timber Duties, by Mr. GREENE, from the Cinque Ports:—By Mr. R. GORDON, from Aberdeen:—By Lord LOWTHER, from Maryport and Whitehaven:—By Mr. EWART, three from Merchants and others at Liverpool:—By Sir M. S. STEWART, from the Chamber of Commerce at Greenock; from the Shipowners of the Port of Glasgow; and from the Shipwrights, Sailmakers, and Ropemakers of Greenock. By the same hon. Member, from the Weavers of Paisley, and the Calico-printers of Scotland, against the additional Duty on Cotton Wool. By Mr. LEGH KECK, from Hinckley, for the Amendment of the Law relating to Masters and Servants. For the Repeal of the Sale of Beer Bill, by the same hon. Member, from Licensed Victuallers at Loughborough. By Lord LOWTHER, from Kendal, against the Registry for Deeds Bill. By Mr. EWART, from the Coach-masters of Liverpool, against Steam Carriages. For the Abolition of Slavery, by Mr. EVANS, from Berkeley:—By Mr. WILKS, from Tunbridge.

PETITIONS FOR REFORM.] Mr. Hodges presented a Petition in favour of the Reform Bill from the Lathe of Aylesford.

Mr. *Bernal* said, he had been requested to support the petition, and which he would do most cordially.

Mr. *Horace Twiss*.—I rise, not for the purpose of entering into the merits of this petition, but to repel a charge which, for the last week, has been daily repeated against me, that in the original debate on this Bill I spoke of the middle classes with ridicule; and though at the earliest possible moment—that is, when the noble Lord (the Chancellor of the Exchequer) concluded the speech in which he misunderstood me as implying such a ridicule,—I distinctly disavowed any expression or insinuation to any such effect, yet the charge has been circulated in a most industrious manner out of doors, and even repeated here, in a way which, after my immediate explanation, I cannot but think was as unparliamentary as it was calculated to prove injurious. The classes in whose hands I said, and still say, not that all franchise would be dangerous, for they have much already, but that it would be dangerous to place this monopoly of franchise, were not those who, even in the largest phraseology, could be termed the middle classes of this country. Of the middle classes I never spoke at all—the phrase "middle classes" never passed my lips. The idea of the middle classes was not even in my mind, for my argument related to a totally different order of persons. It was to the predominance of a body far below the middle class, both in property and intelligence, that I objected; and even of this body, as a body, I spoke in no terms of disrespect; on the contrary, though I objected to place the overbearing majority of votes throughout all the town elections of England in the hands of a single class, and that the lowest in property and intelligence, and comprising, together with many whose respectability is unquestionable, many other very dangerous politicians, yet I distinctly, and more than once, repeated, that I meant no sort of disparagement to the general bulk even of the lowest rate of voters. I did, and do still, protest against giving to the inhabitants of houses rated at from 10*l.* to 20*l.* (as the printed returns show that this Bill will give to them in every quarter of the kingdom except the Metropolis), a decisive majority, somewhat more than 3-5ths, of the elective power of all the towns in England. I did object to placing this overbearing force within the immediate sphere, not of the respectable solicitors of the country, but of inferior practitioners of the law—the description of persons whom the Act for Petty Courts would bring into operation against the more respectable members of the profession. I did not object to increase the franchise of that lowest kind of shopkeepers who, whether as out-voters or as residents, have always been found the most open to bribery; but I did not object, as has been unaccountably represented, to even the humblest class of my fellow-subjects enjoying, proportionately with every other interest, its just share in that elective power. Neither did it enter into my thoughts to attempt what has been called making merry at their expense. The absurdity which I endeavoured to expose, and that in no strain of merriment or levity, was the absurdity chargeable, not upon the voters, but upon the Bill itself, in making the whole Government of this country, its legislation, its finance, its foreign policy, responsible to a majority composed of the uninformed, however respectable, householders of the manufacturing towns. And as to the middle classes, to whose number I myself belong,—classes which I never once named, nor even alluded to, but which I am daily calumniated as though I had sought to libel—men who, in whatever branch of their various professions, or trades, or pursuits, are placed by their character and intelligence altogether upon a different level from that of the indiscriminate multitude now proposed to be made absolute in all the towns,—in a word, as to all the middle classes, so far from uttering one word of ridicule, I did not even deny their competency for the possession of political power, although I avow myself unwilling, even for the sake of these valuable electors to make any extensive alteration in the principle of the existing constitution.

Petition to lie on the Table.

MANCHESTER RIOTS.] Mr. *Hunt* presented a Petition from Blackley, in the township of Manchester, praying for Reform, and for an inquiry into the Manchester massacre. It was his intention, he said, to bring that subject before the House on some future occasion. Murder, it was said, would out, and he knew no reason why that murder should be palliated more than another. He moved that the Petition be printed.

Lord *Althorp* suggested, that as the language of the petition was so strong, the petition ought not to be printed. His own opinions on the occurrence alluded to were well known.

Petition to lie on the Table.

THE PARISH OF CHRIST CHURCH (SURREY).] Mr. *Hunt* took that opportunity of putting a question to the noble Lord, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, with respect to the parish of Christ Church, Surrey, which contained a population of 10,000 or 12,000 persons. It appeared that the inhabitants of that parish, under the proposed Bill, would not have the right of voting either for the district of Lambeth or for the borough of Southwark. A deputation had waited on him on the subject, and he stated his opinion, that the omission was accidental, and that the framers of the Bill probably supposed that the inhabitants of Christ Church were in the habit of voting for the Borough, of which it was really a part. From some circumstances, however, too tedious to explain, the inhabitants of this parish had never voted for the Borough; and the question he wished to put was, whether the omission of Christ Church in the Bill, as forming part of the Lambeth district, was intentional, or merely an accidental omission?

Lord *Althorp* replied, that he was not sufficiently acquainted with the circumstances to give a direct answer. The hon. member for Preston, however, must be aware that there was a clause in the Bill to enable parishes or districts to be added which had been omitted, and which were not otherwise provided for. Whether the case adverted to by the hon. Gentleman was one to which the clause would apply, he was not prepared to say; but, if the parish of Christ Church had a fair claim, no doubt that claim would be considered.

PETITION AGAINST REFORM.] Colonel *Beresford* presented a Petition from the Corporation of Berwick-upon-Tweed, against the measure of Reform proposed by His Majesty's Ministers. The petitioners complained that the number of resident voters in that borough would be greatly diminished by this Bill in the course of a few years, and insisted strongly on the injustice of that part of the Bill which went to disfranchise the sons and apprentices of freemen in boroughs and cities. The inhabitants of Berwick, too, complained, that the right they possessed to vote for the county would be also destroyed by the Bill.

Sir *Francis Blake* said, he should shortly present to the House another petition from the borough, most numerously signed, of a very opposite tendency. He stated that, to shew that the whole of the inhabitants did not agree with the petitioners.

Mr. *Hume* was a non-resident freeman of Berwick, and he cheerfully gave up that privilege, which the Bill would take away.

Colonel *Sibthorp*, in supporting the petition, took occasion to complain, that he had been in constant attendance on the House for several days, and had not had an opportunity of presenting some petitions which had been intrusted to him. He proposed that the period for receiving petitions should be prolonged to eight o'clock, until after the Reform Bill was disposed of one way or another.

Colonel *Davies* protested against any prolongation of the period for receiving petitions. The hon. and gallant Colonel was anxious, no doubt, to get rid of his petitions, but he was also anxious to get rid of a motion which he had to bring forward.

Lord *Althorp* expressed his willingness to enter into any arrangement which Members considered most convenient for the public benefit. Important as the Reform petitions were, however, Gentlemen must be aware that other public business must be got through.

SECONDARY PUNISHMENTS.] Colonel *Davies* rose, to move for a Committee to inquire into the best mode of giving effect to Secondary Punishments. He regretted that a great increase of crime in this country accompanied our increasing wealth and civilization. Notwithstanding our freedom, we were distinguished above all other countries for numerous crimes. He was sure that did not arise from any evil disposition inherent in the people, but from some defect in our institutions, which made it incumbent on the Legislature to seek out the cause, and apply a remedy. In his opinion, much of the evil arose from the want of a proper system of secondary punishments, and from the imperfections of our prison discipline. He would first advert to the increase of crime. It appeared, from documents laid on the Table, that since 1811, when the number of persons convicted amounted to 3,133, they had increased, in 1827, to 12,564. There was no such increase in other countries. It would appear, on a comparison of the convictions in France and England, that the balance was very considerable against this country. In 1826, the total number of the persons accused of criminal offences in France was 6,988; of these 2,640 were acquitted, and 4,348 convicted. But, in England, during the same year, 16,147 were committed, 5,052 acquitted, or the bills thrown out, 11,095 convicted. Thus it appeared, that there was two-and-a-half times more crime in England, with a population of 14,000,000, than in France, with a population of 32,000,000. Certainly, these accounts presented a contrast very unfavourable to this country, especially when the population of the two countries was taken into account. It was the duty of a good Government to endeavour to repress crime: was this attempted in England?—if so, the attempt had not been successful. There was much of our law which tended to generate or augment crime—for instance, our Revenue laws. But the great evil lay in the manner of administering our penal code with respect to secondary punishments. It was this which fostered crime after having called it into existence. He would remind Members in corroboration of this opinion, of the glorious uncertainty of the law, and its effects in increasing crime. While the chances of escape were greater than the chances of conviction, people would be encouraged to commit crimes. That was now the case in this country, and the law was so uncertain, that no crime was surely followed by its proper punishment. Then, again, the nature of our secondary punishments incited to crime rather than otherwise; for, generally speaking, the condition of men was improved upon conviction and imprisonment. He was satisfied by the evidence taken before a Committee of the House, that imprisoned convicts were better off than our agricultural labourers. They were better clothed, better lodged; and to commit a crime, and be sentenced to what was called hard labour, amounted, in fact, to receiving a very comfortable provision. In the evidence given before the Committee which sat to inquire into criminal convictions and commitments, there were many proofs of this fact—he would quote one or two. Sir John Eardley Wilmot, in his evidence, said,—"In one county, half of the prisoners, at least, are boys under twenty, and many of them come back two, three, or four times to gaol, before they are seventeen or eighteen years old." Talking of boys, he says, "Sometimes I have known them, on the very day they are discharged committed again, and often they are extremely impertinent; they thank you if you transport them, and very often make use of very improper language." Again, another witness, Captain Waldegrave, said, "The diet in our House of Correction is so superior to that of the agricultural labourers, that I think some of them are induced to commit petty offences, for the sake of getting into good winter quarters." Again, Mr. W. Tayne, speaking of the increase of crime at Birmingham, said, "One great cause is the comforts that a man finds in prison; instead of being a check upon his conduct, it is an incitement, comparatively speaking." But this was not only the case in the country, it was so also in the metropolis. In confirmation of this he would read an extract from the Report of the Sub-committee of the Corporation of London on the gaol of Newgate.—"On one point the Committee feel themselves called upon to speak in terms of strong reprobation,—the permission given to the prisoners, both tried and untried, to receive any quantity of cooked food their friends may bring, and a quart of porter a-day. It besides frequently occurs, that the prisoners who have money, employ others to draw their full allowance of beer;"—and here he would ask, why are they allowed any beer?—"so that individuals may obtain a very considerable quantity of liquor. On the female side a chandler's shop is kept, from which the men also obtain tea, sugar, tobacco, and other similar luxuries. The Select Committee cannot forbear here to remark, that the condition of these prisoners is, in many respects, superior to that of the labouring poor. Clothed at the expense of the City of London, an ample allowance of food provided, besides the private supplies, and a very sufficient supply of fuel furnished to each ward, and total remission from labour." Again, Mr. Lister Ellis, who was examined before the Select Committee which sat to inquire into the state of the Poor-laws two years ago, and who is much connected with the management of the workhouse at Liverpool, after giving a statement of the diet of the paupers—a most ample allowance of animal food every day—and after stating that they have leave to go out twice a week to see their friends, said:—"I think they work harder in the workhouse than in the house of correction; there is not one in twenty who is sent to the House of Correction for behaving ill, but universally, on their liberation, they say they would rather be sent back to the house of correction than conform to the rules and regulations of the workhouse in question." Mr. Lister was then asked "If you feed them so well in the workhouse, how is it that they prefer the

House of Correction"? He answered, "they feed them quite as well at the House of Correction, but, with a few exceptions, the labour of the tread-mill is not so irksome as that of picking oakum and pumping water. The treadmill is mere play to out-door labourers." He was aware that a great many Committees had already sat on this subject, and that few practical measures of great utility had resulted from their labours. This, however, ought not to be urged as an argument against further investigation; for two or three Committees sat, and reported on the state of the Metropolitan Police, before the right hon. Baronet, formerly Secretary of State for the Home Department, introduced his salutary reform and improvements into the system of police. One of the principal evils in the present prison discipline, in this country was, a want of uniformity. The portion even of what was called "hard labour" in the different Houses of Correction, varied in every case. He had before him an account of the quantity of work performed at the tread-mill in some of the principal Houses of Correction in this country, which, with the permission of the House, he would read. The hon. Member accordingly read the document which we subjoin below.* After reading it the hon. Member continued. — He had no hesitation in stating it as his deliberate opinion, that hard labour would never reform a prisoner. At present, however, from the small quantity of work that criminals had to perform in gaol, and from the superior food they get there, a premium was held out to the commission of crime. Indeed, if they got good food, they had no objection to such labour as they generally had to perform in prison. He did not think that working at the tread-mill was viewed by any portion of our population as a severe punishment; and consequently, instead of this so called hard labour, accompanied with comfortable diet, solitary punishment and bread and water ought to be substituted. He was justified in believing that there would be great efficacy in this mode of punishment by adequate authority; and he would read some passages from the report of the Prison Discipline Society, in order to shew the advantage of this system over every other. "There has been an experiment tried at Lamberton upon the men in solitary cells, the result of which was different from that at Milbank. At Lamberton, the men on whom the experiment was tried were confined the whole time of their sentence in solitary cells. They appeared as well in health as any class of prisoners who have been visited in this country, and the keeper, who has been thirteen years in the institution stated that the effects of solitary confinement had been extremely good, and that the prisoners all left the cells with a strong determination never to return to them, and no one has yet returned." The Superintendent of the New Jersey Prison also stated "that the greatest improvement that has been made, or can be made, in prison discipline, is by solitary confinement. The solitary cells in this prison, in which one-fourth part of the whole number of prisoners are placed under sentence of the Court, have answered all the purposes which it was ever expected they would, so far as trial of them has been had. No person who has been once confined in them has ever returned to prison." It was also stated, that "few persons were confined beyond eighteen months or two years, and that in most instances an effectual reform is worked. The prisoners are allowed half-a-pound of bread, and the same quantity of oatmeal and vegetables." What a contrast did that afford to the de-

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* *Comparative Statement of Labour performed in the undermentioned Prisons.*

	Hours Labour. (nominally.)		Time actually on the Wheel.		Height of Steps.	Steps in a Minute.	No. of Feet per Day.	
	Summer.	Winter.	Summer.	Winter.			Summer.	Winter.
Bedford County Gaol	10h.	7h.	6h. 40m	4h. 40m.	8 Inches.	20	5333	3733
Berks County Gaol	10	8	6 40	5 20	9 〃	48	14400	11520
Knutsford House of Correction	10	7	6 40	4 40	8¾ 〃	48	14000	9800
Devon County Gaol	7½	6	5 9	4 30	7¼ 〃	48	10701	7830
Durham County Gaol	9	6	6 45	4 30	7 〃	46	10867	6411
Gloucester, Northleach House of Correction.	8½	5	5 12	3 8	8 〃	50	10400	6266
Worcester County Gaol.........	10	8	6 40	5 29	8½ 〃	48	13600	10880

scription given by Sir J. Eardley Wilmot, of the gaols of this country, and of the conduct of the prisoners on being discharged! In consequence of the prisoners mixing together in large masses, in the prisons of this country, they saw nothing but what tended to degrade them. He was convinced that, by adopting the system of solitary confinement, the Legislature would greatly increase the chances of reform, and lessen the expense of imprisonment materially. Two months' solitary confinement, upon bread and water, would be considered by offenders as a severer punishment than twelve months' imprisonment with hard labour, as at present. If a criminal had a family requiring parochial relief, ten months of such assistance would be dispensed with by substituting two months solitary confinement for twelve months in gaol, while the county rates would be saved by the adoption of a regimen of bread and water, instead of the costly diet, for a longer period, at present in use. The majority of the persons sent to a prison entertained no feelings of degradation on that account; the pickpockets of London had no such feelings, and therefore imprisonment was scarcely a punishment to them. The hulks had been mentioned as a means of punishment, and he thought, that if the labour was rendered more severe, and the provisions and accommodation less attractive, the hulks might prove a good punishment. But he was afraid that they were far from being so at present. A very active Magistrate of the City of London—Mr. Alderman Wood—was examined on this point, and he said, "The system of sending to the hulks for seven years is very bad. Convicts, if they behave tolerably well, are allowed to come out at the end of four or five years—many of whom return to their old practices; for they are allowed, during their confinement, constant intercourse with their friends." Another witness, Mr. Gregorie, a Magistrate—said of a person well known by name to most who were in the habit of reading the newspapers,—"Ikey Solomons was a notorious pickpocket thirty years ago, and was sentenced to be transported for life. He was, however, sent to the hulks, where he remained only four years, and was discharged." Again, Mr. Capper, the Superintendent of Convicts, said, "The boys on board the hulks are very lightly worked, and their daily allowance of food is great. The allowance of bread to them is ten ounces a day, seven ounces of beef and soup, three-quarters of a pound of potatoes, and six ounces of oatmeal. The male convicts are equally well-fed." he also states, "that eight out of ten, of both boys and men, return to their old haunts." Was not such an allowance of food too much? Did any hon. Member know an instance of agricultural labourers getting so much? Mr. Lester stated to the Committee on the Poor-laws, "That in the Isle of Sheppey the wages of agricultural labourers are 15*s.* a-week, and that the convicts employed on the public works are a great deal better off than the labouring poor, let the convict be ever so bad." Again, he said, "I consider that the convicts do not work as much nor as long as common labourers; they do not work so many hours, nor do they work so hard, as our common labourers, and they live better. It is a very common thing, when they have served four years, that they leave the ship with from 10*l.* to 40*l.*, and some receive from 60*l.* to 70*l.* on going away from the ships." These convicts were allowed a portion of their earnings. He had no objection to their receiving a small sum when they left the hulks, as it would be cruel to drive them away totally destitute; but he objected to their being allowed to carry away with them anything like the large sum he had mentioned. Mr. Lester, in answer to the question, "Do they work in all weathers?" said, "Whenever there is a shower of rain they are taken to the ships, and I have heard our labourers at 15*s.* per week declare, that if they could commit any act so as to be sure to be condemned to labour in the hulks, they would gladly do it." The hulks ought to be made a place of punishment instead of pleasure, which those condemned to them cannot enjoy out of prison. The allowance of food ought to be greatly reduced, and the convicts restrained from having any intercourse with their friends. They ought to be allowed nothing more than wholesome food, enough to sustain existence, and to be kept from associating together as much as possible. If such a plan were adopted, it would be much better to send convicts to the hulks, than to transport them to Botany Bay. From Mr. Capper's last report it appeared, that the total charge for

4,426 convicts, for the six months, from the 1st of January to the 30th of June, 1830, was 36,500*l.*, and that the total amount of their earnings was estimated at 30,870*l.*; consequently, the total charge to the public was 5,630*l.*, or about 1*l.* 5*s.* per head. Again, the total charge for 3,858 convicts for six months, from the 1st July to the 31st of December, 1830, was 31,672*l.*, while the total earnings amounted to 27,396*l.*; the total charge was, therefore, 4,276*l.*, or about 1*l.* 2*s.* per head. The total charge for each convict per annum was about 2*l.* 8*s.* This expense might be considerably reduced by coarser food and more work, and not giving them any portion of their earnings. The cost of sending a convict to Botany Bay was about 35*l.*, or equal to the cost of maintaining him in the hulks for more than fourteen years. He considered the system of transportation most objectionable; and any individual not satisfied with his situation in this country, had only to commit some crime short of murder, and he was sent out to a land of promise. In Mr. Cunningham's "Letters on the Colony at New South Wales," a work written with great ability, he stated:—The Irish convicts say, they were never half so well off in their lives before,—that they formerly were fed on potatoes, but now they lived on beef, pork, &c." When the convicts arrived at their destination, such was the scarcity of labourers, and such, consequently, the demand for them, that there was a general rush made from Sydney, to obtain the services of the new comers, who, by evidence given in the Third Report of the Committee on Colonial Revenue, page 77, appear to be thus disposed of,—"The mechanics and artificers are generally retained by the government, and the remainder are at once assigned to such free settlers as may require them; in the year 1829, the number applied for was 6878, the number assigned was 4258." Mr. Cunningham also observed, "I question much whether many English labourers live better than our convict servants here, whose weekly ration consists of a sufficiency of flour to make four quartern loaves at least; of seven pounds of beef; two ounces of tea; one pound of sugar; and two ounces of tobacco; with the occasional substitution of two or three quarts of milk daily, for the tea and sugar allowances." He had conversed a great deal with a friend of his who had received a large grant of land in that colony: and having observed to him, that these convicts were as well off as the poorer classes at home, he replied, they were better off, for if they were not well fed, well paid, and clothed by their employers, they (the proprietors of land) could not get any work done by them. When it was considered that this colony cost 400,000*l.*, and that it was a penal settlement; but that it actually served as an incitement to crime, he thought the sooner some inquiry was made into the subject, and some alteration made, the better. When a convict arrived at his destination, he became possessed of all the privileges of the country, and had opportunities of amassing wealth. Mr. Cunningham stated,—"We have individuals, who, fifteen years ago, were working as convicts in the government gangs, now possessed of incomes, larger, by all accounts, than I can mention with a hope to be credited. In fact, it is truly astonishing to see how rapidly many of these men prosper in business." Again, he said,—"All the beautiful legal technicalities which adorn our English laws, and seem to fill the minds of culprits with joy, and the pockets of the lawyers with money, have been duly imported, and are made daily available, as well in the cases of convicts, even at the very instant of suffering the sentence of the law, as in those of freemen who had never before committed any offence." And also,—"It was no uncommon thing to see receivers of stolen goods driving up to court to receive sentence in their carriages, with livery servants. A new and severe course of discipline is now followed; and, in consequence, the press of Sydney is endeavouring, by menaces, to force the governor to return to the old practice, and to deter him from punishing the convicts." As to the enjoyment of stolen property, Mr. Cunningham observed, "A convict, at the termination of his punishment worked his way home as a common sailor in the ship I went home in; the very next year I met him again at Sydney, he having been again transported for a robbery, and allowed to retain the fruits of it, sixty guineas. I cannot see the propriety of permitting the most notorious thieves to retain the property they have dishonestly acquired, in defiance of the rights of those they have robbed. Why could not the fellow I have before alluded to have had the sixty guineas taken from him, and the person he robbed compensated with it as far as it would go? Even the notorious Herring, who robbed the Stirling Bank, carried out gold and jewels to the amount of nearly 1,000*l.*, to revel upon in his captivity." Was it not monstrous that a man should be allowed to retain 1,000*l.*, which never belonged to him? He had heard an instance of an individual who robbed his employers, London bankers; and who, soon after the expiration of his term of transportation, came in his carriage, and asked some of his late fellow clerks to dine with him. Let the House look at the immoral tendency of such a system; particularly if these young men had not had too high a principle to accept the proffered hospitality of such an associate. Though the country was put to the expense of 400,000*l.*, per annum, the whole system of the management of the convicts was faulty, and did more harm than good. He knew an instance of a man transported the year before last, a clever smart fellow, and a good accountant; and the very moment he came on board ship, he was made ship's-steward; and, when he arrived at Sydney, he was made a clerk in the Commissariat Department. This man had been sentenced to transportation, and had formerly been a private soldier. The object he had in view was, that inquiry should be made into the whole system of the management of convicts, and that a remedy should be applied to the existing defects. It was absolutely necessary that a prison should be a place of punishment, and a place looked upon with dread, and that the practice of sending men on board the hulks should be modified. He was most anxious that transportation, instead of being a sure road to prosperity, should be rendered a bitter punishment. If this were the case, these worthy gentlemen, who now preyed upon the public, and swarmed in every town, would wonderfully diminish. They would not be received by old friends on their return from transportation; and they would cease to write to their friends to say how comfortable they were at Botany Bay. If a proper system were adopted, instead of thinking transportation at all agreeable, they would have so great a dread of it, that they would say—"For God's sake do not transport us, do any thing but that." It was the more necessary that some better system should be adopted, because the sentiments of the public of this country were becoming every day more vitally fixed upon the question of capital punishments; and the Legislature could not proceed with that topic, unless it turned its attention to the consideration of secondary punishments, and the whole system of criminal law. The gallant Colonel concluded by moving, "That a Select Committee be appointed to inquire into the best mode of giving efficiency to Secondary Punishments."

Mr. *G. Lamb* said, he did not rise to oppose the Motion, neither did he mean to follow his hon. friend through all the facts which he had collected with reference to this subject. He must, however, observe, that the difficulties which surrounded this question were much greater than his hon. friend seemed to suppose. He admitted that there was, of late years, a considerable increase of crime, and that, undoubtedly, was a point well worthy the consideration of all good citizens. His hon. friend complained of the state of the prisons, and observed, that the culprits who were confined in them were much better off than the agricultural labourers; and that, consequently, those places had ceased to be a terror to offenders. Now it was true, that the Legislature might have made the gaols too comfortable, but what was the reason? Why this was the necessary consequence of the horrible situation in which the prisons formerly were. At the time to which he alluded, the gaols were the nurseries of vice. They were at once injurious to the health, and destructive of the morality (where any morality remained) of the prisoners. What then was to be done? Where the sentence was imprisonment, the Legislature felt it right, that, while in prison, the health of the individual should not suffer more than could be avoided. His hon. friend said, that, of late years, the prisoners lived too well. Here again what was to be done? He did not know how this was to be remedied, when they gave the prisoners an assurance that they should be maintained without injury to their health, and at present, no more food than enough for that purpose was given in prison. All prisons, he allowed, must, to a certain degree, be productive of vice; and, his hon. friend wished, as he understood, that such vicious properties should be checked by solitary confinement, conjoined with the exhortations of the chaplains and officers of the gaols. There was one point, though perhaps not a very important point, connected with that system, which ought not to be over-looked. He alluded to the expense attending the solitary confinement of each prisoner. Of late years, the counties of England had not been put to any great expense by the classification of prisoners; but the accommodation necessary for solitary confinement would necessarily create a considerable additional expense. Solitary confinement was, also, a punishment which he should be very unwilling to inflict. It appeared from the report of the Police Committee, that it might, in cases of tender age, produce a beneficial effect; while, with reference to some who were of adult age, it would produce no good effect, and the minds of others would be incapable of bearing it. He, however, confessed there was a necessity for considering some of the useful suggestions of his hon. friend; and therefore it would be right that they should be laid before a Committee. Transportation he considered to be a punishment from which the greatest benefit was derived. By sending men out of the country, they subjected them to a very great punishment; at the same time that they gave to individuals an opportunity of reforming, and becoming respectable members of society. By proceeding thus, they also best consulted the ease and safety of the honest part of the population. His experience at the Bar enabled him to say, that more horror was expressed at the sentence of transportation than at the sentence of death; because the execution of the one was certain, while that of the other was uncertain. He believed that transportation was viewed with feelings of deep regret; for, since he had been in the Home-office, numberless applications had been made to him by the friends of convicts, to obtain leave for them to return to this country, and many applications were made by those condemned to be permitted to remain in England. They had selected New South Wales as a penal colony, on account of its fruitfulness; and he could never approve of sending those people to a miserable country, such as Fernando Po (which the Government was on the point of abandoning), where they might perish through hunger and fatigue. He was anxious that the inquiry should be entered into, but he had thought it right to shew that it was connected with difficulties greater than, he was afraid, his hon. friend was aware of.

Mr. *Hunt* meant always to speak whenever the subject of prisons and confinement came under the consideration of the House. He saw that the present discussion was attended by Judges, Barristers, and other learned persons, but none of them knew the inside of a prison so well as he did; and, in his opinion, no punishment was so proper and effectual for hardened offenders, as solitary confinement [*a laugh.*] The hon. Gentleman might laugh, but if he knew as much about solitary confinement as he (Mr. Hunt) did, perhaps he would laugh at the other side of his mouth. He believed that solitary confinement for two months would effect more good than ordinary confinement for two years. He knew what solitary confinement was, for he had suffered it for two years at Ilchester. The gaoler there had the arbitrary power of placing a prisoner in solitary confinement whenever he pleased. [*No, no.*] "No, no," He would say "Yes, yes!" The gaoler, he knew, possessed that power while he was in Ilchester gaol for two years and six months. The visiting Magistrates, some of whom, perhaps, denied his assertion, knew nothing about what passed in the inside of that gaol. He had seen men sentenced to solitary confinement by the gaoler, but he never knew those who had been so confined to again commit the offence for which they had been punished in that manner. Besides solitary confinement, there were some species of torture in our gaols. He was a decided enemy to torture; and he considered the tread-mill, in many instances, as a torture. To a man who could walk up and down stairs, or who was used to walking about the fields, the sway of the tread-mill was a matter of amusement: but if they put a tailor, or any other sedentary artisan on the machine, it produced a very different effect. What, he asked, was the object of Government? Was it, or was it not, the prevention of crime? Certainly it ought to be to prevent crime; but it was quite clear that the present system did not prevent crime, which appeared to be daily increasing. Was it not right, then, to try some new experiment for the achievement of that object? He conceived that they ought, and no punishment was more likely to reform and deter prisoners than that of solitary confinement, if not carried to an extreme. He, however, wished that it should be introduced by degrees. He hoped that what he was about to say would be communicated to some of the Ministers connected with the Navy. He knew that great dissatisfaction prevailed among the workmen of Portsmouth Dockyard, because they were obliged to work with the convicts. He had received a great many letters on the subject, and he trusted this disgraceful practice would not be continued. Twenty years ago, he could safely say, that persons in prison were better fed and lodged than the labourers under the power of Magistrates, who, at that time, fixed the rate of wages. With respect to transportation, he must say, that it was better than confinement on board the hulks, which was a most disgraceful thing to the country. But, whatever treatment ordinary offenders then received, political offenders were, at that period, most harshly treated. In 1816, 1817, 1818, 1819, persons who only called for what would be termed moderate Reform in these days, were visited by a suspension of the *Habeas Corpus* Act. They were plunged into solitary confinement,—excluded from the use of pen, ink, and paper, and sent into various gaols, from one end of the country to the other, without their friends knowing where they were. Look to the melancholy victims who were sent to York gaol. He recollected two brothers, named Reilly, who were sent into solitary confinement for attending political Reform meetings in a parish in Yorkshire. One of them was a man of weak mind, and he inflicted on himself the same sort of death which individuals in much higher situations had done—he cut his throat in his solitary cell. His body was removed, and his brother was placed in the cell, which had not been cleansed of the blood of the unhappy suicide. [*Oh! oh! oh!*] It was so; he knew it was so, and he should be ashamed of himself to state any thing there which he did not know to be a fact. Yet these two reformers, who were thus punished, were moderate, when compared to his Majesty's Ministers. These days, however, were now gone by, and he sincerely hoped, as he believed, that they never would return. Such was the humanity of gaolers,—of whose conduct the visiting Magistrates knew little or nothing. He remembered that on one occasion, thirty or forty prisoners were confined at Ilchester gaol, under sentence of death. Among the number were two pretty women. Previous to the transportation of the prisoners, whose capital punishment had been commuted, the visiting Magistrates came to the gaol, and were advised by the gaoler not to send the two pretty women out of the country, but to let them serve their time out in the prison. His advice was followed, and the consequence was, the birth of a child, who continued in the prison for the period of six years, without the knowledge of the Chaplain of the gaol, or the visiting Magistrates. It was the constant practice of the ruffian gaolers at Ilchester gaol, when they found among the prisoners a woman who pleased their fancy, to send her into solitary confinement, in order to have an opportunity of visiting her in private. Yet this was the gaol which Mr. F. Buxton had declared to be the best conducted in England.

Sir *E. Sugden* had never heard an address which he considered more merited deprecation than that which had just been delivered by the hon. member for Preston. Could any thing be more outrageous than for the hon. Member to make such assertions as he had done, with respect to transactions which took place in 1817? Were the people of this country to be told, that because a man was a reformer, and a moderate reformer, in 1817, he was unfeelingly thrust in the solitary dungeon which was still flowing with his brother's blood? He was sure that there was no man living who would give the slightest credit to that story. For his own part, he did not believe a single word of it; and notwithstanding the confident assertions of the hon. member for Preston, he challenged the hon. Member to prove the matter to the House. He was perfectly satisfied that no such practice ever existed. This he knew, that if any such proceeding had taken place, and evidence of it had been brought forward, that House would have reprobated it as most nefarious and atrocious, and punishment would have been sure to fall on the guilty parties. The hon. member for Preston might laugh, but he was sure he expressed the feelings of every hon. Member, on both sides of the House, whatever his political opinions might be. But he asked the hon. member for Preston, whether it was proper to bring accusations against individuals who had no opportunity of defending themselves. The hon. Member had made use of the expression, "ruffian-like gaolers." Of the persons alluded to, he knew nothing; but ought the hon. Member to stigmatize in that way individuals, without bringing a distinct charge against them before the House? Those persons might have friends and connexions, who would deeply feel the observations made by the hon. member for Preston. It was the duty of the hon. Member, then, to abstain from making such observations, or else to bring the subject manfully forward; when, if the parties were guilty, they would be condemned, and if innocent, they would be relieved from the stigma which had been cast upon them. The hon. Member had also alluded to the conduct of the visiting Magistrates: he utterly denied the correctness of the hon. Member's observations on that head. He had been a visiting magistrate for many years; and he had discharged his duty with the greatest anxiety. He had visited every ward, and gone through every room, in the prison. He had asked every prisoner whether he had any complaint to make, and if any was made, he had considered it his sacred duty to attend to it. What he had done, thousands of others in the same situation had done still better; and therefore he felt it his duty to contradict the statements which had been made by the hon. Member, that visiting Magistrates were utterly careless of the feelings of those whom it was their duty to protect; and that the most terrible scenes took place in the prisons, of which they were totally ignorant. Passing from this topic, however, and referring to the point before the House, he must say, that he had always, very unwillingly, supported the necessity of punishing the crime of forgery with greater severity than some other hon. Members. At the same time, he was very anxious that every inquiry should be made to ascertain whether the last dreadful punishment might with safety be remitted. He meant, therefore, to give his support to the motion of the hon. and gallant Member. He did not anticipate that much good would result from it; but, at the same time, that was not a sufficient reason why the Motion should not be acceded to. One word upon the subject of solitary confinement. He confessed he was opposed to it. It had already been tried to a great extent, and, in his opinion, had altogether failed. Of necessity, such a punishment must, at all times, be extremely unequal. All punishments, indeed,—even the punishment of death,—were necessarily unequal, depending on the habits and manners of individuals; but, of all punishments, that of solitary confinement was certainly the most unequal, depending upon the construction of men's minds. If solitary confinement were tried upon any two given individuals, the effect upon each would be found to be very different: in one, perhaps, it would produce only a sort of torpor and indifference, while the other would be driven by it to madness and despair. Under any circumstances, however, a man's bodily health must always be prejudicially affected by it, and he, therefore, was not disposed to resort to it. At the same time, he would keep his mind open to conviction; and if, upon due inquiry, it should appear that nothing short of that or the last fatal punishment would be sufficient to prevent the crime of forgery, he should be ready to accede to any proposition for its adoption. In conclusion, the hon. and learned Member expressed his hearty concurrence in the gallant Officer's motion, and assured him, that he should be ready at all times to assist him in his inquiries into the subject.

Mr. *Hunt* begged to acquaint the hon. and learned Member, who had asked him why he did not bring the charge he had made manfully before the House, that he had already done so. While he was in confinement in Ilchester gaol, he had sent petitions to that House: and the consequence was, that a commission was sent down, and all the facts he had stated were proved to be true.

Sir *E. Sugden.*—I spoke of York.

Mr. *Hunt.*—The hon. and learned Member spoke about the gaoler at Ilchester; and that person was dismissed from his situation, because the charges brought against him were proved to be true. With respect to the transaction at York, he recollected that a petition was sent to that House.

Sir *E. Sugden.*—At what time?

Mr. *Hunt.*—In the year 1816 or 1817, at the time of the suspension of the *Habeas Corpus* act. Hon. Members, he knew, got up in that House, and contradicted the statements contained in those petitions, just in the same manner as the hon. and learned Member had contradicted his (Mr. Hunt's) statements, every word of which had been proved to be true.

Lord *Sandon* supported the Motion. He considered that solitary confinement would be very beneficial and effectual, if proper care and attention were paid to the condition of the different persons subjected to it. He had seen instances of its advantageous operation. Limited transportation he believed, was never followed by any good effects on the convicts, and he would, therefore always make that perpetual or only redeemable by good behaviour. Imprisonment for a great length of time was not so beneficial as for shorter periods accompanied by wholesome severity and great watchfulness. He believed, however, that on all these subjects inquiry was yet necessary, and therefore he should like to see the Committee appointed.

Mr. *H. Sumner* stated, in reference to what had fallen from the hon. member for Preston, that the Act which required the classification of prisoners, also required the separation of the male and female prisoners. All the hon. Member's observations had applied to the year 1819, and the prisons were now regulated by the Act of 1824: since that time he believed that they had been well attended to. He knew several instances, in which solitary confinement had had a beneficial effect. He remembered in particular one of the most daring prisoners who ever entered a gaol being completely subdued by it. On his first entering in, he glanced his eye towards the walls (which, by the bye, were of a very considerable height), and said, in a deriding tone, "You dont expect to keep me here three days?"—"Yes, we do," it was replied; "You won't do it then," said he; and before he had been confined three days, he attempted to force the door of the gaol. He was discovered, however, and secured; and, on a report being made to the Magistrates, he was sentenced by them to a short period of solitary confinement. The man submitted to the punishment with apparent indifference, and had not been out a week before he committed an assault upon the gaoler. This being represented to the Magistrates, his punishment was doubled; but still he endured it with apparent indifference, and on being liberated, his first act was to turn the pockets of one of the prisoners who sat near him in the chapel inside out. For this offence, the Magistrates again sentenced him to solitary confinement, and at that time he appeared perfectly hardened. Afterwards, however, when he was about to be removed to his solitary cell, he fell down upon his knees, and exclaimed, "For God's sake save me from that dreadful punishment, and I will promise to behave in the best possible manner." The change effected in this man's mind, from the anticipation of again enduring a period of solitary confinement, was most remarkable. From the most undaunted and daring ruffian possible, he became perfectly subdued and tractable; and on his sentence being remitted, did not again misconduct himself. As he was fully persuaded that the occasional investigation into these subjects by the House of Commons was useful, it was hisi ntention to support the Motion.

Mr. Alderman *Wood*, alluding to the contradiction which had been given to the statement of the hon. member for Preston, respecting the transaction at York, told the House to remember, that the hon. Member's statements respecting Ilchester gaol were denied with equal indignation, and that they were afterwards proved to be true. The hon. Member was proceeding to make some observations on the hulk system, which he considered to be entirely bad, when

An Hon. *Member* told him to "make haste."

Mr. Alderman *Wood* protested against such an improper interruption, and declared, that he would not be dictated to in that way by any person. The manner in which the managers of the Penitentiary obtained the prisoners which were confined in that place was not such as to give a fair view of the effects of the system adopted at the Penitentiary. They went to Newgate, and selected the best characters; and yet, after all, two-thirds of the prisoners at the Penitentiary found their way back to Newgate again.

Sir *C. Burrell* also thought favourably of solitary confinement. The hulk system he considered the worst of all; but whatever mode of punishment was followed, he wished that no man, after being confined, should be turned loose on society without the means of subsistence. It was a practice, too, for some of the greatest scamps to procure a remission of their sentence by pretending to virtue and religion; that he hoped would be avoided. He supported the Motion.

Mr. *Shaw* had also witnessed very beneficial effects from solitary confinement, and thought that it might be advantageously extended.

Sir *T. Fremantle* had been long connected with the Penitentiary, but had never heard of the practice the hon. Alderman had alluded to. Even if the keeper of the Penitentiary took the most healthy prisoners from Newgate, that would not invalidate the great fact, that two-thirds of the inmates of the Penitentiary were made respectable members of society.

Sir *Edmund Carrington* thought no subject more difficult or more worthy of consideration than that of secondary punishments, particularly as there was a disposition in the people to object to capital punishments. For his own part, he preferred transportation to solitary confinement.

Mr. *John Martin* believed, that the hon. member for Preston's statements, particularly as to female prisoners, were by no means unexampled. He thought the whole subject well worthy of inquiry, and he gave hissupport to the Motion.

Mr. *Wilks* returned his thanks to the hon. and gallant Member for having brought forward so important a motion in such an able manner.

Colonel *Davies*, in reply, said, he wished that before prisoners were sent to New South Wales, they should undergo a severe examination, and that all offences against the laws should be expiated by hard labour. The expense of solitary confinement was not so great as some hon. Members imagined. The expense of converting the day rooms into cells at Worcester had been estimated at 9*l.* a cell; new cells might cost about 11*l.*, but no county would require more than 100 cells. The expense, therefore, would be very trifling, and the good might be immense. The manner in which his motion had been received made it quite unnecessary, however, that he should trespass any further on the attention of the House.

Motion agreed to, and Committee appointed.

FEES IN SUPREME COURTS (INDIA).] Mr. *Stuart Wortley* rose for the purpose of moving for leave to bring in a Bill, the nature of which, if the House would allow him, he would very shortly state. The object of the Bill was, to regulate the offices of the Supreme Courts of India, and it might properly be divided into two parts. The first related to the offices which existed in the Supreme Courts, and were originally established at the suggestion of the Judges of those Courts. The parties filling them were remunerated by fees arising out of the proceedings. In the course of time these fees had amounted to so large a sum, that it was absolutely necessary to regulate them. To give the House some idea of these emoluments, he would mention one or two instances. The Equity Registrar, who holds several other offices, as was the case with every officer affected by the Bill—the Equity Registrar of Bengal received emoluments to an amount very little short of a lac of rupees in a year. The emoluments of another officer in that Court amounted to 9,000*l.* a-year, and the emoluments of a third officer were 7,000*l.* a-year. In Madras, the fees were not so great as in Bengal, but the principal Registrar there received 6,000*l.* a-year; and in Bombay, the emoluments of the Chief Registrar amounted to between 4,000*l.* and 5,000*l.* a-year. These fees now amounted to a sum which was never intended, and certainly ought not to be allowed. That such emoluments were inconsistent with the offices to which they were attached would be at once perceived when he stated, that while the Chief Justice of India received a salary of 8,000*l.* a-year, the principal Registrar of Bengal was in the receipt of an income very little short of 20,000*l.* a-year. The object of the first part of the Bill, therefore, was, to regulate these enormous emoluments, and to reduce the incomes of the different officers connected with the Courts of India to their proper standard, by assigning them a regular salary, to be derived from the fees, but to be fixed by the government of India, with the sanction of the Board of Control at home. It was proposed that the surplus arising from the fees beyond the amount of salaries should be carried to the Territorial Fund. The second part of the Bill related to the Judges' Clerks. Ever since 1799, the Judges' Clerks in India had been in the habit of practising as attornies. In the course of the year 1829, his noble friend, then at the head of the Board of Control, wrote to the Judges in India upon this subject. The Judges replied, that they were perfectly aware of the practice, that it had existed for a long time; but they were not aware of any evil arising from it. Rather, however, than that any practice should exist which would throw them open to any suspicion, they begged that steps might be taken to abolish it. The object of the second part of the Bill, therefore, was, to provide that Judges' Clerks should not be allowed to practise as attornies of the Supreme Courts of India, These were the only objects of the Bill, and he moved for leave to bring it in.

Mr. *Charles Grant* was aware of the extreme importance of this subject; but was unwilling then to enter into any of the particulars of it. He only wished, in giving his assent to the introduction of the Bill, to reserve to himself the right of objecting to any of its details in a subsequent stage. His hon. friend knew that his opinion differed from that of his hon. friend upon some of the points connected with this subject. The two points upon which he particularly wished to reserve to himself the right of objecting, were—first, the continuing of these enormous emoluments, even during the lives of those who now enjoy them; and, secondly, the carrying of the surplus fees to the Territorial Fund.

Mr. *Cutlar Ferguson* admitted that it appeared improper that any secondary officers in Courts of Justice should receive such enormous emoluments as the Registrars and other officers of the Courts of India. In legislating upon the subject, however, it was necessary to consider how the public service might be affected by it. The emoluments of the principal Registrar of Bengal were certainly prodigious; but he did not believe that any other single individual could be found to discharge the duties of all the offices which he filled. He should have been better pleased if the returns, upon which this Bill was founded, had contained an account of the emoluments paid to these officers for a series of years, than for only one. He was certain that during his stay in India the amount of these fees and emoluments was not near so great as at present. The offices, from the increase of the business of the Courts, had become more lucrative than formerly; and it had been considered that barristers of a proper standing and ability could not be induced to accept them, unless their emoluments were, at least, equal to those which they derived from the Bar. The fees attached to those offices were not fixed by Act of Parliament, but by the Judges; and after they were approved of by them, they received the sanction of Government. It would not be just towards the persons who accepted these offices, upon the faith of receiving the fees attached to them at the time they accepted them, that a part of those fees should be taken from them. He would not enter into details, but would reserve his remarks for a future stage of the bill.

Leave given, Bill brought in, and read a first time.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Friday, March 18, 1831.

MINUTES.] Returns ordered. On the Motion of the Duke of RICHMOND, an account of the Waste Lands belonging to the different Manors of the Crown in England and Wales:—On the Motion of the Marquis of SALISBURY-the statements, calculations, and explanations submitted to the Board of Trade, relating to the commercial, financial, and political state of the British West-India Colonies, since the 19th of May, 1830.

Petitions presented. In favour of the Ministerial plan of Reform, by the Earl of RADNOR, from the Parish of Christchurch, in Middlesex; from St. Peter's, in the Isle of Thanet; and from another Parish in Kent:—By Earl GOWER, several from the Staffordshire Potteries:—By Lord DURHAM, from the Parish of Mary-la-bonne; from Horsham, in Surrey; from Brechin, in Scotland; and from Longtown, in the County of Cumberland:—By the Duke of NORFOLK, from Shepton Mallett, from Kirkaldy, from the Operatives of a place in Fife, from the parish of St. Ann's, Limehouse, and from Leven, Fife:—By the Duke of DEVONSHIRE, from Derby, and other places in Derbyshire:—By the LORD CHANCELLOR, from the Members of the London Bar, signed by 396 practising Barristers, including the great majority of those who went the Northern and Western Circuits; from Beverley, Yorkshire, signed by 3,000 persons; twenty-nine Petitions from Falmouth, Taunton, Kingston-upon-Hull, signed by 7,000 persons, from Dumfries, Penzance, Knaresborough, from different Trade Corporations of Glasgow, Edinburgh, Leith, and Stirling, with forty other Petitions, from Huddersfield, in Yorkshire, signed by 7,500 persons; from Ross, in the County of Somerset; from Leeds; from Dumfermline; from the Chamber of Commerce of Edinburgh; from the Shoemakers and Bakers of Perth; from Portobello; from Kingston; from the Glovers of Perth; from the Merchants of Glasgow; from the parish of All Saints, Poplar; from York; from Totness; from Haddington, Montrose, Chatham, and other places:—

[He had already presented 147 Petitions, many of them from the most important places of the country, in favour of the Ministerial measure of Reform, and he had still forty-seven in his possession, the presenting of which he would postpone till Monday.]

By the Marquis of LANSDOWN, from Bradford, Trowbridge, and another place in Wilts; from the parish of St. Mary, Whitechapel; and from the Magistrates and Town Council of Stranraer:—By Lord KING, from Beverley, Yorkshire; from Emsworth, Southampton; and from a place in the County of Lancaster. By the Duke of WELLINGTON, from Newcastle-under-Lime, against the Ministerial plan of Reform, but praying that Representatives might be given to large Towns. For the Abolition of Slavery, by Earl GOWER, from Dissenters at Tiers Cross:—By Earl CAWDOR, from Glenwr and Ean:—By Lord STOURTON, from Teignmouth. By the Duke of ARGYLE, against any alteration of the Timber Duties, from the Shipowners of Ayr; and against the Reduction of Duty on Barilla, from the Western Islands. By Lord KING, for the Repeal of the Assessed Taxes, and for a Commutation of Tithes, from Winstow, Somersetshire; and from a Barony in Carlow.

SUB-LETTING ACT.] Lord *Melbourne* rose, pursuant to notice, to lay on their Lordships' Table an Act to repeal the Act of the 7th Geo. 4th, commonly called the Sub-letting Act, and to substitute other provisions in lieu thereof. As this was a subject of great importance, especially to the landholders and agricultural population of Ireland, he hoped their Lordships would indulge him while he made a few observations in explanation of the alterations which it was intended to make in the provisions of the existing Act. He repeated at the outset what he had said the other night, in answer to a question put to him by one of the noble Lords opposite (Carbery), that it was the intention of Ministers to maintain, support, and strengthen the principles of the existing Act, and that the only object was to remove some inconveniences and difficulties that had occurred in the execution and operation of the Statute, and clear up some doubts that had arisen as to its proper construction. In order to effect this object, it had been thought preferable to repeal the existing Act, rather than attempt to amend it, in order to avoid those ambiguities, complexity, and confusion which so often resulted from passing several Acts for amending a particular Statute, instead of entirely remodelling it. The plan of substituting a new Statute was adopted for the sake of perspicuity and simplicity. Their Lordships were probably all acquainted with the history of the Sub-letting Act. In consequence of the distresses which existed in Ireland in 1822-3, the subject was taken under the consideration of Parliament, and a Committee of the House of Commons was appointed in 1824 to investigate the subject, which was again taken up in 1825, and investigated by the Committee of the other House, and also by a Committee of their Lordships, and it was from the Reports of these Committees that the Acts originated. A laborious and extensive investigation then took place, and various remedies were suggested for the evils which pressed so heavily on the country. That investigation was conducted by men of the greatest ability, industry, and understanding, and many witnesses, of various classes, who had the best opportunity of being acquainted with the state of Ireland, were examined. Eminent lawyers were consulted who were connected by their professional duties, and otherwise, with the different parts of the country; several Roman Catholic priests; many resident Magistrates, and land-agents, as well as surveyors who had been employed by Government; men, all of them having the best opportunities of becoming thoroughly acquainted with the situation and condition of the various parts of Ireland, were minutely examined; and the result was, that all, with one voice, ascribed the disturbed state of that country chiefly to the relation which there existed between landlord and tenant, to the great and manifest injury of both parties. The landlords, when their lands came into their hands, after the expiration of leases, found them crowded with a multitude of paupers, whom they had no means of removing or providing for in other places; and the case was still more hard on the occupying tenant, for, perhaps, between him and the head landlord there were six or seven intermediate persons, and each of these, in case of disputes, or in case of failure in payments between themselves, had the power to distrain on the occupying tenant, who was thus liable to be compelled to pay his rent repeatedly, instead of paying it only once. The concurrent testimony of all was, that the grand evil was this relation between landlord and tenant, and in this the Reports of the two Committees concurred; and the first remedy recommended in the Report of the Commons was an amendment of the law between landlord and tenant. In consequence of this recommendation, the Bill was brought into the House of Commons by the late Chancellor of the Exchequer, who was then Secretary for Ireland, assisted by the then Attorney-general for Ireland. The Bill was brought in in 1825, and stood over for a Session, and in 1826 it passed. But it was soon found that those by whom it had been prepared had fixed their eyes steadily on the existing evils, and on the application of the remedy, without sufficiently considering the effect which the remedy would have when viewed with reference to the existing state of the country; and, therefore, when the Act came into operation, some blots and errors in it were discovered. These blots and errors had, however, been most grossly exaggerated, and a great clamour had been raised by those whose object it was to excite discontent and animosity among the people. A great outcry was consequently set up against the Act; but it was not to satisfy that clamour, or to give way to the outrages promoted by agitators, that Ministers proposed to bring in another Bill on the subject. The only object was, to remedy the defects and remove the inconveniences and difficulties of the existing Act, and to clear up the doubts which had existed as to its construction. Having made these preliminary observations, he would state to the House the most material alterations now to be made. The enactments of the Statute were two-fold; first, respecting the leases that were in existence on and before the passing of the Act in 1826; secondly, respecting the leases that might be made subsequent to the passing of the Act. It was not intended that the Act should be retrospective, nor that it should have any operation on the leases in existence at the time of its passing, as to their covenants, or waivers of those covenants, all which covenants and acts it left as before. But it had been generally understood in Ireland, that it had such a retrospective effect on pre-existing leases, which gave rise to various disputes, and to much irritation. At the Bar in Ireland, however, the general opinion was, that it had not a retrospective operation, but that covenants and waivers were left in the same condition as before the passing of the Act of 1826. But as there was some doubt on that head, that doubt was a sufficient reason for passing an enactment for its removal. It was intended that the new Bill should be entirely prospective, and relate only to leases made subsequent to its passing, and should not affect, one way or other, any covenants or waivers, whether constructive or otherwise, of preceding leases, with reference to any question of sale or sub-letting. The Bill would leave all the preceding leases to the ordinary rules of law, whether as to assignment or sub-letting. But where there should be introduced in subsequent leases covenants against assigning or sub-letting, it was intended that such leases should not be saleable under executions, nor on bankruptcy, or insolvency, of the tenants; but that the leases should become void, and the land revert to the landlord. This, perhaps, would be in some measure retrospective, as far as regarded creditors, and might, perhaps, startle their Lordships; but it was conformable to the spirit of the Act, and he hoped to be able to prove in the course of the progress of the Bill, that there was no injustice in this, and that a mode would be left open for fraud, unless some such clause was introduced. Another difficulty was, the devolution of leases on intestacy. In case of the decease of the lessees without having made any will, their personal representatives, if they were chattel interests, took the lease, and this gave occasion to much of that division of lands which it was so desirable to avoid. It was proposed to enact that no divisions should take place on death and intestacy which the lessees could not make by will. It was enacted by the 9th Geo. 4th, that the lease, when left by will, could be left only to one person, but it left the case of intestacy unprovided for. By the new Act it was intended to adopt the provision, that if left to two or more, it should only be as joint tenants, without division or power of alienation, except among each other. In the same manner, in cases of intestacy unprovided for by the former Act, it was intended that when leases came, as real property, to the heir, or as chattel interests to the next of kin, that when it happened in either cases that the successors were co-heiresses, or there were more than one next of kin in the same degree, these respectively should take as joint tenants, and that there should be no division or alienation except between each other. These were the most material alterations intended to be made, and he thought it unnecessary to say more on the subject until the Bill came under the consideration of their Lordships.

Lord *Carbery* thought the propositions upon the whole satisfactory; although there might be shades of difference in opinion as to some of them. The object of the original Bill was, to create a substantial yeomanry in Ireland, and to enable landlords to get their land into possession in such a state, that they could with prudence and safety lay out money on the improvement of it, instead of having it crowded with a pauper peasantry, without capital to render it productive; so that the benefit of the land was in a great measure lost both to landlord and tenant. The Act, however, was an instrument in the hands of the agitators, who had endeavoured by its means to work upon the people; nevertheless, knowing the value of the Bill, he was glad that Ministers were resolved to maintain its principle, and he would render every assistance in his power in forwarding the Bill.

The Earl of *Wicklow* differed *in toto* from his noble friend, as far as he approved of the new Bill; for he thought the original Act far preferable to the very serious alterations which were to be made in it. He had taken various opinions on that

Act, and he maintained that the objections to it were entirely groundless, although one or two not very material alterations might be made in it. The proposed Bill would do a great deal of mischief, and he would rather have no Act at all on the subject. He would, therefore, strenuously oppose it.

Lord *Farnham* agreed, as to the mode of proceeding, that the best way was to bring in a new Bill, and so to avoid complexity and confusion. On the old Act, he gave no opinion as to whether it was retrospective or not. Lawyers had adopted a doctrine, where there was a lease with covenant against alienation, and yet an alienation had taken place, and the landlord had accepted rent after that alienation, that this was a constructive waiver of the covenant, even although the acceptance should have been owing to mere inadvertence. This might be law, but it was a doctrine that had no just foundation in fact. But, however, the discussion would come better when the Bill should be before their Lordships.

Bill read a first time.

Commutation of Tithes.] Lord *King* stated, that he had some Petitions to present, praying for a Commutation of Tithes. He had presented several petitions to the same effect without saying anything upon the subject, from a belief that the Clergy of the Church themselves were disposed to propose some measure for effecting a commutation. But when a noble and learned Lord (Tenterden)—a friend of the Church—brought forward a Bill, one object of which was to limit the time for contesting moduses, and thus putting an end to a fertile source of vexation and oppression, a right reverend Prelate, the Bishop of Bristol, took the alarm, and proposed that a notice of sixty years should be given to incumbents to enable them to consider about contesting their claims. But if matters went on as they had done for sixty years, there would probably be no Church property at the end of that period to legislate about, and, the Bill would so far be perfectly useless. So true it was, as Lord Clarendon said, that of all those who were able to write and read, the clergy were the most ignorant, and took the narrowest view of things. The Petition he had to present was from the Hundred of Newcastle, in the County of Glamorgan, praying for a Commutation of Tithes.

The Bishop of *Bristol* observed, that the observations of the noble Baron proceeded from mistake, for he had not opposed the Bill in question, but only suggested that, as incumbents were often very negligent in enforcing their rights, and disinclined to have disputes concerning them, for various reasons, a period of three years was a great deal too short a time to be allowed before the prescription began to run; and in this the noble and learned Lord on the Woolsack appeared, to a certain extent, to concur with him.

Lord *King* said, in consequence of what had fallen from the right reverend Prelate, he would move, that there be laid before this House a return of the number of suits on account of tithes commenced in the Courts of Chancery and Exchequer, and in the Courts of Common-law, during the last forty years. This would show whether incumbents had been backward or not in asserting their claims to tithes, or in their efforts to set aside moduses or compositions.—Motion agreed to.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Friday, March 18, 1831.

Minutes.] Bills. Candle Duties Repeal, read a second time. Prohibition and Mandamus, read a third time and passed.

Petitions presented. Against the Grants to the Kildare-street Society, by Mr. D. Brown, from a Parish in Mayo. In favour of these Grants, by General O'Neil, four from different Parishes in Ireland:—By Sir A. Chichester, from Ballcloghan and Knockboy. By Sir R. Bateson, from the Chamber of Commerce of Londonderry, complaining of the Corporation of that City having misapplied a sum of Money, advanced by the Government, to Build a Bridge over the Foyle, and praying that the Act of Parliament relating to that subject might be Repealed. In favour of the Church Endowment Act, by Mr. Hughes Hughes, from the Clergy of Rutland. Against any alteration of the Timber Duties, from Whitby, by Sir Robert Bateson:—By Sir M. W. Ridley, from Newcastle-upon-Tyne. Against the Tax on Steam Vessels, by the same hon. Member, from the same place:—By Mr. M. Fitzgerald, from the Directors of the Dublin and London Steam Marine Company. By the same hon. Member, from the Islands of Ennis Lee and Ennis Lackane, against lowering the Duties on Barilla. Against the Vestries Bill, by Lord Ebrington, from St. George's, Hanover-square. For the Abolition of Slavery, by Mr. Pendarvis, from several places and Dissenting Congregations in Cornwall. In favour of the Labour in Cotton Factories Bill, by Lord Stanley, from Chorley. By Mr. R. Price, from Ross, for the Abolition of Capital Punishment in Cases of Forgery. In favour of Reform, by Mr. Hodges, from Deptford, Woolwich, and Greenwich, and from High Haldon and Woodchurch:—By Mr. C. Buller, from Mirfield:—By Colonel Tyrell, from Essex, Halesworth, Bury St. Edmund's, and Beccles:—By Sir M. W. Ridley, two from Newcastle-upon-Tyne:—By Mr. Robarts, from Maidstone:—By Lord Fordwich, two from the non-resident Freemen of Canterbury:—By Mr. Blount, from Derbyshire:—By Sir W. W. Wynn, from Wrexham:—By Mr. J. Johnstone, from Dunfermline and Inverkeithing:—By Mr. R. PRICE, from Ross:—By Lord ALTHORP, from Knaresborough, Christchurch, Ludlow, and Keighley:—By Mr. P. THOMSON, from Dover, and St. Leonard's, Shoreditch:—By Sir A. CHICHESTER, from Belfast:—By Mr. HODGES, from the Isle of Thanet. Against the Reform Bill, by Mr. H. HOPE, from East Looe:—By Mr. CAPEL, from Queenborough, so far as the Disfranchisement of that Borough was concerned.

DECCAN PRIZE-MONEY.] Colonel *Sibthorp*, after stating that there was some unaccountable delay in distributing the Deccan Prize-money, begged to ask the noble Lord, on behalf of several members of the United Service Club, whether there was any probability of that prize-money being distributed?

Lord *Althorp* said, that the parties most interested in the decision of the question had objected to its being referred by the late Government to Sir James Scarlett and Sir Charles Wetherell (then Attorney and Solicitor General), because those gentlemen had been employed in the argument before the Privy Council; therefore the present Ministers had referred the case to the present Attorney General, as he had not taken, hitherto, any part in the discussion.

DISTRESS IN IRELAND.] Mr. *Dominick Browne* presented Petitions from parishes in Mayo, praying for Parliamentary aid. He said, that the advances which had been made by the House for public works in Ireland had done much, not only to abate distress, but to improve the condition and habits of the people. Nevertheless, the distress at present prevailing in Mayo, and other parts of the West of Ireland, was excessive and increasing. Every day he received accounts from that part of the country, complaining of the misery suffered by the population, and calling upon the Government to advance sums of money, to be expended in public works for the relief of the people. The sums of money thus called for, were to be laid out, he admitted, without any hope of a direct return. There would, however, be an indirect return, so great as to render the propriety of advancing such a sum as might be required a matter deserving of the favourable consideration of Government. It had been proved, that the money expended under the direction of Mr. Nimmo, returned 100 per cent to Government, by the increased consumption of exciseable articles. He hoped, under those circumstances, and with such a prospect, there would be no objection on the part of his Majesty's Government to advance a small sum of money to be expended in that wild district; and from the extreme suffering and distress endured by the population of that district, he was satisfied, that above all others it demanded attention from his Majesty's Government. The district to which he referred consisted of the baronies of Erris and Borriso, in the county of Mayo; but the petitions which he had now to present came from a different district, and one to which his former observations did not apply. A great part of the district from which he was about to present a petition, was the property of the Marquis of Sligo, who was in Ireland, doing all he could to relieve the wants of the people; but the distress had grown to an extent which placed it beyond the power of any individual, however wealthy, to afford adequate relief. He had, also, a Petition from the landowners, merchants, and others of Ballina, in which there were a great number of landed proprietors, who were doing all they could to afford relief. The object of these petitioners was, to obtain an advance from Government, to the amount of 3,000*l.*, for opening the navigation of the river Moy, and they offered to Government unquestionable security. There was an extensive lake, called Conn, deep and navigable, but it had no communication with the sea, from which it was distant about three miles; and the petitioners stated, that the communication to the sea might be made at a small expense, and that it would be attended with great public benefit. He respectfully submitted, that these petitioners had a strong claim to the favourable attention of the House and the Government. Those who were acquainted with the distress in that part of the country, knew that one-third of the potato-crop had failed. It had failed wherever the lands were mountainous, or near the sea. If, under such circumstances, the Government would advance a sum to be expended in public works, the repayment would be amply secured. If something were not done, he was much afraid, that many would suffer from starvation in the course of the next twelve months. The hon. Member presented petitions, complaining of distress, from the inhabitants of Kilmore Moy—and of the united parishes of Kilbelfad and Ballinahaglish; and a Petition from landowners, merchants, and others, of Ballina, for resuming the Government works in that neighbourhood.

Mr. *J. Smith* could confirm the statements of the hon. Member, respecting the distress of the poor in Ireland. He feared that it was rapidly increasing, and he regretted that there could scarcely be expected from the people of England such extensive and generous assistance as they had given on a former occasion; for, from what causes he could not say, it was too evident, that the people of Great Britain were becoming very much alienated from their Irish fellow-subjects. He believed that grants of money could be so advanced by the Government as to effect great good, without any loss to the public, and he could say, from his own experience, that loans to the Irish peasantry were not only honestly applied to the purposes for which they were advanced, but in all cases punctually repaid.

Sir *Robert Bateson* said, that the distress was not confined to Mayo and the West of Ireland, but was equally prevalent in several of the northern counties. The distress was increasing to so great a degree, that it would be necessary for Government to take some measures to check it.

Mr. *James Grattan* agreed with the hon. Baronet in the opinion that the increase of the distress was alarming, and that it would be necessary for the Government to do something for its alleviation. He acknowledged with gratitude the liberality which the English people had manifested towards the Irish poor in 1822. But he thought that the present occasion called for exertions on the part of the Irish gentlemen themselves. That was the proper course, and he hoped that they would come forward speedily with subscriptions, following the example of the noble Marquis already alluded to, which he would most gladly imitate.

Sir *Robert Bateson* did not wish it to be understood that he had alluded to the necessity of grants from the Government to relieve the distress. There were other measures which he believed it would be necessary to resort to, in order to prevent a dreadful scarcity of food—such, for instance, as a temporary prohibition of the use of grain in the distilleries.

Mr. *Leader* read extracts from several Reports, to show the beneficial effects which had resulted from parliamentary grants for the employment of the poor, and for local improvements in Ireland. The sum of 100,000*l.* expended in Connaught, produced an income equal to the whole amount, in seven years. So great was the stimulus given to industry by the expenditure of those sums, that the revenue was, in each instance, during the progress of the works to which the grants were applied, increased to nearly double the amount of the sum advanced by the Government. As an Irish gentleman, he felt bowed down with sorrow and disgrace when he heard the distresses of Ireland brought forward as subjects of discussion in that House. Irish gentlemen ought to consider the great effects which had been produced by parliamentary grants of comparatively small sums of money, which plainly showed, that if they employed at home one-half of the produce at present exported, to the amount of ten millions annually, in the shape of rent to absentee landlords, and for which no return whatever was made, scarcely one man would be unemployed in Ireland.

Mr. *George R. Dawson* could confirm the statements which had been made by the Gentleman who preceded him, respecting the distress in several parts of Ireland. But he could not admit that the means of relieving it ought to come from the Government. He could not consent to Gentlemen's bringing Ireland annually before that House as a mendicant. He agreed with the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Leader), that Ireland had abundant resources in herself for her own relief, if they were properly made use of. It seemed to him, that the most effectual means by which the Legislature could promote the improvement of that country would be, the passing of a bill to allow Grand Juries to raise money for public works and local improvements, upon the security of the county rates; or, perhaps, the institution of Poor-laws, and a bill empowering parishes to mortgage the rates for money to be employed in public works, would afford effectual means of convincing Irish gentlemen, that they must apply their own resources to relieve the distress of Ireland, and not burthen this country for that purpose.

Mr. *O'Connell* considered it his duty, as an Irish Member, to inform the House and the country, that the most frightful distress was spreading over Ireland, and that a famine was approaching. He did not know what was to be the remedy; he would not undertake to suggest any: he had no doubt that the Government was anxious to devise one; but he begged it not to invest the Grand Juries of Ireland with any new power—he begged it not to countenance any scheme for enabling those Juries to tax the people under pretence of relieving them. The distresses of that people were the more grievous, as it was undeniable that the produce of their soil and of their industry was not only ample, but superabundant. It was lamentable that a country whose production was greater, in proportion to its population, than perhaps any country in the world, should be subject to periodical famine.

Lord *Althorp* was sure the House would feel, that the Government must have much difficulty in treating a subject of the kind then under the consideration of the House. No doubt there was, as his hon. friend (Mr. D. Browne) had stated, much distress in the county of Mayo; but, unhappily, the distress was not confined to that part of the country, and the Government had much difficulty in attempting to deal with matters so limited and local, lest it might do more harm than good; if, upon inquiry, however, Ministers were enabled to learn anything that could justify or give room for beneficial interference on their part, they would be most happy to do all in their power, consistently with their sense of duty.

Mr. *Hodges* said, that a tax upon absentees, in the form of a well-regulated Poor-rate, would be the only remedy for this periodical famine which visited Ireland.

Mr. *A. Lefroy* admitted, that the distress of the peasantry was very great in the part of Ireland mentioned, but he must defend the resident landlords from any imputation of neglect, for he was sure that they did all in their power to relieve the distress in their respective districts.

Sir *M. W. Ridley* concurred with those who thought, that a wise and well-regulated system of Poor-laws would go a great way towards preventing the recurrence of evils of that description. He was, indeed, satisfied, that nothing but a Poor-rate would, or could, compel the wealthy landlords of Ireland to contribute to the support of the peasantry.

Mr. *Benett* was also of opinion, that the institution of Poor-laws would be highly beneficial, and that it was in vain to expect that any voluntary system of relief would be sufficient.

Mr. *Ruthven* thought, that if the Poor-laws were established in Ireland, they should be so limited as to prevent their abuse. He did not wish to see the English Poor-laws introduced into Ireland, for with that system so many abuses were connected, that it would probably be more injurious than beneficial. However, in some towns, the wealthy contributed nothing to the relief of the poor, and some means ought to be devised to reach them. At all events, something ought to be done to arrest the progress of the present famine, and to prevent its recurrence for the future.

Lord *Killeen* said, that the distress was not confined to Mayo, but extended all over Ireland. Even in the county which he represented, though near Dublin, and though extraordinarily fertile, the distress was very severe.

Mr. *Sadler* had no difficulty in asserting, that the wealth of the country ought, by compulsory means, to be made to sustain the poverty of the people. New cases of that kind would be continually recurring until provision was made for the poor. The want of a legal provision for the Irish poor was one cause of the sufferings of the English poor, and in justice to them, the Irish ought to be provided for at home.

Mr. *Hume* said, that the time from five to seven o'clock had been set apart for receiving Petitions upon Reform, and they had now spent a considerable portion of that time in discussing Poor-laws.

Petition to be printed.

DUTIES ON NEWSPAPERS.] Mr. *Charles Buller* presented a Petition from Coventry, praying for the removal of all taxes affecting the circulation of knowledge. There was no one, he observed, who took the trouble to make himself acquainted with the condition of the people, but must be fully aware, that the want of instruction was the source of many of their crimes, and of much of the distress that from time to time they suffered. The daily Press was almost the only means of instruction they possessed; the petitioners, therefore, declared their full conviction to be, that the Duties on Newspapers, Advertisements, and on Paper, should be immediately taken off. He feared that the present state of the Revenue would not allow a total repeal of the duties. On a former day he gave notice, that on that night he should move that the duty on Newspapers be reduced to one halfpenny; but as he understood the proposition to which he intended to move that as an amendment was not to be that night moved, he should, he feared, be precluded from then submitting his amendment to the House. He meant however, to take the opportunity of doing so when the Chancellor of the Exchequer brought the stamp-duties under the consideration of the House.

Mr. *Hunt* supported the prayer of the petition, and said, he had received many similar petitions from various parts of the country, but had been prevented from presenting them by the House being so much occupied with other matters. Whatever reduction might be proposed in these duties, or should it be proposed to abolish them, he would support the proposition.

Petitions to be laid on the Table.

WEST-INDIA TRADE WITH AMERICA.] Mr. *Poulett Thomson* moved the Order of the Day for the House to resolve itself into a Committee on this Bill. On the Order being read, the right hon. Gentleman explained, that the Resolutions of the Committee on which the Bill was founded, had been correctly stated in the Journals of the House, but that in the report from the Committee presented to the House, a mistake had been committed, making the report at variance with the Resolutions. After a brief conversation, in which the Speaker stated, that the difficulty arose from the fact that the House could know nothing of the Resolutions of the Committee, but through the report, it was agreed that the clerical error in the report should be corrected, and the House be supposed to have known only the correct report.

The House then resolved itself into a Committee.

Mr. *George Robinson* stated, that he had an objection to make to the Bill, but he did not wish to oppose it at that stage, provided the discussion of his objection might be taken at a future period.

Mr. *Poulett Thomson* said, the Bill had already been discussed, and he wished that the Bill should then be proceeded with; the hon. Member might then state his objections.

Mr. *G. Robinson* did not then mean to discuss the propriety of the duties, but he objected to the word "temporary," and to the duties being imposed only for a certain period. He wished that word should be struck out, not meaning to say that the duties should be permanent, but leaving it quite at the discretion of the House to decide unfettered concerning them. He did not wish those duties to be permanent, but he did wish that the House should be unpledged. The right hon. Gentleman declared that they should be reduced in 1834—he wished the Parliament of 1834 to do what it liked. That would be a better means of keeping the Americans in check than by pledging the House at that time to a particular line of conduct in 1834. He wished to propose as an amendment, that the word "temporary" be left out, for he held it to be dangerous to say to the Americans, these duties shall be reduced at any particular period.

Sir *John Newport* thought the conduct of the hon. Member exceedingly strange. The hon. Member wished the duties not to be permanent, and yet he proposed to strike out the word which made them temporary. If the word temporary was left out they would be made permanent. He dissented altogether from the hon. Members views.

Mr. *Hume* hardly understood the hon. member for Worcester, but as far as he did understand him, he could not agree with him. For his own part he wished that the duties on flour and timber should cease at an earlier period than that provided by the Bill.

Mr. *Keith Douglas* objected to the Bill as a most inconsistent piece of legislation, and as striving, contrary to the principles professed by the right hon. Gentleman opposite, to build up a new interest in the Canadas. He should certainly support the amendment.

Mr. *Poulett Thomson* stated, that the object of the Bill was, not to build up any new interest, but to give protection for a certain period to interests which had grown up in Canada in consequence of the Non-Intercourse Act, which interests, unless they were protected, now that the intercourse with the West Indies and the United States was to be renewed, would be endangered. Those interests, however, were only to be protected for a certain time; and the Bill went on a principle which he had often heard praised in that House, and, if he were not mistaken, praised by his hon. friend, the member for Dumfries; and that principle was, of at once saying to any class of persons to whom protection had been granted which was found impolitic, that it should cease at a certain period. The Bill fixed a definite time at which the protection would be withdrawn, and that would enable the parties concerned to withdraw their capital. It was not building up, it was letting down an interest, and in a manner which had been frequently adopted, and generally recommended. He was surprised at the quarter whence the opposition to the Bill came.

Mr. *Maurice Fitzgerald* agreed with the hon. member for Worcester, that it was not a constitutional practice to settle beforehand at what period duties should cease. He did not agree with the hon. member for Middlesex, and was certain that nothing was more injurious than to have commercial duties and regulations uncertain and fluctuating. He wished to preserve our colonies, and was an advocate for the whole and entire protection which their interests had hitherto received. The noble Lord might sneer, but he could not defend the treatment the colonies now received. He repeated, that he was the advocate for entire protection, and he was prepared to defend that doctrine. He was not to be put down by sneers—he would treat them with contempt, as well as the coxcombry and conceit which prevailed in the measures he opposed. He was not ashamed nor afraid to meet the noble Lord on that ground. He would not say more than declare that he was opposed to the measure.

Mr. *Spring Rice* was surprised at the warmth of his right hon. friend, and was sure he must recollect measures of very great importance to which he had agreed, that were founded on the very principle of those measures which he stigmatized as dictated by coxcombry and conceit. The principle of the measure was to give a temporary protection to interests which had been forced into undue importance by the pressure of circumstances, and to fix a definite period when that protection should cease. He meant to give the Bill, as it stood, his warmest support.

Mr. *Goulburn* thought it was infinitely better to avoid casting any shackles on a future Parliament, or binding it down to adopt any decided course, when circumstances might hereafter show it to be impolitic and inexpedient. He, therefore, supported the proposition of the hon. member for Worcester.

Lord *Althorp* said, if the Parliament did not show that it intended to do away with these duties at a certain period, capital would still continue to be embarked in the Lumber-trade, and the object of the delay in reducing the duties would be wholly defeated.

Mr. *Hume* said, that the House was now plainly legislating against the West-India interests, and compelling them to pay a higher price for their Lumber, in order to maintain the colony of the Canadas. He thought the whole measure so unjust and impolitic, that he should certainly move as an amendment, that the duty should be 15*s.* now, and that it should wholly cease and determine on the 5th January, 1834.

Mr. *Herries* thought it would be better to leave it to Parliament from time to time to deal with the question as it thought fit; and that the House should not be pledged to give any particular time for the removal of the protecting duty.

Mr. *Warburton* considered, that the duty, as it would stand, would be a tax on the West-India interest for the sole advantage of the Canada trade, and he, therefore, was against making it permanent. He opposed the Amendment.

Sir *E. H. East* begged to ask the Vice-president of the Board of Trade, why it was, that the duty on American produce had been raised, in the present instance to 24*s.*?

Mr. *P. Thomson* said, that calculations had been made, and that 24*s.* would give a protection of about 9*s.* a ton, which was found to be the lowest duty that would give a protection to British shipping.

Mr. *George Robinson* begged it to be understood, in the event of his being compelled to divide the Committee on his amendment, that his objection was not to the rate of protecting duty, but to the period of its continuance, which he thought should not then be peremptorily defined. If another opportunity should be afforded him for taking the sense of the House on this proposition, he would let it stand over for that evening; if not, he should feel himself obliged to then press it to a division.

On the question being put,

Sir *A. Grant* informed the hon. Mover of the Amendment (Mr. Robinson), that his object would be defeated by the omission of the word "temporary," because the effect of omitting it would be, as there was a second and lower duty, to make the first and higher duty a permanent duty.

Mr. *George Robinson*, under such an explanation, could not press his motion to a division; but as he had allowed the original Resolution to pass *pro formâ*, under the expectation of taking the sense of the House in Committee on this question, he should certainly avail himself of some other mode to effect his object.

The first Amendment, to leave out the word "temporary" was then negatived.

Mr. *Hume* thought, that although there was a formal objection to the Amendment of his hon. friend, there could not be any objection to his, and he therefore moved that the word "additional" should be omitted.

This Amendment, as well as a succeeding one, that the existing Duties should cease in 1834, were negatived without a division and the House resumed.

Mr. *Robinson* wished to know the Speaker's opinion with respect to a point of order. The hon. Member stated the nature of the Amendment which he had made, and the decision of the Chairman of the Committee (Sir A. Grant) on the question. He wished to know from the Speaker, whether or not he was properly precluded from making such an Amendment?

The *Speaker* informed the hon. Member, that his proposition went to increase the rate of duty mentioned in the Bill, and could not, therefore, be adopted in the Committee.

Mr. *Robinson* did not see that his proposition would have had the effect stated by the Speaker. All he proposed to do was to omit the word "temporary" (duty), and leave it to Parliament to lower the duty at any time that might be thought proper.

The *Speaker* stated, that the hon. Member's Amendment, if adopted, would make the Bill a permanent measure; and that the duties, being fixed permanently, would on that account be higher than if they were only of a temporary nature.

CUSTOMS ACTS—SILK DUTIES.] Lord Althorp having moved that the House resolve into a Committee on the Customs Acts,

Mr. *B. Hoy* begged to ask the Vice-president of the Board of Trade (Mr. P. Thomson), whether it was intended, in any new regulation of the Silk-trade, to remove those restrictions by which the port of Dover possessed the exclusive privilege of being the only place on the coast through which silks could be imported? He thought that Southampton, from its position and maritime importance, was entitled to share that privilege, and its inhabitants complained much that they were deprived by the present regulation of many advantages they would otherwise enjoy through the passage of strangers and natives to France.

Mr. *P. Thomson* believed there was no intention to alter the existing regulations. No representations on the subject had been made to the Board of Trade.

Mr. *B. Hoy* replied, that a representation on the subject had been sent in to the President of the Board under the former Government.

Mr. *Thomson* said, he was satisfied that the noble Lord at the head of the Board would pay attention to the representation.

TIMBER DUTIES.] Lord *Althorp* then rose to state to the House the course he intended to pursue with respect to the Duties on Timber. He had at first intended not to bring this matter before the House until that day week; but it having been stated, that mischievous and inconvenient consequences might ensue if any further delay took place before the intention of Government with respect to the timber duties was made known, he had felt it his duty to change his intention, and explain the matter that night to the House, though he did not himself think that any inconvenience would have resulted from postponing the discussion to next Friday. When he first proposed the measure respecting an alteration of the timber duties to the House, his object was, to get a large increase to the revenue, without, at the same time, pressing on the commerce of this country. It was also his opinion, that the proposition Government made would have the effect of leading to the adoption of a better commercial system with respect to the trade of timber. In endeavouring to effect this object, he was aware that he was likely to meet with most powerful opposition. He knew the influence of Gentlemen connected with the shipping interest; which was much increased by the union with which they acted. Still, feeling confident that the proposition of Government would prove beneficial to the country, he was prepared to meet the opposition of those Gentlemen. He knew that it was made a charge against the proposed measure, that it would take money out of some people's pockets. Now he was ready to admit, that whatever capital was destroyed by the change, so far an injury would be done; but if capital was not destroyed, but merely diverted into another channel, the whole operation might be performed, and no person a loser. Supposing that by the operation of a law, coals from Newcastle were obliged to be sent round Scotland before coming into the port of London, the price of the article would be greatly increased to the consumer. But if the Parliament repealed that law, and permitted coals to come straight to London, placing at the same time a duty on the article of the same amount as the expense saved in the carriage, the Exchequer would be benefitted, and not a human being hurt. It was, indeed, plain, that when any article was brought from a greater distance than was necessary, in consequence of a law, that an alteration might be made which would have the effect of increasing the revenue of the public, without injuring any individual, provided the capital employed in the trade could be as profitably employed in another direction. He was desirous that the Committee should fully understand the defect of the present law with respect to the importation of timber. The present law either compelled the consumer in this country to use a worse article than he liked; or, if he used a better article, the law raised the price of it artificially against him. That was the case which was avowed by the advocates of the existing law. It was avowed that for the sake of one class of the community we ought to raise against the consumer the price of the best article, or compel him to use an inferior one. That North American timber was inferior to the Baltic, it needed no argument to convince the House. It was unfit for many purposes; and it was stated, in evidence before the Committee, in 1821, by Sir Robert Seppings, that ships built of North American timber lasted only four years, while ships built of Baltic timber lasted eight years. In consequence of that evidence, North American timber was excluded from the dock-yards of this country, and he believed that in all building contracts there was a specification that Baltic timber should be used. This was a sufficient proof, he thought, of the inferiority of North American timber. He knew it was said, and truly, that the red pine of North America approached nearly to, if not equalled, the quality of the Baltic timber. But then, what was the effect of the existing regulations upon the consumer of wood in this country? Supposing the red pine of North America to be equal to the Baltic timber, yet the price of the red pine before importation was 35*s.* per load; while the price of equally good Baltic timber was only 23*s.* The existing regulations, therefore, in forcing a man to purchase the red pine of North America, compelled him to pay fifty per cent more for it on the first price than he need have paid for the Baltic timber. The red pine, of which he had been speaking, was the produce of Upper Canada, but a great deal of that timber was brought from the United States. When Gentlemen, therefore, talked of the existing regulations being a protection to the colonies, he begged leave to say, that though they were partly so, yet at the same time they afforded great protection to the produce and great encouragement to the clearing of the United States. Then, on the other hand, the commercial advantages of the proposed change seemed to be left entirely out of sight. What was the state of the question with respect to that point? There was Norway, in the north of Europe with a bad climate and sterile soil, which could produce nothing to give this country in return for its manufactures excepting timber. Canada, on the contrary, was a fertile country, its climate was propitious, and it produced corn and legumes in abundance. Why, then, should we take a bad timber from a country which could give us in exchange for our commodities other articles of a better description, instead of drawing our supply of timber from a country which could give us nothing else in exchange? But it might be said, that Norway, while it supplied this country with timber, would not take our manufactures in return. It certainly appeared, that whatever of our manufactures was consumed in Norway did not come directly from England; but the reason of that was, the laws which precluded the English consumer from making use of Norwegian timber. If we took the Norwegians' timber, they would be glad to have our manufactures. In fact, they used them now, but they obtained them circuitously through the North of Germany, and there could be no doubt that Norway, as well as all the countries of the North of Europe, would gladly receive them direct in exchange for their own produce. It was then plain, that we excluded from this country the only article which Norway could supply us with, in order to take a worse article from a country which was able to supply us with much better commodities. When, therefore, he found himself called upon to provide for a large amount of revenue, he did think that the proposition which Government had made, to alter the duties on timber, would, for the reasons he had stated, prove most beneficial to the country. That proposition had met with great opposition, and he admitted that the opposition it had experienced made him feel a difficulty in carrying it. He had also no hesitation in saying, that with respect to the shipping interest, every possible anxiety would be shown on the part of Government to avoid injuring it if possible; but he was not prepared to say, that he would sacrifice every other class of the community in order to support that one. He did not think that the House ought to sacrifice commercial advantages merely for the sake of supporting the shipping interest; yet he should wish that the alteration of the duty should be as little injurious as possible to the shipping interest, and in carrying it into effect, he had studied in what manner he might best accomplish it with regard to that interest. The question then arose in his mind, could any alteration in the duty on timber be made, in such a manner as to effect the object he had in view—namely, the restoration of the trade to a healthy and natural state, without injury to any one? In order to put the House in a condition to judge of the propriety of the change in the duties on timber which Government now intended to propose, it would be necessary for him to enter into a statement of the state and prospects of the revenue of the country. The House would then be able to judge of the policy of the proposition which he should submit at the conclusion of his speech. The House would recollect, that in the financial statement which he made a few weeks ago, he had calculated what would be the produce of the revenue for this year, from its amount in last year, and had stated his expectation, that the new taxes which he intended to lay on would bring more to the revenue than would be lost by the repeal of some others. But since that period he had the experience of the effect which the reductions of taxation made by the right hon. Gentleman opposite, during last year, had had on the revenue. Looking at the amount of the revenue derived from the Customs for the first two months of the present year, he found that it exceeded the amount received during the corresponding months of last year by the sum of 176,000*l.* If the revenue proceeded increasing at that rate, he calculated that at the end of the year there would be an excess, upon the Customs alone, of 1,056,000*l.* beyond the amount of last year. He did not mean, however, to calculate upon the whole of that sum; but he would take two-thirds of it, or 704,000*l.* as the excess which would exist at the end of the present year over the receipts of last. Adding that sum to the amount of Customs of last year, he found it would give a total of 18,250,000*l.* From that sum he deducted the amount of the duty on coals and slates for ten months, 700,000*l.*, and the total amount would then be about 17,550,000*l.* From the taxes he proposed to place on steam-boats, he expected 75,000*l.*; on cotton wool, 250,000*l.*; on coals exported, 100,000*l.*; and on wine, 150,000*l.* These taxes made up a sum of 575,000*l.*, which added to 17,550,000*l.* made a total exceeding 18,125,000*l.* He had founded his calculation upon the receipts of the Customs for the two first months of the year, a test which had been often taken, which, he believed, was taken by Lord Goderich, and had always been found to answer. Looking at the revenue derived from the Excise during the same term, he found it had fallen off as might have been expected from the remission of taxes, but not in proportion to the amount of taxes reduced. The diminution of this branch of the revenue in the first two months of the year was 239,704*l.*, which would give in the whole year 1,438,224*l.*; but in order to be quite safe he would take it at 1,500,000*l.* He deducted this from 18,644,384*l.*, the amount of the Excise last year, and this gave 17,144,384*l.* In addition, there had been taken off this year the taxes on

Printed Calicoes - - - - - - -	£540,000
Candles - - - - - - - - - - -	200,000
Drawback on exported Calicoes, estimated at - - - - - - - -	600,000
Making- - - - -	£1,340,000

The Post-Office, Stamps, Taxes, and Miscellaneous items he would take as last year, and the whole revenue would therefore be,

Customs - - - - - - - - -	£18,125,000
Excise - - - - - - - - - - -	15,804,348
Stamps - - - - - - - - - -	6,950,000
Taxes - - - - - - - - - -	5,000,000
Post Office - - - - - - - - - -	1,450,000
Miscellaneous - - - - - - - -	350,000
Total - - - -	£47,679,348

The expenditure of the year he estimated at 47,000,000*l.*, leaving a surplus of 680,000*l.* He was not apprehensive that any falling off was to be anticipated in the amount of the revenue for the present year. Indeed, from the success—he had almost said the splendid success.—both of our trade and manufactures at this time, he saw no reason to calculate even on the chance of any deficiency in the Revenue. He was anxious, however, to keep himself on the safe side, and therefore, in the estimate he had made, as there was a decrease in the receipt of the Excise to be deducted from the increase of the Customs, he had taken the increase as equal to only two-thirds of its probable amount; but he took the whole probable decrease of the Excise, and the result was a surplus of about 680,000*l.* on the whole amount for the year. In addition to this sum of 680,000*l.*, at which he calculated the surplus of this year, in the next year several items would appear to the public credit. There would then be no drawback on printed calicoes, amounting this year to 600,000*l.*; linen bounties would cease, amounting to 150,000*l.*; the duty on cotton wool imported to be received next year would be 50,000*l.*: all which, added to the 680,000*l.* of this year, would make a gross surplus for the next year of 1,480,000*l.* But when it was recollected that there was a deduction to be made from the income of the present year, in consequence of the duties repealed on candles, 200,000*l.*, on coals, 130,000*l.*, it would be more prudent to take the nett surplus for the year at 1,150,000*l.* If that view of our finances was correct, there remained no imperative reason why the Government should lay any heavy taxation on the importation of timber for the purpose of benefitting the revenue. But commercial policy did call on the Government to take steps, not violently, but gradually, to relieve the consumer of timber in this country from the heavy duties he now paid. While he looked on this question as one of revenue, he was bound to take that course which he thought would produce the greatest benefit, and therefore he considered it necessary to increase the duty on Canada timber. But now, when the prospect of the revenue was more flattering, he did not propose to increase the duty on Canada timber; but he intended to reduce that on Baltic timber, and he would state the grounds which made him believe that the plan he had adopted would prove advantageous to the country. He was aware of the importance of the shipping interest, yet he did not consider that it should be alone regarded. The prosperity of that interest depended on the state of the commerce of the country, and unless that commerce were flourishing, the shipping interest could not thrive. Some hon. Gentlemen were accustomed to argue the question as if the shipping interest were opposed to the other interests of the country; but he considered that any regulation which interfered with the commerce and industry of the nation, would be injurious to the shipping interest. The duty on timber in log, coming from the Baltic, almost amounted to prohibition; and while from Canada one-third only of the quantity imported came in the shape of deal, two-thirds came from the Baltic. The alteration which he proposed to make in the duty on timber, in log and in deal, would, he thought, be advantageous to the commerce of the country, and open the trade with the Baltic more than at present. The only points of objection that could, he conceived, be raised against his proposition was, the effect it would have on the colonies. He was ready to admit, that whatever capital was laid out on saw-mills in Canada, would suffer. But the amount of capital so laid out was very small in proportion to the capital which was otherwise engaged in the timber trade; and even that capital might be applied, to a certain extent, to other purposes. The largest amount of capital was employed in the lumber-trade in Canada. That was an entirely floating capital, and capable of being diverted to other channels, with as great ease as any other floating capital. Then it was said, that the emigrants would suffer. But the emigrants were not employed in any one part of the operation of the timber trade, because they did not understand the use of the axe. They were certainly employed to a certain extent in moving the timber down to the coast; but the only reason why emigrants accustomed to agricultural pursuits were so employed, arose from the legislation of this country, which had the effect of driving capital into the lumber-trade. By taking gradually away the inducement to capitalists to place their capital in the lumber-trade of Canada, he hoped to induce them to turn their speculations to the cultivation of the soil, and give employment to the emigrants in agricultural occupations. He did not believe that the effect of such a change could be anything but advantageous to Canada; and it was clear, from evidence produced at different times before that House, that persons engaged in the lumber-trade were not desirous of continuing in it. He admitted that the case was somewhat different with respect to the southern parts of Nova Scotia, and New Brunswick. The soil there was not so propitious, and the timber-trade was, consequently, of greater importance: but he could never admit that that trade would be destroyed by the proposed measures of Government. The timber of that part of these colonies was used for the manufacture of certain articles, and it would always continue to be used for that purpose. Though an improper material to be used in buildings of a permanent nature, yet it had the advantage of being more easily worked than other timber, and therefore it would continue in some cases to be used. Indeed, the yellow pine of those provinces was more valuable than the yellow pine of Canada, and would be the last American timber displaced from the market by the Baltic timber. The noble Lord proceeded to state his plans respecting the duties on timber, but his remarks were nearly inaudible in the gallery. He was understood to propose that the duty now payable on Baltic timber should be lowered from its present amount, 55*s.* per load, to 40*s.*; which duty of 40*s.* so far from being the means, as it was weakly asserted by some, of the ruin and annihilation of the timber-trade in Canada, would operate as a permanent protecting duty to the productions and industry of that colony. The timber, too, had properties of itself which rendered it highly valuable. It was a soft wood, with very few knots, and was found very easy to work. It was impossible, then, to imagine that, with all these natural advantages, and the continuance of a protecting duty to the amount he had before stated, the change in the existing scale of duties on Baltic timber could possibly injure either the trade in the red pine of these colonies, or in the yellow pine of the southern part of them, nor, least of all, could it prove injurious to the trade of New Brunswick, the pine of which was the best of any. The amount of duty which Baltic timber paid above Canada timber might be taken as at 45*s.* per load; namely, 55*s.* on the Baltic timber, and 10*s.* on the Canada timber. The Baltic deals were subject to a duty, according to their length, from twelve to twenty-one feet, of from 19*l.* to 22*l.*, making an average duty altogether, on all Baltic timber, as nearly as possible 55*s.* throughout. The consequence of the duty on both sorts of deals being formerly the same was, that the Baltic merchant only sent us the fourteen feet deals instead of those of twenty-one feet. Having premised thus much with respect to the duties formerly, and as they stood at present, he should proceed to detail his plan. He first would apprize the House that, aware of the effect which might be occasioned by any sudden alteration in these duties on Baltic timber upon our colonial trade, he intended to avoid any such consequence by making the alteration gradual, in such a way as that the Bill should not come into operation as to the reduction of duties until the 1st of January, 1832, so as to afford ample time, during the whole of this year, to the Canadians to carry on this trade without competition, or to re-invest their capital in other occupations. On the 1st, then, of next January, he should propose to reduce the duty on Baltic timber 6*s.*; on the 1st of January, 1833, a second reduction in the amount of duty, to the extent of 6*s.*, should also take place; and, in the beginning of the year 1834, the remaining 3*s.* would, by the first of his resolutions, expire; after which, no further reduction of duty was contemplated, leaving, therefore, the Canada timber-trade with a protecting duty of 30*s.* There was an advantage arising from thus arriving, by degrees, in a period of three years, at his object of reducing the duties on Canada timber, which was, that it would enable him to bring about, at the same time, the establishment of the same rate of duty both in Ireland and in England. The noble Lord, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, concluded by moving his first resolution, as follows:—"That it is the opinion of this Committee, that in lieu of the duties of Customs heretofore payable, as mentioned in the table annexed, there shall be taken and received the duties following:—On all timber being eight inches square, imported from any Port in the Baltic, on or after the 1st of January, 1832, there shall be payable, per load, a duty of 2*l.* 9*s.*; after the 1st of January, 1833, a duty of 2*l.* 3*s*; and, after the first of January, 1834, a duty of 2*l.*"

Mr. *Attwood* condemned the plan of the noble Lord, as differing from what had been anticipated. It had proved, in effect, to be an attempt to destroy a protection formerly given to timber, the growth of British colonies. The reverse of a sound principle was adopted, for here the duty on the foreign timber was reduced, whilst that on the British colonial timber was suffered to continue. He must confess he had felt obliged by the seeming candour of the noble Lord, in attending to the wishes of the parties most interested in the ultimate decision of the House on this question. That candour, he regretted to say, was anything but real, for it was a fact that, up to this hour, the trade was in doubt as to what was the measure to be proposed by Government. He differed altogether from the noble Lord as to the imagined facility with which capital embarked in one trade could be changed and diverted into another. But it was too prevalent an error with that class of men denominated political economists. He congratulated the House that they, as practical men, were aware of other interests and of other parties than those which solely constituted the solicitude of the noble Lord in his scheme of finance. The interests and amount of the revenue, with the interests of the consumers of timber, had, for the first time been avowed as adequate and abundant grounds on which to legislate. He knew well, that the Committee would throw out all consideration of revenue, and all question as to the price of timber, in discussing this subject, and decide on the broad ground of just colonial policy. He would remind the House that, ever since the year 1809, this trade had been settled under particular stipulations, and secured to Canada as sacredly as any trade could by treaty have been ceded to a foreign nation. Previously to 1810, in fact, no trade whatever existed in timber exported from Canada to this country, but the expediency of establishing such a trade had been rendered palpable, if not imperiously necessary, by the political changes in Europe. We had begun to feel most sensibly the effects of the prohibitive system of the French government, whose power extended over the countries on the Baltic, and crippled our supply of timber. The reasons, then, on which this trade was founded, were neither considerations of revenue nor the cheapness of the price at which timber might be procured. The duties were, in effect, duties of prohibition, nor was the distance of the colonies from the northern countries left out of the consideration. The price of the transport of timber from the Baltic being 1*l.*, whilst that from Canada was 2*l.* It was, then, no mercantile speculation, on which this system of protection on the one side, and prohibition on the other was established. The report of the Committee of the House of Lords on the subject in 1820, distinctly recognised the principle in these remarkable words, "As our intercourse with the Northern States must be liable to be influenced by the fluctuations of political events; and as the exclusion from their ports, which has been once experienced, may at some future period recur, your Committee are apprehensive that the consequences of any measure that might have the effect of placing our dependence for a supply of timber exclusively on those countries, might become, eventually, the occasion of serious political inconvenience and danger." Here the political principle was embodied on which the Canada timber-trade was encouraged; and it appeared that it was in a time of peril and danger that we had endeavoured to liberate ourselves from the possibility of ever finding that important arm of our national strength — namely, our navy, threatened with extinction for want of the raw material of naval warfare. It was under a threat of invasion by the enemy, and upon the faith of an Act of Parliament, that our merchants were induced to invest an enormous amount of capital in the deep recesses of the woods and forests of Canada, in the erection of saw-mills and wharfs. But the danger, it was said, had now passed away. He admitted that, at present, Government had reason to be perfectly satisfied with the friendly relations in which it stood towards all the Powers of Europe, there being no political danger to be apprehended from without—no terror of invasion. But though he admitted all that, were they, he would ask, therefore prepared to sacrifice those men, who by their capital and enterprise had saved the nation from a great danger, and now secured it against the possible recurrence of such a crisis? Were they to sacrifice the property of such men which had been embarked on the faith of an Act of Parliament. There could be no wisdom in any policy which was not founded on justice and fair dealing. No measure could be beneficial or safe which had not justice for its basis. Cheap timber would be dearly purchased by a sacrifice of the national faith, and the Exchequer would be filled at a great cost if it were done by confiscation. Whatever measures were proposed for the regulation of the policy of the country, it was necessary to preserve the national honour, instead of adopting changes which nearly bordered upon revolution. He was convinced that the discontent which prevailed would be increased by the measure which was proposed; that it would augment the violence of the violent, and urge the dissatisfied to still further demands. Was this a time to excite more discontent by a series of acts of legislative injustice, sacrificing one class after another—pressing down the rights of the higher classes, and valuing little the property which was embarked in commercial enterprises? The discontent which existed, not to call it disaffection, had originated in a long series of misgovernment and fallacious legislation, which sacrificed vast properties embarked in important interests to the vague notions of a crude philosophy. One after the other—the farmer, the trader, the manufacturer, the merchant, had been ruined, and the latest victim had been the unfortunate kelp-burner. The revolution of property would bring about revolution of Government, and would render it absolutely necessary that some change of system should be adopted. It was a great delusion which was at the bottom of the proposed change, to imagine that capital invested in one way, which might be considered by certain political economists wrong, might simply or lightly be transferred to another trade. This fallacy ran through Adam Smith's works, and was adopted by all his disciples. He (Mr. Attwood) maintained, that capital embarked in one branch of commerce could not without danger be transferred to another, any more than a labourer, habituated to one species of industry, could, with equal advantage, apply his exertions in another way. It was impossible for any set of men to make industry accommodate itself to their crude notions and abstruse speculations. It was upon the general policy and propriety of adopting these measures, and not merely upon what the Exchequer would gain, that the House was to decide. If the principle of this measure were adopted, it would dissolve the links that bound our colonial possessions to the mother-country, and destroy the protection hitherto wisely extended to our domestic interests. Whatever was left of protection might be invaded upon the same arguments and reasoning. He was far from admitting that a system of protection ought never to have been established; but that was not now the question; capital had been invested under it, and labour had been supported by it, and the point was, whether it was politic to put an end to that system? Supposing that decided in the affirmative, there would still remain the question, whether the present was the period when the great change ought to be adopted? In order to effect it, under the most favourable circumstances, some period of prosperity at home and tranquillity abroad ought to be sought. The question came then—Was this a period at which this country could be deprived of her protective policy? Even if it were desirable to abandon the system of protection, still it was necessary to look for a period of general prosperity and tranquillity—prosperity at home, and tranquillity abroad—before we made that great experiment which, as one of its unavoidable consequences, must obstruct, for a time at least the progress of national prosperity. Was there any branch of commerce upon the stability of which we could rely at home, and what market was there abroad, upon which we could reckon for three months certain? Political economists supposed that labour could be better employed than it was, and accordingly they closed one channel and opened another, without reflecting that, before they had closed the old channel for a month, political events might occur which would render the new one unavailable. He should not be astonished that those who called themselves liberal politicians, and were carried away by abstract and fanciful theories, were to put experiments of this kind into practice, without regard to the state of the country, and of the world around them; but he candidly confessed, he was astonished that men filling the high situation of Ministers of the Crown—responsible for the acts of the Government—should at this period, when danger threatened on every side—when, turn in whatever direction we might, the aspect of the future was unfavourable and menacing, and when, consequently, they ought to address themselves to the necessary precautions against the coming evils—that they should, instead of providing safeguards against these dangers, or occupying themselves with the calamities of the country, when they saw half Europe in arms, bring forward a crude and precipitate plan, which must be accompanied by grievous calamities, and must augment the national embarrassment. It was to bring the subject properly before the House and the country, that he, advocating the cause of the property of the trader, and stated his determination to take the opinion of the Committee before he suffered this proposition to be adopted. The noble Lord, in his present plan, altered nothing of the principle of his former propositions; the only alteration made was in degree. The plan was open to all the objections which had been formerly urged. It was defended upon grounds very different from those upon which he should wish to see a question of this nature argued; and he trusted that the House would not concur with his Majesty's Ministers in the proposition which they had now brought forward.

Mr. *Poulett Thomson* said, the hon. Gentleman had stated, that his Majesty's Government argued this question upon principles very different from those upon which he wished to see it argued, and upon which he should wish to argue it himself. He was glad of this, and he should be very sorry if any Government in that House were to place a question of great national importance, like the present, upon the exclusive grounds of the two interests to which the hon. Gentleman had alluded. He had argued it with reference to the interests of the colonies and of the ship-owners, and he seemed to wish, what he (Mr. Thomson) trusted would not occur, that the interests of the consumers should be wholly lost sight of. He trusted, that never would such grounds be urged by any Government—and although on this question the interests of the colonies and of the ship-owners had been considered by his Majesty's Government, they were considered as they ought, in common with the interests of the country. He said, they had been wisely so considered, because it would be vain to think that one interest could be bolstered up effectually or permanently at the expense of another, and they must be short-sighted legislators who would advocate any other interests than those of the country generally. The objections urged by the hon. Gentleman were —first, that the Legislature had no right to interfere with duties without looking to the rights of the parties concerned, and he had read a report from a Committee, which, as he contended, would bear him out in the statement, that some pledge had been given, or understanding entered into, that these duties were to be permanent and fixed. The House had heard to-night, and heard properly, that when a duty was fixed by that House, it was in the power of Parliament to alter it at a subsequent period; and if it were found inconsistent with the safety or the advantage of the country, it became not only the right, but the duty of that House to alter it, and no plea of injustice could be set up against the change. He would beg to read to the hon. Gentleman another part of the Report to which he referred—a Report of the Committee of the Lords, when, in 1820, an attempt was made to set up this very plea, and that attempt so strongly made, that the Lords' Committee thought it necessary to give a distinct denial to that supposition, after hearing all the evidence. The report stated, that the principle of altering duties, when the necessities of the State should require it, had always been explained to the Canada merchants, in all their communications with the Board of Trade. But the Resolution of that House was not in conformity with the Report of the Committee, which recommended a scale differnet from that adopted by the House. When the hon. Gentleman spoke of a breach of faith, he must allow him to refer him to an authority for the measure now about to be adopted, and he believed the hon. Gentleman would not call the individuals to whom he now alluded visionary or crude philosophers. He referred to the authority of a Minister of the Crown, in another place, who expressed his deep regret at the scale having been altered from that proposed by the Committee; and of another Minister, who declared that the whole scale of duties was open to revision, and that such revision would probably take place in a few years. Lord Bathurst reminded their Lordships, that it was necessary to give protection to the colonial interests; that the Resolution went further than the Report; but the difference was rather in quantum than in principle, and that it would be open to revision. He (Mr. Thomson) had never heard another place, which he need not more distinctly particularize, talked of as the nestling place of rash visionaries and crude philosophers. What was the express report of the Committee of that House ten years ago? In 1820 the Lords' Committee reported, that it would be expedient to compensate the Canada merchants by such limited duty as should be found necessary for the purpose. The measure now before the House, which would have its full operation in three years hence, would give a protection, in 1834, of one-half more than that which the Lords proposed in 1820. The details of this subject were necessarily tedious, and he was unwilling to press them more than he could avoid upon the House; but when exaggerated statements were made, and exaggerated conclusions drawn from facts and figures, it was only by a recurrence to facts and figures that these exaggerations could be met. Therefore, if his details were tedious, the subject must be his apology, and the House would grant him its indulgence. He should now beg to call the attention of the Committee to one material point in the present plan—namely, the alteration of the duty on deals. His noble friend had not put forward, perhaps, as strongly as he might have done, the disadvantage to the industry of the country, when labour was needed—of the unequal rates of duty upon timber and deals. It was obvious that while deals could be brought in at 45*s.* per load duty, they would be used in preference to timber, and many were the petitions which he had had occasion to read, and which had been placed on the Table of that House, praying that this unreasonable law might be altered, and a due protection given to the industry of the country. He now came to the most extraordinary statement of all the statements made by the hon. Gentleman opposite. He said, that the proposition now before the House would have the effect of raising up the industry of Russia at the expense of our own colonies. Surely the hon. Gentleman could not fully understand the measure; and he (Mr. Thomson) was surprised that he had not applied himself to some of those sources from which he could have derived correct information. The effect of the measure, instead of assisting the trade of Russia, would be to place Russian timber, which now had a great advantage, as it paid but 19*l.* where it ought to pay 29*l.*, upon an equal footing with the timber of Sweden and Norway, and not the least pressing expostulations which had been forwarded to the Board of Trade, on the subject of this measure, were from persons interested in the Russia trade, who considered that their interests were injured by it. The effect of the measure was to draw nearer to a gradual approximation of the duties between American and Baltic timber. He was glad that the operation of the measure was to be gradual, but he would ask the Committee to consider fairly the nature of this trade, and what price the country paid for the unequal protection afforded to the colonies—that protection his Majesty's Government professed not to remove, but only to diminish to a certain extent.—Those who said, that in introducing this measure they were destroying their colonies, could not know what they said, or it would be impossible for them to make the statements they did. In judging of these statements, the House ought to be guided by the truth or fallacy of the statements which had been made on former occasions. When this subject was under consideration before, exactly the same statements were made as those at present; it was then said, "Alter the duties as they now exist, and you destroy the Canada trade." But instead of these expectations being realized, or such predictions verified, exactly the reverse occurred, and, therefore, he said, the House had good grounds for hesitating, at least, ere it gave credence to the assertions of the same party, founded on the same facts. In 1820, when it was said, that the Canada trade would be destroyed by any interference with the duties, what was the state of that trade? It was known that in 1819 and 1820, the trade received an unnatural impulse, and that its state, at that time, did not furnish a criterion of its general condition. But he would take that period for the purpose of his present calculation. In 1817, the timber imported from Canada, was 188,000 loads. In 1820 it amounted to 270,000 loads; and in 1829, the quantity of timber and deals imported from Canada, was 518,000 loads, so that, instead of the Canada trade having been destroyed by an arrangement which raised the duty on the one species of timber by 10*s.* and lowered the other by the same amount, it had increased in this large ratio. The House ought to receive with very great caution the statements which were made upon this subject by the opponents of the measure. Nothing was more obvious than that the calculations they had made were quite erroneous. He would take as an instance the statement which had been made by an hon. Member opposite on a former evening—that in this trade there were engaged 1,600 ships, amounting to 430,000 tons, and giving employment to 20,000 seamen; for when that hon. Member talked of this measure being calculated to throw out of employment 800 ships and 10,000 seamen, which he took as half of the whole trade, the fair inference from his statement was, that the total number of ships employed was 1,600, and of men 20,000. Now, what was the fact—a fact which he called upon any man to deny if he could? That this number of ships was the total amount of all ships which had been entered inwards from our North American possessions in the course of the year; and it was well known that these ships made repeated voyages, averaging one voyage and three quarters to each ship annually. By taking that fact into account, the number of ships employed in the entire trade with our North American colonies would be reduced to 900; their tonnage to 246,000 tons; and the number of men to 11,000. From that amount we had to deduct the amount of shipping and men not employed in this particular trade—the timber trade. That amount was 100 ships, 27,000 tons, and 1,500 men. After making that deduction, we had 800 ships, with 219,000 tons of tonnage, and upwards of 8,000 men, employed in the timber trade with the Canadas. That simple fact would show the House how careful it ought to be in giving credence to the exaggerated statements which had been put forward on this subject. He was anxious to bring the question of this trade before the Committee in the way of pounds, shillings, and pence; for that, after all, was the proper way to look at the subject, and he wished, therefore, to state to the Committee the amount of real loss which the country suffered in consequence of the difference in the duties. Now in doing this he would take the statement which had been put forward by the ship-owners themselves, and he believed he should be able, from that statement alone, to lay before the Committee an estimate of the loss which we had suffered in this way, which would make the House reflect and wonder how such a preposterous system should ever have been introduced. When he, and those who acted with him, were accused of going too much upon theory, and of carrying principles too far, he thought it would be proper that the country should know how much at present it had to pay for this protection. Two years ago, his hon. friend the member for Bridport, moved for an account of the amount of duty which had been received upon North American timber, and also for an account of what the amount of that duty would have been if it had been received upon Baltic timber. Now the result of the difference between those two amounts would be, upon the showing of the shipowners and the petitioners themselves, the actual amount of the loss which the country sustained from upholding this protection. The languages of the ship ownerwas, that if you should withdraw that protection at all, the whole of this trade would go from them to the Baltic. Now this trade with the Canadas, since its first commencement in the year 1810, had cost the country a sum of not less than 20,000,000*l.* He held in his hand the accounts which had been laid before Parliament, in pursuance of the motion of his hon. friend, the member for Bridport, and referring to those accounts, he found that in the year 1825, the difference between the amount of duty levied on Canada timber that year, and what the amount of that duty would have been if it had been levied on Baltic timber, was 1,226,000*l.* The difference in 1826 was, 1,409,000*l.*, and so on in the succeeding years. Last year the difference was 1,348,000*l.*, making altogether the loss to the country, during the last seven years, of 7,424,000*l.* He assumed that to be the loss, taking for granted the statement of the shipowners, that if this alteration should be made in the duty, the whole trade would go to the Baltic. He founded his calculation on the statement of the petitioners, but he would strengthen that calculation by one which had been made in a different manner, which did not go quite so far, and which appeared to him a better one. He would take the timber imported from the North American colonies as costing 20*s*. per load more for the freight than an equal quantity from Europe, and he would take the difference as to the quality of the timber by the market price, which estimated it at 1*l*. 10*s*. less than that of the European timber. With regard to the deals from America, he would take it that their cost of freight was 6*l*. per load more, and that the difference in quality between them and the European deals, calculating it by the market price, amounted to 6*l*. more. It appeared then, that in the year 1829, the calculation stood thus,—in that year we imported from the North American colonies 393,000 loads of timber, which cost 20*s*. more in freight than the same quantity would have cost from Europe, making 393,000*l*., and the difference in quality being estimated at 1*l*. 10*s*., made an additional sum of 590,000*l*. The difference of freight upon 18,250 hundred of deals imported in that year, estimated at 6*l*., made 109,000*l*., and the difference in quality, estimated also at 6*l*., made a further sum of 109,000*l*. It thus appeared from this statement, which checked the former calculation, that the total loss in that year amounted to 1,202,000*l*. a sum which the country had to pay for following this circuitous mode of obtaining its timber instead of going directly for it to the Baltic. He defied them to show that this loss was made up to the country in any other way, by the employment of capital in this trade which could not be profitably employed in some other manner. What was the capital employed in this trade? The ship-owners estimated the tonnage at 430,000 tons. He would strike off the 30,000 tons, and leaving it at 400,000 tons, the rate of freight was 40*s*., which in 400,000 tons made 800,000*l*. Now, if the country actually took up those ships, and paid their owners that freight, and kept them sailing about the Atlantic, and doing nothing, it would be seen that the country would be a gainer by such an arrangement. It was said, that this measure would totally destroy this trade; but without denying that this measure would eventually diminish the trade to a considerable extent, he denied that it would produce more than a trifling destruction in the employment of the shipping. But, even if it were calculated to throw the half of the ships out of employment, he would contend, that it would be more economical to keep those ships sailing about, doing nothing, and to buy up the whole of the timber which was cut down for exportation in Canada, and bring it to the coast and burn it there, than to be paying for it at the rate which the country paid at present. By such an arrangement as that even the country would be a loser by 20,000*l*. less than it lost at present. The Government did not propose any violent or sudden measure—it proposed merely a gradual diminution of the protection. The Ministers said, they were willing that the country should continue to pay a portion of that protection, but that the existing amount of it was too great, and that it must be diminished. This measure was not to come into operation immediately, it would not take effect until the 1st of January next year, and then the diminution in the duty on Baltic timber would be only 6*s*. in the first instance. The entire reduction in the end would be 15*s*.; but as that would be brought about gradually, it would not have the effects which might be anticipated from a sudden reduction to that amount. When the amount of the reduction reached 15*s*., the effect would be to displace a portion of the Canada timber, and enable the public to get supplied from the Baltic with timber of a better description. There was a duty of 10*s*. a load upon Canada timber, and it had a clear protection above Baltic timber of 35*s*. a load upon deals, and 45*s*. upon solid timber. By the proposed change, Canada deals of every description would have a clear and an increased protection of 39*s*. He calculated that about one-third of the quantity of timber which was now imported from Canada would be brought from the Baltic when the alteration was effected. He now came to consider how far this measure interfered with the shipping of the country—namely, by the transfer of one-third of the shipping to the Baltic trade. This part of the subject brought him to meet the assertion, that the trade of the country would be carried on in foreign bottoms. In the statement made by those who opposed the alteration, the whole of the Russia trade was excluded. The total amount of importation in the timber trade in 1830, from Norway, Sweden, and Russia, was 141,000 loads in foreign ships. The quantity brought in British ships in the same year was 219,000 loads. The tonnage of foreign ships, as compared with British ships, had not lost any of its proportions. It was as three-fifths to two-fifths up to 1823, and it was above three-fifths now. It was said, that foreign ships were more fully employed than British ships, but it ought to be borne in mind that British ships were ready and prepared to go into the Baltic trade. He contended, that at least one-half of the one-third of the numbers of ships that would be displaced from the colonial trade, would find employment in bringing timber from the Baltic. Taking the number of ships reduced at 265, he felt satisfied that 133 of them would go to the Baltic. Supposing the amount to be proportionate on 265 ships, he thought it impossible that sufficient employment might not be found for them, even if they had recourse to the coasting coal trade. He had been taunted with not knowing that those timber ships were generally of from 400 to 500 tons, and that such ships could not be employed advantageously in the coasting trade. Now he would take the statement of the ship-owners themselves, that there were 1,600 ships, amounting to 430,000 tons, employed in this trade; and by dividing that tonnage by the number of ships, it would give 200 tons as the average tonnage to those ships employed in this trade. He was well aware that there were vessels of 400 and 500 tons employed in that trade, but, to give the average which he had stated, there must be a considerable number of vessels employed in it under 200 tons. Now, as an instance of the ships employed in the coasting trade, he would state the number of ships, and the amount of their tonnage, which had come into the port of London, laden with coal, in the year 1830. The number of vessels was 6,944, measuring 1,432,000 tons; and by dividing the tonnage by the vessels, it would be found that the average tonnage was 204 tons. He was glad to have an opportunity of stating this fact, for it showed how little consideration was paid to the merits of the present question, by many of those who indulged in taunts and sarcasms. The average amount from the port of Newcastle-upon-Tyne was 207 tons. He would ask, then, had he been proved to have been guilty of ignorance when he asserted that a large proportion of the Canadian vessels would get employment in the coasting trade? He wished to add a word or two on the exorbitant nature of the protection given to the Canada trade, and the effects resulting from it. He contended that the existing system of protection was exorbitant and uncalled for. In the last Session, his hon. friend, the member for Bridport, had moved for an account of the number of vessels which had sailed from the Baltic, with timber to the Canadas—had discharged their cargoes there—had reloaded, and then sailed to this country, thus undergoing the expense of a double voyage for the purpose of avoiding the duty. That return shewed that such things were done. But it might be said, that if such a thing had been done, it was only an experiment, and that it would not be repeated. He denied that it was a mere experiment, the thing could be done, and had been done. In proof of that statement, he read an extract from a letter which he had received shortly after he had come into office, from a merchant in Newcastle, inquiring whether it was not the construction of the law that such importations avoiding the higher rate of duty could be made, stating that such voyages had been made, and timber carried from Memel to Canada, and afterwards brought to England, and could be made by the merchants there with advantage, and expressing a wish to know whether it was the intention of the Government, acting up to the declaration of Mr. Herries last Session, to have that part of the law amended, because, he added, while the continuation of the law was doubtful, the merchants did not know how to act. He would ask whether such a state of things as that should be allowed to continue? The next point to which he (Mr. Thomson) must advert, was the injury which it was alleged the colonists would sustain by the change. It was asserted, that a capital of 1,500,000*l.* was invested in saw-mills, in the colonies. If such were the fact, the increase must have been most extraordinary since the year 1822. In that year the whole amount of capital employed in saw-mills was only from 100,000*l.* to 150,000*l.*, and he thought it hardly probable that the sum should have increased to such magnitude in the comparatively short period that had since expired. The consequence of the proposed alterations which were contemplated by the present measure might probably, and, indeed, he was prepared at once to admit, would have the effect of diminishing the export of timber from Canada into England, and, consequently, would affect also the productiveness of the capital that was now invested in the mills to which he had referred; but, the Committee ought not to lose sight of the fact, that though in this one branch of industry there would be a great falling off, yet the same amount of labour might be applied to much greater advantage on the land in the colonies; and the mills which would be rendered useless for their original purposes, might be converted into highly useful auxiliaries to the agricultural and other pursuits of the colonists. So that the enormous losses that had been placed in so frightful a point of view, would, as he had shewn, be absolutely next to nothing. Then again he had been told, and the country had been told, that at one time the Government of this country had given extraordinary encouragement to emigration to the Canadas, and now, after the impulse had been given, and the effects to a certain degree produced by a number of new settlers having been located on the lands in the Canadas, that same Government was about to wrest from them, by this measure, their only means of support, which consisted in the produce of the trees which they cut down on the lots of land which were portioned out to them. Were they, however, to be imposed on by this statement for a single moment? Did any one in that House believe, that the moment an emigrant gets located upon his land in Canada, he sets to work and cuts down the trees, trims them, and floats them down the nearest river to the market, where they are to produce him immediate returns? Why, there was not one tree in a hundred that was fit for the purposes of timber; and, instead of this timber trade being an advantage to the settler, it was exactly the reverse, because, when he cut the trees down for timber, instead of burning them down, he presently afterwards found that a great heap of brushwood sprung up from the root of each tree that had been cut down, and which never occurred where his land had been cleared by the operation most in use—that of burning; and this brushwood was evidently a great hindrance to the cultivation. So notorious an evil was this on the lands in Canada, that there was actually a Company established there for the purpose of clearing the lands, and the charges incurred in that process were absolutely greater than the original cost of the land. Instead, therefore, of this prospective diminution of the export of timber from Canada being injurious to the emigrant, it was precisely the reverse, for it rendered it a matter of necessity that he should clear his lands in the most effectual way, having no inducement to cut down his timber for exportation. Then again, the emigrants would very soon find employment in other pursuits, which would prove much more beneficial to them than this of which they were deprived; and with reference to the arguments which had been urged against the alterations in the timber duties, let them look at what language his hon. friend, the member for Callington had used at a previous period, not far distant from the present, and with reference to the Canadas. Why, that hon. Member had said, that the Lumber men were, of all the nuisances that could be found in any colony, the very greatest; and yet that hon. Member was now, by the course he had chosen to pursue, absolutely encouraging this class of men who were, as he had described them, a nest of pests in the Canadas. The right hon. Member referred also to a work on the North American Colonies, by Mr. Richards, who had been sent by the late Government to investigate the state of Canada, in support of his views. Mr. Richards stated, in his account of his journey through Upper Canada, that, in New Brunswick, "that a great portion of the labour of the inhabitants is devoted to the removal of lumber: that farming is neglected; and that the produce of the land is, consequently, sometimes insufficient to meet the consumption;" and he observed, "that when time or chance shall induce or compel the inhabitants to desist from that employment, agriculture will then begin to raise its head." This was the language of a gentleman sent out by the Government. There was only one point further, with reference to this subject on which he wished to say a few words to the Committee, and that was with reference to an important document, which was not a public one, but which he had become possessed of by private means, and which he was disposed to consider of the greatest value, as affording another opportunity of proving that the injury to the shipping interests of this country and the Canadas would not be so great as was represented by those who were opposed to the measure. The document was a statement of the number of ships, and the mode of employing those ships, belonging to the North American colonies; and before he proceeded to state the results of that inquiry on which the document was founded, he must observe, that when it was argued that the alterrations in the timber duties would destroy the Canadian colonies altogether, he would first refer those Gentlemen who used such arguments to the statements which showed the number of ships which *bona fide* belonged to the colonies, and then let them say, whether it would be possible for so trifling a reduction in the duty, as was proposed, or rather, whether so trifling a diminution of the present protection extended to one branch of the trade of those colonies could by any possibility have such a ruinous effect as was predicted. The paper which he held in his hand contained an account of the coasting and corn trade of those colonies; and it appeared from the statements that, in the year 1829, the number of ships that entered the ports of Quebec, St. John's, St. Andrew's, Halifax, and other adjacent places, was no less than 5,596; and the tonnage of those vessels was 724,000 tons. The mode in which those vessels were employed was as follows;—In the West-India trade, 3,712; in the trade with the United States, 488; leaving out of the gross amount of 5,596 ships belonging to the ports of our North American colonies, 1,396 vessels employed in the direct trade to this country. He must again repeat, that he had ever, whilst on the opposite side of the House, entertained views and opinions which were peculiarly his own, and which, from the knowledge that he had of this subject, he was the more confirmed in, and the less inclined to abandon, though he was thwarted and opposed by a powerful body in that House, who entertained opinions at variance with his. He had never, however, been hostile to the commercial, the shipping, or the colonial interests, and now that he was in office, it was his duty to defend and protect them. At the same time, it was also his duty, as it was the duty of Parliament, to protect the interest of the consumer, and the more important permanent interests of the whole nation. He trusted, therefore, the House would see that he had clearly and distinctly made out the fact that a saving to the country of 1,200,000*l* a-year would result from the alterations which he proposed to make, and that the gradual diminution of the protection which was at present awarded to the North American colonies, which the proposed modifications in the duty would effect, was not calculated to produce such injurious consequences as had been predicted by those hon. Members who were opposed to the measure.

Sir *George Murray* wished to set the right hon. Member right with respect to the mode in which the settler in Canada found it most advantageous to get rid of the wood on the lot of ground which was apportioned to him on his arrival. When a settler arrives there, he generally has a lot of 200 acres, on which he can only cut down a certain portion of the timber, and in a certain season of the year. He must also only cut down in proportion to the ability which he has of cultivating the land which he clears; for, if he were not to cultivate it at once, and keep it in cultivation, it would speedily become covered again with brushwood.

Mr. *Keith Douglas* observed, that the noble Lord had abandoned the tax which he had before proposed, and, instead of it, he had brought forward a measure which would not come into operation before next year. So that it seemed as if the House had so little to do, that the only method of filling up their time was by legislating for three or four years in prospective. The hon. Member proceeded to observe upon the gradual rise and progress of the Canada trade with England since the year 1809, when the continental system of Napoleon had interdicted any commercial intercourse between this country and the Continent of Europe. In the year 1820, the comparative imports of the produce of the two countries, Canada and the Baltic—were, from the latter, 280,000 loads, and from the former 300,000 loads of timber; and in the year 1827 the import of Canadian timber amounted to 380,000 loads, whilst that of Baltic timber was reduced to 260,000 loads, which showed that there was a preference for the former. As it was impossible to know what alteration would take place before the change in these duties was to come into operation, he thought it quite unnecessary then to legislate on the subject, and he should oppose the Motion.

Mr. *George Robinson* (with great difficulty in being heard) protested against the Committee hearing only one side of the question, and observed, that however incompetent he might be to offer any opposition to the measure, he felt it to be his duty to do so; and he should, therefore, looking at the lateness of the hour, endeavour to compress his observations into as short a space as possible. It was, however, to be remarked, that the House was placed by the noble Lord in the predicament of discussing an entirely novel proposition at that late hour; and the right hon. Gentleman opposite (Mr. P. Thomson) had dilated on the measure in a manner that it was impossible for any one not intimately conversant with this subject to understand or to follow. It had been his intention originally to have discussed singly the details of the proposed alterations; but, in consequence of what had been stated, he must pass at once to the general observations which he had to offer to the Committee. The alterations effected in the year 1821 in the timber duties were not brought forward in the same manner as the present measure was, but were submitted to two Committees, who obtained evidence, and upon that evidence furnished reports by which the decision of the House was guided. He could not agree with the hon. member for Boroughbridge, who seemed to think that it was not in the power of Parliament to alter the present scale of duties. He considered that the Parliament was perfectly competent to effect such alterations as might be found necessary; but then it ought to be done after the deepest consideration, and it ought not to be confined to a question of finance as it had been by the right hon. member for Dover; but all the political considerations, which could never be separated from it, ought also to undergo investigation.—Such a subject ought never to be discussed but with reference to those considerations; and he should therefore, come at once to the point, and express it to be his opinion, that a measure which might be calculated to prove injurious to the North American colonies and the shipping interests should receive some further consideration than the present had done. He thought it would not be judged wise to inflict on those colonies a measure of this tendency, whilst the effects of another, the Colonial Trade Bill, were yet untried. Two such important changes in the colonial policy were never brought under the consideration of the House before in this manner. To be sure the noble Lord, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, had given the Committee one advantage, by acknowledging that the measure was given up as a financial operation, and in so far he had disencumbered him, and many others who thought with him, of the hesitation with which he should have come forward to discuss a matter connected, as this was, with finance. He denied that the present system of raising the duty on the Baltic timber was at all oppressive, for no one had ever come before that House to petition against it; and when the noble Lord opposite observed that the consumers of this timber complained of the duties, he stated that which he was not justified in doing. The shipping trade of this country had been depressed for several years.

In 1819 the number of British ships was	25,482
In 1829 the number was	22,040
Being a decrease in ten years of....	3,442

ships; and within the same period there was a decrease of tonnage to the amount of 251,590 tons. A proportionable decrease was apparent in the building of ships, which as every one knew, was the only mode of keeping up the number of ships.

The number of ships built in 1827, in the ports of Great Britain, was	1,719
The number built in 1830 was only	1,075
Being a decrease in the building of ships in three years of	644

When ships were once built they must be employed. He was not now a ship-owner for he got out of the trade as rapidly as he could, knowing it to be ruinous. But he knew the practice was, to transfer the vessel from one owner to another at a loss; and because ships were kept afloat in that way, the shipping interest was said to be in a state of prosperity. He would not trouble the House with reading the statement; but he had in his hand a comparative statement of the British and Foreign shipping employed in the North of Europe for several years; and it would appear, from that statement, that since the Reciprocity system was adopted, the number of British ships engaged in that trade had greatly diminished. If the experience of eleven years was taken, it would appear that the exports from these kingdoms to the North of Europe had decreased considerably; the only exception was the trade with Russia. Taking at a sweep Norway, Denmark, and Prussia, the value of the exports from Great Britain to those countries was—

In 1822	£1,510,040
In 1829	1,244,678

Within the same period, the exports to British North America, the trade with which was now proposed to be transferred to the North of Europe, had increased from 1,597,000*l.* to 2,206,000*l.* He put it to the House, whether those facts did not require some consideration. It was proposed to transfer the trade with our colonies to foreign nations, who would not take our manufactured goods, though they were willing to supply us with theirs. It was impossible the country could go on much longer with such a delusive system of policy as was pursued, by encouraging the importation of foreign goods, even at some advantage of price, from countries which declined all trade with us. America was the most commercial nation, perhaps, in the world, and possessed numbers of shrewd practical men; and yet America distinctly declined to enter into the system of reciprocity proposed by this country. The fallacious character of that system had been aptly exposed by the former President of the United States, Mr. Munro, and subsequently by Mr. Jefferson, in a work published after his death. At this late hour, and as many other Gentlemen were anxious to speak, he would not trespass further on the attention of the House, though many other topics suggested themselves as worthy of remark.

Mr. *Herries* rose amidst cries of "Question" and "Adjourn." He assured the House that it was not his intention to argue the important question now submitted to the Committee. He asked, could any man pretend to give his assent to such important propositions without further consideration? Such an example of what he must call a political trick he had never witnessed. What had they assembled for? What had they come down to consider? The noble Lord had brought them together to consider a part of his Budget—the imposition of a duty of frightful importance to the interests concerned, but still a part of the Budget. Upon coming down, however, to discuss a part of the Budget, a measure of general policy, of the very first importance was submitted to the House. There was a taking off of duty it was true but the proposed measure had nothing to do with the Budget. There were circumstances connected with this revolution in the intention of his Majesty's Ministers well deserving of consideration. He (Mr. Herries) had put a question to the noble Lord to ascertain his views with respect to Ireland on this question. The answer the noble Lord gave was, that the duty on Canada timber was not to be raised in Ireland, but that Baltic timber was to be reduced to 40*s.* At the time the noble Lord gave that answer, he (Mr. Herries) had no doubt the noble Lord intended to persevere in his original plan. Up to the last moment, the noble Lord had informed the various deputations that waited on him, that the plan he had first introduced was the one he would adhere to. The change must have been effected within a few hours. His Majesty's Ministers had suddenly retreated from a position they were unable to defend: they knew well that a majority of that House could not be found to support them, and, without previous notice, they abruptly changed their front, and came forward with the present measure. The measure now brought forward was different in every respect from that originally brought forward. It was different in its purpose, in its working, and in its terms—it was totally different. No legislature, he contended, had a right to assent to a measure of such importance without the deepest and fullest deliberation. The House was not now called upon to decide upon a part of the Budget, but on a question of general policy. Coming down to decide on one plan, they were called upon to decide on another plan, founded on another principle. He begged not to be understood as giving any opinion on that plan, he had a very strong opinion, but he did not think it necessary now to state it. He did not say that such a plan as that proposed might not be with propriety, and after full consideration, adopted; but a measure brought forward at such an hour, and in such a manner, ought not to be agreed to whatever were its merits. The plan went to alter a system which had been acted upon for ten years, after the fullest consideration, and after a report of a Committee of the House of Commons. If it was resolved to depart from that system, it should not be done without a similar investigation, and an equally prolonged consideration. The vast importance of the proposition was clear from the noble Lord's (Althorp) statement. The noble Lord admitted the injurious effects of the measure on the Canada trade. He only presumed to hope that the measure would not altogether destroy the Canada trade; but it might be gathered from the noble Lord's statement, that it would go pretty well to effect that. Under all these circumstances it was impossible for him to give the present proposition his support. He was not unwilling, if any mode was proposed to investigate the subject, to meet such a proposition with his assent, but he could not now enter into the merits of the question. It was a new Budget, forming no part of the old Budget, and liable to considerable objection. The noble Lord now thought he should be enabled to do without the increase of revenue he had reckoned upon from the change in the timber duties. He found himself richer than he thought he should be when he brought forward his Budget. Now, sanguine as he felt as to the revenue, he could not think that the noble Lord's new conviction was well founded. The noble Lord founded his anticipations of a great increase of revenue by comparing the produce of the months of January and February, this year, with the produce of the same months in 1830. He had pointed out the great increase in the produce of the revenue, and especially the Customs, in those two months, as compared with January and February, 1830. It was right the House should remember, however, that in January and February, 1830, the ports were shut up, and business at a stand, in consequence of protracted frost. The comparison, therefore, was calculated to mislead. If the noble Lord reckoned upon an increase during the whole year, founded upon that in January and February, he proceeded on a poor foundation: building upon that slender foundation, however, the noble Lord calculated that the total sum available at the end of 1832 would only amount to 1,000,000*l*. Under those circumstances, the noble Lord thought he might dispense with the timber duties. It was for the Committee to consider whether the noble Lord was not putting his faith upon a slender foundation, which would render him unable, perhaps, at the close of the year to pay the interest of the public Debt. The reasons which induced him to abstain from entering into the merits of the question ought, he thought, to induce the House not to give its assent to the proposition now made. Before the House adopted any new course, it ought to be solemnly and carefully investigated; and he considered that an investigation by a Committee of that House would be the most expedient. The measure, whenever it was brought forward, ought to be brought forward, not delusively, but fairly, and after proper notice; and they should not be called upon to determine on one proposition, when they were prepared to discuss another. For these reasons, abstaining from touching on the merits of the proposed measure, if it should be pressed to a division, he should certainly divide against it.

Mr. *Warburton* said, that as many Gentlemen were anxious to address the House, he should propose an adjournment. [*This motion was received with cries of "Divide," "Go on," and "Adjourn".*]

Lord *Althorp* hoped, that however the Committee disposed of the question of adjournment, after the attack made by the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Herries), they would suffer him to say a few words. As to the answer which he had given the right hon. Gentleman some days ago, he assured the House it had been given sincerely. But then the right hon. Gentleman charged his Majesty's Ministers with having altered the whole principle of the measure. That he must deny. The hon. member for Boroughbridge (Mr. Attwood) had said the measure was precisely the same in principle as that originally proposed; and he (the Chancellor of the Exchequer) admitted it was precisely the same measure in principle. It was charged against Ministers, that they had changed their mind; but, he asked, why were Ministers to listen to deputations if they were only to hear them, and not to attend to their representations? It was undoubtedly true that, upon representations being made as to the effect of the suddenness of the change, when he (Lord Althorp) found that the change might be made gradually, without injuring the revenue, he was glad to take advantage of the opportunity. As to the danger to the revenue, the Committee had heard his statement of the grounds on which he had formed his opinion, and they might judge for themselves. For his own part he entertained a perfect confidence on the subject. The right hon. Gentleman had represented him as saying that he had only a small degree of hope that his propositions would not destroy the whole of the Canada trade. Now, he had stated that his decided feeling was, that the measure could not destroy the Canada trade, although it might transfer a portion of it.

Mr. *Attwood* felt it incumbent on him to move that the Chairman should leave the Chair. The measure now proposed was similar, he admitted, in principle, to that originally proposed by the noble Lord, but it was a different measure of policy, different in all its details, and different in its results. The noble Lord stated, that he had proposed the measure in compliance with the representations made to him. He had proposed the measure at nine o'clock, and called upon the House to decide on it at twelve o'clock.—[" *No, no!" from the Ministerial Benches.*] He begged the noble Lord's pardon; he thought he intended to press the question to a division. As to the motion for Adjournment, the question could not be adjourned, or it must be adjourned for a very long time, as other important questions were to be brought forward. To remedy that inconvenience, and to mark the sense of the House as to the manner in which the measure was brought forward, he should move, that the Chairman do leave the Chair.

The Question having been put on this Motion,

Mr. *Warburton* again rose, amidst cries of " Question" and considerable confusion. He expressed his surprise that the last speaker, a Gentleman himself engaged in trade, should not have allowed an adjournment, which would give other Gentlemen engaged in commercial pursuits an opportunity of delivering their sentiments, more particularly as the hon. Member himself had already obtained a patient hearing. If he (Mr. Warburton) was to enter into the subject, he should occupy the Committee for the greater part of an hour. Exhausted as he (Mr. Warburton) and the House were, and knowing that many other Gentlemen wished to address the House on the subject, he (Mr. Warburton) should not speak to it that night, but would persist in his motion for adjournment.

Sir *Robert Peel* said, that he had never been involved in greater difficulty than in coming to a decision on the question. He expected that he should be called upon to discuss a portion of the noble Lord's Budget, but he found to his surprise, that, instead of having a portion of the former Budget, the noble Lord thought he had succeeded so well with his Budget of 1831, that he had ventured to make one for 1832. He (Sir Robert Peel) was anxious to hear the matter fully discussed. He could not dismiss financial considerations, nor the interests of the consumers, nor those varied and important considerations which arose out of the question. He felt that the Legislature had attempted too many experiments, and that it was not desirable to add to them by an experiment on the shipping and colonial interests. The noble Lord gave no reason for the proceeding. He had himself completely changed his own view of the question, and could give no reason for the change; yet he expected that, without any consideration, all others should also adopt his altered views. The noble Lord would not accede to the proposition of his right hon. friend (Mr. Herries), and have a Committee similar to that of the year 1821 to inquire into the subject. Such a Committee could inquire far more satisfactorily than it was possible for the whole House to discharge such a duty. They stood upon the report of the House of Commons in 1821, which went fully into the whole subject, and recommended the existing scale. The noble Lord was bound to show that that report was unfounded; but not even one cogent argument had been urged to prove that to be the case, and yet they were to be excluded from that further inquiry which they desired—and this, too, when the Resolutions referred only to a future year, and could not require immediate or instant decision. He did not mean to impute to the noble Lord any desire to take the House by surprise, but he must say, that if such had been the noble Lord's intention, he could not more completely have effected it. An hon. Gentleman had said, on a preceding night, with reference to the question of Reform, that the surprise of the measure then brought forward had taken away his breath; and it really appeared as if the noble Lord had been anxious on this occasion, in a similar measure, to take away the breath of those on the side of the House opposite to himself. As he should not be precluded from further inquiry by supporting the amendment, and as it left the subject open to have a better and fuller inquiry before a Committee, he should certainly support the motion of the hon. member for Boroughbridge.

Lord *Palmerston* claimed the vote of his right hon. friend (Sir R. Peel), on the ground that, as he wished for further inquiry, he ought to support the motion for reporting progress and asking leave to sit again, instead of that for the Chairman to leave the Chair.

Sir *R. Peel* was quite astonished at the observations of his noble friend. He was reluctantly, indeed, compelled, by the course which the noble Lord had pursued, to prefer that proposition which would undoubtedly preclude the noble Lord from proceeding further with the question at present. But why did the noble Lord postpone the question to the Friday? Why postpone the discussion to the day preceding the question of Reform, which must necessarily occupy several nights? Why, too, not begin till nine at night, when, on other occasions, the important business of the evening always began at five o'clock. He could not help thinking that this singular delay was intentional; and he could not consent to allow all those important interests involved in this question to remain in a state of suspense till it accorded with the pleasure of the noble Lord to fix some subsequent day for continuing the adjourned Debate. Would the noble Lord either allow this question to have precedence of Reform on Monday, or would he agree to the appointment of a Select Committee? If the noble Lord would do neither of these things, he must vote with the hon. member for Boroughbridge.

Mr. *Spring Rice* stated, that it must not be forgotten that the bringing on of this measure was not the act of the Ministers. It had been pressed upon them from the other side of the House, as essentially necessary for the satisfaction of important interests in the country; neither were they answerable for the lateness of the hour at which it was brought forward. The Sugar Bill admitted of no delay, as the duty expired on the 5th of April. The Colonial Trade Bill was equally urgent for other causes, and they were not responsible for the debate which arose upon it.

Mr. *Goulburn* said, that he was one of those who had pressed for an early decision by Parliament of the question respecting timber, as brought forward by the noble Lord in his Budget, and which had been unnecessarily and too long delayed, to the prejudice of those interested in the colonies and shipping. But had the noble Lord told him, when he pressed him on the subject, that he meant to lay no new duty in 1831, he should have been satisfied to wait to any future period the discussion of the political question involved in a future change of the timber duties. Such arrangements could not affect the trade of this year, and it was only with reference to that trade that he had applied to the noble Lord. In voting upon the present question he did so on the ground, not of stifling discussion, but on the refusal of the noble Lord to accede to the proposal of appointing a Committee to inquire into the whole subject, considering that that which had been settled by a Committee, after a laborious inquiry, in 1821, ought not to be completely changed without that careful examination and inquiry which could be effected but in a Committee.

The House then divided—For the Chairman leaving the Chair, 236; Against it 190 Majority against Ministers 46.

The House accordingly resumed.

PETITIONS IN FAVOUR OF REFORM.] Mr. *Benett* presented Petitions from Wiltshire, Bradford, Malmesbury, Warminster, Swindon, and Devizes, in favour of Parliamentary Reform. All these petitioners highly approved of the measure proposed by his Majesty's Ministers, and hoped that it would pass into a law.

Sir *J. Dugdale Astley* supported the prayer of these petitions.

Sir *C. Forbes* took occasion to express his regret that so many persons should be induced to express themselves in favour of a measure which was not reform, but revolution, and which must prove ruinous to the Constitution of this country.

Mr. *Hobhouse* was equally surprised that any person of common sense could suppose that the Reform measure would have such an effect as that which the hon. Baronet attributed to it.

Sir *C. Forbes* said, he could not understand why the hon. member for Westminster had not, after the decision of the House that evening, asked his usual question of "When do the Ministers mean to resign?" Why had not the hon. Member, after so decisive a defeat, put the same question they had so often heard him put to the late Government, of "When does the noble Lord propose to resign."

Mr. *Hobhouse* said, his memory was not so defective but that he could recollect the opinions of the hon. Baronet to have been, on former occasions, different from what they were now. The question which the hon. Baronet wished him to put was not, however, quite so appropriate at the present moment. The country would not be gulled by the trickery of the vote of that evening. The question for them was, whether they were to have Reform or not, and whether those who had for fifty years been labouring to obtain Reform were now to be tricked out of their object? He was convinced that the day when the Ministers resigned would be a bad day for the country; but he was satisfied that the country would not be baulked in their wishes by the vote of that night. He had frequently heard the hon. Baronet pledge himself to Reform, and would now call upon him to prove his consistency.

Sir *C. Forbes* declared, that he was still a friend to Reform, but not to Revolution.

Petitions to lie on the Table.

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HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Saturday, March 19, 1831.

MINUTES.] Returns ordered. On the Motion of Sir R. INGLIS, the Expenses paid by the Lords Commissioners of the Treasury, relative to the following Disfranchisement Bills; viz. Aylesbury, in the year 1804; Helleston, in the years 1813, 1814, 1815, and 1816; Barnstaple, in the year 1819; Penryn, in the year 1819, and in the years 1827 and 1828; and Grampound, in the years 1820 and 1821; distinguishing the several years; the Expenses paid by the Lords Commissioners of his Majesty's Treasury, on account of all Select Committees of the House of Commons, and Committees of the whole House, since the end of the year 1800; distinguishing the expenses under separate heads, of each Committee, and in each year; the total Expenses incurred in Building, Repairing, Fitting, and Furnishing the several Gaols and Houses of Correction in England and Wales, since the year 1800; distinguishing such several Gaols and Houses of Correction.

Petitions presented. In favour of the Ministerial plan of Reform, by Mr. Alderman WOOD, from the Wards of Cornhill, Cripplegate Without, Aldgate, and Aldersgate:—By Colonel ABERCROMBY, from Alloa:—By Sir GEORGE ROBINSON, from Northampton:—By Mr. BUCK, from Exeter:—By General PALMER, four from the Parishes of Bath:—By Sir M. S. STEWART, three from Greenock:—By Mr. P. STEWART, from the Town of Lancaster:—By Mr. HUNT, from Stayley-bridge, Lancashire:—By Lord EBRINGTON, from the County of Devon, assembled in Shire Hall, and from several Parishes of the Eastern part of Devonshire:—By Mr. HUME, eighty-nine from England and Scotland:—By Mr. WEBB, from Gloucester:—By Mr. R. SMITH, from Chesham and Newton-Pagnell:—By Mr. PENDARVIS, from Falmouth, Penzance, Truro, St. Mawes, Egleshall, and another Town in Cornwall:—By Sir W. INGILBY, from Stamford, and from three places in Lincolnshire:—By Mr. BELL, from the County of Northumberland:—By Mr. R. GRANT, from 7,000 Inhabitants of Norwich, being full one-half of the male adult population of that City:—By Mr. CURTEIS, from Hastings and Ringmer:—By Mr. STANLEY, from Marlborough and Clithero:—By Mr. BENETT, from the Town of Warminster, and from the City of Salisbury; the latter Petition being signed by five or six of the Clergy:—By Captain WEMYS, from Cupar:—By Mr. LANGSTONE, from the City of Oxford:—By Sir A. DALRYMPLE, from Haddington:—By Sir G. STAUNTON, from Havant:—By Sir J. WROTTESLEY, from Stafford:—By Mr. CARTER, from Fareham, and from Portsmouth:—By Mr. MUNDY, from Chesterfield, six places in Derbyshire, and one in Leicestershire:—By the LORD ADVOCATE, forty from Scotland one-third of which were from Corporate Bodies, already in the possession of a franchise monopoly:—By Mr. GUEST, from Brecknock:—By Mr. GROSVENOR, from the Mayor and Corporation of the oldest Town in the Empire, the City of Chester—being an answer to all the ravings of an hon. Member, as to that plan's being a corporation robbery:—By Mr. WYSE, from Thurles:—By Sir JOHN BOURKE, from the County of the Town of Galway:—By Mr. KENNEDY, from Ayr, and fourteen other places in Scotland:—By Mr. WARBURTON, from Stockport, praying, in addition, that as the Town contained a population of 50,000 souls, it might possess the privilege of sending two Representatives to the Reformed Parliament; though the Petitioners did not wish that their claims should embarrass the progress of the present Reform Bill:—By Sir W. HEATHCOTE, from the Town of Gosport:—By Sir J. JOHNSTONE, from 573 of the Inhabitants of Scarborough:—By Lord MORPETH, from Barnsley, Saddleworth, Selby, and another Town in Yorkshire;—By Colonel CAVENDISH, from the Mayor and Corporation of Derby:—By Mr. R. GORDON, from Cricklade, Highworth, and Swindon:—By Mr. HOBHOUSE, from the parish of St. Paul, Covent Garden:—By Mr. WRIGHTSON, from Kingston-upon-Hull:—By Lord J. RUSSELL, from Thornhill:—By Mr. GISBORNE, from New Mills, and neighbouring places, in the County of Derby:—By Mr. J. FOLEY, from Droitwich:—By Lord STANLEY, from Ashton-under-Line, Chorley, and Rochdale:—By Mr. BYNG, from Uxbridge and from Whitechapel:—By Sir J. GRAHAM, from Oldham, (praying also for the Vote by Ballot) Birmingham, Leith, Cumberland, Maryport, Whitehaven, Cockermouth, and a place near Edinburgh:—By Sir E. KNATCHBULL, from Ashford:—By Mr. ELLICE, from Thorne, in Yorkshire:—By the ATTORNEY GENERAL, from the members of the English Bar, signed by nearly 400 persons, including twenty King's Counsel and Serjeants-at-law; including persons entertaining a variety of political opinions, and they expressed their full conviction, that the measure tended to the stability of the Crown, the security of property, and the welfare of the community; and from Bishop Auckland:—By Mr. SANDFORD, from Yeovil, Shepton-Mallet, and four other places in Somersetshire. From the Royal Burgh of Dunbar, two places in Fife, and one in Northumberland, by Sir R. FERGUSON:—from four places in Gloucestershire, by Sir W. GUISE:—from Lynn, in Norfolk, by Lord G. BENTINCK:—from Taunton, by Mr. LABOUCHERE:—from Oldham, and three other parishes in Lancashire, by Mr. J. WOOD:—from Boston, by Mr. WILKS:—from three places in the East Riding of Yorkshire, by Mr. SYKES. Against the Reform Bill, by Mr. BERNAL, from the Mayor and Corporation of Rochester:—By Mr. MILLER, from Newcastle-under-Lyne. By Colonel ROCHFORT, from Westmeath, for an Abolition of Capital Punishment in cases of mere offences against Property:—By the LORD ADVOCATE, a similar Petition, from the Chamber of Commerce, Edinburgh. By Mr. BYNG, from Clerkenwell, against Building a second new Church in that Parish. By Sir J. BOURKE, from Ballinahill (Galway), complaining of Distress, and imploring Relief; from the Chamber of Commerce, against reducing the Duty on Barilla; and from Rahoon, against further Grants to the Kildare-street Society. Against any alteration of the Timber Duties, by Lord EBRINGTON, from Bideford. Against Slavery, by Mr. WILKS, from Dissenters at Boston, Louth, and Wareham (and from Wareham for the Abolition of the Pilgrim Tax in India):—By Mr. WYSE, from Wesleyans of Cork:—By Sir J. JOHNSTONE, from Rilstone and Conistone:—By Mr. CURTEIS, from Dissenters at Brighton:—By Mr. LINLEY, from Birmingham and Stratford-upon-Avon. In favour of the Vote by Ballot, by Mr. HUNT, from Padsham, Lancashire, Flushing, Cornwall, from Denny, from the Milrow Co-operative Society. By the same hon. Member, from various Associations, for the Repeal of the Stamp Duty on Newspapers; from a place in Carmarthen, against the Tithes; and from the Working Butchers of Taunton, against the Tax on Horses. By Mr. J. WOOD, from Chorley, against the Truck System; and from Haughton-le-Kerne, for a Modification of the Tithe Laws. By Mr. SYKES, from Beverley, for the Repeal of the Assessed

Taxes. For extending the Franchise of Galway to Roman Catholics, by Sir R. Inglis, from the Protestants of Oran More. By Mr. Burton, from the Burgesses and others of Beverley, against the Reform Bill; and from the Inhabitants of Beverley, against the General Registry Act. By Mr. Evans, from certain persons licensed to sell Beer under the new Act, against the Corporation and Magistrates of Leicester, who had refused to allow them to continue their trade, unless they took out their freedom. They complained of the Magistrates exercising a species of espionnage over them.

System of Truck—and Cobbett.] Mr. *Hunt* said, he had another Petition to present, of which he had given notice. It showed the evils of the Truck System, and was drawn up some twelve months ago, when the hon. member for Staffordshire brought in his bill to compel the payment of labourers' wages in money. The petition was taken round to as many as eight or nine Members of that House, soon after it was drawn up, but they had all objections to presenting it, for some reason or another—but, as petitioners conceived, because it alluded to an individual—one Cobbett—who was the editor of some publication of which those hon. Members were in dread. The petition was brought to him (Mr. Hunt) at that time, to see whether he could recommend the petitioners to whom they should apply to present it; and, upon being told that so many Members had refused, he said, " if he were in Parliament, and knew the statements in it to be true, he should have no hesitation in presenting it." When he (Mr. Hunt) became a Member of that House, the petitioners reminded him of his former declaration, and called on him to fulfil it; and, in accordance with the pledge so given, he now presented the petition. The hon. Member then proceeded to read the statements contained in the petition, which was as follows:—

The humble Petition of the undersigned Labourers, of the Parish of Kensington, in the County of Middlesex, and of Barnes, in the County of Surrey;

Most humbly sheweth—That your Petitioners belong to a class of the community who are destined by Providence to earn their daily bread by the sweat of their brow.

That for some time past, previous to the winter of 1827, and the spring of 1828, your petitioners have been enabled to command, as wages for garden and other labour, from 2*s.* 6*d.* to 3*s.* a day; that with such wages, scanty and insufficient as they are to purchase any thing other than the necessaries of life, your humble petitioners have been, nevertheless, able to support themselves, their families, and their children.

That owing to the pressure of the times, consequent upon the enormous taxes with which this country is burthened, and which fall so heavily upon the labouring classes of the community, your petitioners have greatly experienced the want of employment; but, being naturally anxious to embrace it whenever it offered itself, your humble petitioners were compelled, by that necessity which arises from the increasing wants of their families, to accept of employ under one William Cobbett, a nurseryman and a seedsman, residing at Kensington, in the county of Middlesex, and also occupying what he calls an " Indian corn farm," at Barn Elms, in the county of Surrey, upon the following terms—namely, 2lbs. of meat, 1½lb. of bread, and ½lb. of cheese per day for each man! That the said William Cobbett assigned to your petitioners, as a reason for this sort of payment of wages, " his great desire to keep your petitioners from the cursed chandler's shop and the big brewer; and also, that every man who worked for him should have in his belly some bread, meat, and cheese."

These were the motives assigned by the said William Cobbett for thus employing your humble petitioners; but more false or more hypocritical motives never were assigned, as will be seen, and of which your honourable House will be perfectly convinced, by the following statement of facts: to wit, the meat, consisting of the worst part of bad mutton, or cheap pickled pork, might have been bought by your humble petitioners at 5*d.* a pound retail; the bread, composed of coarse black filthy Indian corn meal and rye flour, at 1*d.* a pound; and stinking cheese at 4*d.* a pound, making the wages of your petitioners to consist of food of the following value—namely,

For Mutton or Pork..	2lb at 5*d.* ..	10*d.*
For Bread	1½ at 1 ..	1½
For Cheese..........	½ at 4 ..	2
Total		1*s.* 1½ a day.

Thus paying your humble Petitioners, in lieu of 3*s.* or 2*s.* 6*d.* a day in money, paying them in such disgusting food, to the utmost not worth more than thirteen-pence-halfpenny, (hangman's wages), while the prime cost of it to the said William Cobbett could not possibly exceed sixpence-three-farthings.

Your honourable House, therefore, will readily perceive, from the foregoing premises, the true cause and selfish motives which induced the said William Cobbett to adopt the infamous practice of paying your humble petitioners in meat and meal, instead of the current coin of the realm.

With such payment of wages your petitioners were left with no means whatever to purchase clothes, fuel, beer, soap, candles, lodging, or even tobacco, now rendered so necessary by the habits of their lives; and, in short, your humble petitioners were deprived of the necessaries of life, or compelled to sell, at an immense loss, a great portion of their hard-earned, coarse, and unwholesome food, such as the hogs of the said William Cobbett have been frequently known to refuse, in order to purchase some one of the articles just above enumerated.

Your petitioners, therefore, most earnestly implore that your honourable House will interpose between your humble petitioners and all such persons who may be disposed to imitate the fatal and abominable example of the said William Cobbett, and pass a law as will in future protect them from becoming the dupes of such low cunning, as also from the additional misery and degradation of their station in life, by preserving them from the payment of wages in food.

And your petitioners further pray, that they may be permitted to prove all and every allegation contained in their humble petition at the bar of your honourable House.

And your petitioners will ever pray.

A grosser instance than this of the evils arising from the truck system, perhaps, had never been brought before the House; and he hoped the system would soon be put an end to. The individual referred to (Cobbett) had been attacking him (Mr. Hunt) in his publications; but he assured the House he was not instigated to present the petition from that circumstance. He had pledged himself to present the petition many months ago, before those attacks had taken place. As he was on his legs, he would advert to another circumstance:—A few nights ago, the subject of the treatment of prisoners in gaols came under their consideration; and when he (Mr. Hunt) alluded to a fact which came within his own knowledge, as to the treatment of some Reformers in a gaol in Yorkshire, the hon. member for Weymouth (Sir E. Sugden) boldly and plainly got up and said (in a manner, no doubt, quite parliamentary) that he did not believe the account. In answer to the hon. member for Weymouth, an hon. Alderman (Wood) then rose and stated, that he knew the greater portion of the facts mentioned by him (Mr. Hunt) to be true. Now, the particular case alluded to was that of a Reformer named Reilly, who was committed, in the year 1817, as a Reformer, and cut his throat in prison; and the fact stated was, that a brother Reformer was put into the cell, where the man had committed suicide, before the cell was cleaned out. The hon. member for Weymouth said it was impossible such a circumstance could have taken place in this country, and that, if any thing of the kind had occurred, those guilty of such cruel treatment must have been brought to justice. The relations of Reilly, most respectable shopkeepers, however, had since called on him and confirmed the whole of his previous statement, which they were ready to prove at the bar of the House. The hon. Member was proceeding to give an account of a statement made to him by the brother of Reilly, when

An hon. *Member* rose to order, and observed, that the statement into which the hon. Member was entering had nothing whatever to do with the petition he was about to present.

Mr. *Hunt* appealed to the Speaker whether he had not a right to advert to a direct contradiction given to a statement of his on a former evening?

The *Speaker* said, that the hon. member for Preston was quite in order.

On the question that the Petition be printed,

Another hon. *Member* rose, and was about to enter into the subject of the contradiction given by the hon. member for Weymouth to the statement of the hon. member for Preston, with respect to the case of Reilly, when he was stopped by

The *Speaker*, who said, that the hon. member for Preston was personally concerned in the matter, and, therefore, had that claim on the attention of the House to his statement, which the hon. Member who was about to address the House had no title to.

Mr. *O'Connell* remarked, that the mode in which Mr. Cobbett paid his labourers, would render him a benefactor in Ireland, where they would be too glad to work for beef and bread. He had heard the character of Mr. Cobbett very highly spoken of by the Irish labourers in his neighbourhood.

The Petition to be printed.

PETITIONS IN FAVOUR OF REFORM.] Colonel *Sibthorp* presented a Petition from the Inhabitants of the Bail and Close of the City of Lincoln, in favour of Reform. He willingly presented this petition, although he did not go so far as the petitioners with respect to the question of Reform. At the same time he professed himself a Reformer, but not a radical nor root-and-branch Reformer. He thought there was much that required amendment in the existing system of Representation, and should be happy to see a plan of Reform brought forward of which he could conscientiously approve. With respect to the Ministerial scheme of Reform, he thought it more objectionable in its de-privations than in its extension of the franchise. The hon. Member also presented a Petition in favour of Reform, from the Mayor and Corporation of Lincoln.

Mr. *Hume* said, that although he was not often in the habit of defending Ministers, yet he felt himself bound to say, that last night the present Ministry had been extremely ill-used. The object they sought to obtain was a diminution of taxation, and yet they had been met with the most factious opposition that he had ever witnessed. It should be remembered, however, that they had to carry on the Government with materials congregated together by the last Government; in consequence, those who held what they called Treasury boroughs, voted against them. The public should take notice of this, for, in addition to the ninety-nine arguments in favour of Reform, this was the hundredth, and the best of them all.

Mr. *Curteis* said, he was one of those who had voted in the majority last night; but he could with perfect truth deny the charge of having given a factious vote. He had given, not a factious, but a painful vote. He was sorry to be obliged to oppose his Majesty's Ministers; his vote was not directed against them, but against the principles of free trade.

Mr. *O'Connell* said, no doubt many hon. Members were actuated by the same motives as the hon. member for Sussex: that his hon. friend (Mr. Hume) did not mean to deny. He only expressed his opinion, that, generally speaking, the vote had been dictated by factious motives. This he (Mr. O'Connell) firmly believed to be the case. But he would desire his Majesty's Ministers not to be discouraged: he told them, that the people of England and Scotland,—ay, and after all that had passed—of Ireland, too, were with them, and would co-operate in putting down the boroughmongering faction, that was endeavouring to thwart the Reform brought forward by Ministers. What had occurred last night would only stimulate the people to make fresh efforts in favour of the present Government; particularly when it was seen that the Treasury boroughs were in the hands of Opposition Members, who voted against the Government to which those boroughs belonged. Were not Members who acted thus, pursuing a factious, not to say a dishonourable course? Certainly they acted differently from the nominees of private patrons. When the nominee could not vote with his principal, he gave up the borough; but the Gentlemen to whom he had alluded adopted an opposite course.

Mr. *Miller* took that opportunity of complaining of the use that had been made of his Majesty's name, with a view to influence the opinions of people out of doors, and to promote the getting up of petitions in favour of a plan of Reform which the King was said to approve.

Mr. *O'Connell*, as a constitutional lawyer, defended the practice censured by the hon. Gentleman, and declared his opinion to be, that it was legally and constitutionally justifiable to refer to his Majesty's known opinions on Reform, with a view to induce the people to co-operate with the first Reformer in the country—the King upon the Throne,—in securing a satisfactory amendment of the Representation. There was a wide distinction to be taken between allusions within these walls to the opinions of his Majesty, for the purpose of influencing decisions of the House of Commons, and references made out of doors to the royal sentiments, with a view to excite the people to express their wishes in addresses to the King and Parliament on the subject of Reform. The House considered the former course irregular, but the latter proceeding he (Mr. O'Connell) was prepared to justify.

Mr. *G. Dawson* called upon the hon. and learned member for Waterford to speak, not as a lawyer, but as a Member of that House: whatever arguments legal ingenuity, directed to one side of a question, might suggest to the hon. Gentleman, however he might attempt to justify the practice referred to, when speaking as an Advocate, he (Mr. Dawson) did not see upon what ground the hon. Gentleman, in his capacity as a Member of the Legislature, could defend it. For his own part, he considered it highly unconstitutional to use the name of his Majesty for the purpose of exciting a cry throughout the country in favour of Reform; and he thought that if the hon. and learned member for Waterford had not ulterior objects in view, he would not stand up to defend the practice.

Mr. *Bernal* rose to order: he considered it irregular in the right hon. Gentleman to speak of the "ulterior objects" of an hon. Member, particularly as it must be pretty plain that the right hon. Gentleman meant to connect ulterior motives with ulterior objects.

The *Speaker* decided, that the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Dawson) was in order, and that the hon. member for Rochester was himself irregular, in confounding "objects," with "motives."

Mr. *Dawson* had not imputed motives to the hon. and learned Member, he only spoke of the hon. Gentleman's ulterior objects, which were confessedly—Annual Parliaments, Universal Suffrage, Vote by Ballot, the destruction of Corporations, and the annihilation of the Protestant Church. These were the ulterior objects in furtherance of which the hon. Gentleman was prepared to support the present Ministry in their plan of Reform, and it was with a view to the accomplishment of these objects that the learned Member justified the appeal to the supposed opinions of his Majesty. He repeated, those were the ulterior objects which he imputed to the hon. member for Waterford, and he was sure that the hon. and learned Gentleman was too honest to conceal them.

Sir *John Wrottesley* denied that any petitions had been got up in Staffordshire by any undue influence whatever. The people being zealous in the cause of Reform, had come voluntarily forward to address the King and petition the Houses of Parliament in its favour.

Mr. *Wilks* was proceeding to state that we had official information of the opinion of his Majesty, in his answer to the Address of the Corporation of London on the subject of Reform, and to argue that it was justifiable to refer to the opinion so expressed, when

The *Speaker* told the hon. Member, that his allusion was disorderly, inasmuch as it might give rise to an irregular discussion as to the construction of his Majesty's answer.

Mr. *O'Connell*, in answer to the observations which had been made by Mr. G. Dawson, denied that he was, or ever had been, an advocate for Annual Parliaments. He certainly approved of Triennial Parliaments, as established at the Revolution, which the right hon. Gentleman had so often denominated "glorious;" and, in his opinion, the right hon. Gentleman should be the last man to object to the principles which triumphed at that period. He confessed that he was a friend to Universal Suffrage; but upon that point he gave way to the pending measure of Reform, because he thought that it was calculated to produce the self-same ends; namely, good government and cheap institutions. The right hon. Gentleman had thought fit also to charge him with being an enemy to the Protestant Church, and as one who wished for its overthrow; but he denied this accusation in the most decided manner. He respected the hierarchy of the Church of England, as a faint image of that of his own Church, and he was only opposed to its enormous temporalities and overgrown wealth.

Mr. *G. Dawson* called on the House to compare the statements of the hon. member for Waterford in that House with the sweeping anathemas he had repeatedly fulminated against the Protestant Church and Parliament out of doors. He was astonished, that not only the hon. member for Waterford, but his particular friends, the members for Preston and Middlesex, should give up their extensive plans of Reform, for the weak milk-and-water measure now before the House.

Sir *J. Newport* spoke to order. The right hon Gentleman was not justified in imputing to the hon. member for Waterford that that hon. Member had falsely stated his opinions.

Mr. *G. Dawson* said, he had no intention of imputing anything like falsehood to the hon. member for Waterford. He had his own opinions as to the motives which influenced that hon. Member.

Petition to be printed.

Mr. *Stanley* said, he rose to present a rather singular and important Petition in favour of Reform. It was a petition signed by a respectable body of Commercial Travellers, principally communicating between London and Birmingham, and its neighbourhood. The petitioners set forth, that from the nature of their avocations, they had opportunities which few other classes of the community possessed, of ascertaining what were the opinions, sentiments, and wishes, of numerous bodies of society, of different grades, and of very various occupations. The petitioners had taken pains to inform themselves upon the subject, and they could state, that the people were unanimous and ardent in favour of Reform, and that even those whose views were not precisely accordant with the measure brought into that House by his Majesty's Ministers, would sacrifice all differences upon minor points, and zealously support the Bill, upon the conviction that it was calculated to effect the greatest good to the country.—To be printed.

Mr. *P. M. Stewart*, in presenting a Petition from the Freemen and Inhabitants of the Town of Lancaster, and its vicinity, in favour of Parliamentary Reform, said, that he was unwilling to trespass upon the time of the House, considering the mass of petitions that still remained to be presented. He begged, however, to say, that the meeting at which this petition was adopted was of the most intelligent and respectable character, and had carried the resolutions and the petition by acclamation, and among them were many individuals who, by thus supporting the measure of Reform, submitted to being immediately denuded of their franchise, and others submitted to the limitation of it to a mere life-rent, instead of a perpetuity, all concurring in sacrificing their individual advantages for the good of the public. The petition lay for seven hours for signature, and was subscribed by upwards of 1,100 names. To any person acquainted with Lancaster, and with the community which he had the honour of representing, this fact spoke forcibly of the irresistible progress which this great question was making over the whole country; and so impressed was he with this, that he felt convinced, in the event of their being sent back to their constituents before this saving measure was secured to the country, they would, with a few exceptions, have to return here and appear as he (Mr. Stewart) now did, with a petition like the present as the credentials of their appointment.—Petition printed.

Sir *G. Nugent* presented a Petition from Buckingham against the Bill. The petitioners complained that they had been improperly included among the disfranchised boroughs, inasmuch as Buckingham contained many more than 2,000 inhabitants.

Sir *T. Fremantle* thought the petition well worthy of the attention of the House. The Bill then in progress proposed to disfranchise all boroughs, the population of which was less than 2,000 according to the census of 1821; and though the population of Buckingham was actually 3,460, it was included in the list of the boroughs to be disfranchised. He had had a conference in private with the noble Lord (John Russell) who brought in the Bill, on the peculiar hardship—indeed injustice, even on his own principle—of including Buckingham within its disfranchisement provisions; and he trusted the noble Lord would make public his private avowal, as it would afford great satisfaction to the inhabitants of that borough.

Mr. *Stanley* was enabled to state to the House, that the case of Buckingham was at that moment under the peculiar consideration of the framers of the Bill.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Monday, March 21, 1831.

MINUTES.] Petitions presented. In favour of the Ministerial plan of Reform, by the Duke of GRAFTON, from the County of Suffolk, unanimously agreed to at a public Meeting; and from Woodbridge and Aldeburgh:—By Earl SPENCER, from the Town of Northampton, from Daventry, and from Upton, Suffolk:—By the Earl of KINNOUL, from the Royal Burgh of Perth, and from Forfarshire:—By the Earl of RADNOR, from the Borough of Lancaster, although the Bill would disfranchise the Petitioners altogether; and from eight other places:—By Lord KING, from South Molton, Bridgewater, and six other places:—

[The noble Lord said, that all the Petitioners expressed loyalty to the King, confidence in the Government, and a conviction that the measure of Reform would prove a most efficient and beneficial measure.]

By the Earl of ROSEBERY, from the Burgh of Queen's Ferry:—By the Earl of DUDLEY, from Sedgeley, Staffordshire:—By Lord DURHAM, from Warrington, Greenwich, Durham, and other places:—By the Duke of NORFOLK, from Horsham, Cove, Bexley, Glasgow, and Perth:—By the Marquis of CLEVELAND, from Darlington and Totness:—By the Earl of HADDINGTON, from Haddington:—By the Marquis of LANSDOWN, from Warrington and Romsey:—By the Duke of SUSSEX, from St. Luke's, Chelsea, from Holywell, in Flintshire, Renfrew, and Dumfries:—By the Earl of CARLISLE, from Carlisle and Cumberland. Against the Bill for Parliamentary Reform, by the Earl of HADDINGTON, from Dalkeith:—By the Earl of MANSFIELD, from certain Inhabitants of Edinburgh. By the Earl of RADNOR, from the Operative Spinners of Manchester, in favour of the Labour in Cotton Factories Bill. By the Earl of ELDON, from the Roman Catholics of Merchants' Quay, Galway, for the extension of the Franchise to Catholics. By the Duke of WELLINGTON, from Sheffield, for an Alteration in the Beer Bill. By Lord ELLENBOROUGH, from Falmouth, against any alteration in the Timber Duties.

A Message from the House of Commons brought up the Mandamus Bill.

PETITIONS AGAINST REFORM.] Lord *Montague* had been intrusted with two Petitions on the subject of Reform, and they being of a different character from those lately presented, he considered it his duty to call the attention of their Lordships to the statements of these petitions. He wished to avoid entering into the general question, and to confine himself to the petitions. One was from the freeholders of the County of Selkirk, the other from the Burgh of Selkirk; and both complained that, by the measure proposed by his Majesty's Ministers, the petitioners would be virtually disfranchised. The freeholders stated, that, from the earliest records, they returned two Members to the Parliament of Scotland; and that, by the Treaty of Union, it was settled they were to return one Member to the British Parliament. They had heard, however, with great surprise, that, by the measure of his Majesty's Ministers, they were to be deprived of this right, and, in conjunction with Peebles-shire, to return only one Member to Parliament. The petitioners were at a loss to discover on what principle they were to be deprived of their privilege. The petitioners had not seen the Bills, and when they received them, they would naturally seek to discover on what grounds they were to be deprived of their rights. The preamble of the English Bill would tell them that it was expedient to increase the number of county Members; but in the Bill for Scotland, they would find not one word in the preamble about county Members. That Bill contained only a dry enactment, that Scotland was to return twenty-eight instead of thirty county Members. By the English Bill, the county of Rutland was to return two Members with a population but little exceeding that of Selkirkshire and Peebles-shire united, which were to return but one. There were at least seven English towns which were to return two Members each, of which the population was inferior to that of the two Scotch counties. If Selkirkshire was taken singly, the case would be still more striking. From the superior population of Peebles-shire, it was quite evident that, under the proposed new qualifications, Selkirkshire could never return the Member, and thus would be doomed, practically, to perpetual disfranchisement. He would say nothing of the new qualifications, numerous as were the objections to them, because they were not noticed in the petition. It was, indeed, not worth while for the petitioners to inquire how a county Member was to be elected, when it was quite evident they never could elect one. Passing then to the Burgh, Selkirk, with three others, Peebles, Lanark, and Linlithgow, at present return one Member, and Selkirk has generally had its fair share in the election; it was proposed, however, to add Falkirk to these four burghs, a town hitherto unrepresented, with a population so superior to that of any of the other burghs, that, under the new qualifications, it would always return the Member. By uniting with Linlithgow, a town at no great distance, and in the same county, it would prevent Selkirk, Peebles, and Lanark, from ever having the Member of their choice. The petitioners asked, why they were to have the populous town of Falkirk thrown in upon them, while many English towns were to enjoy the privilege of electing a Member, though their population be inferior to that of the four united burghs. Scotland might have made a bad bargain at the Union as to her Representation; with it, however, she had hitherto remained contented. Under it she had increased in happiness and prosperity; but if the Treaty of Union was to be violated, at least let Scotland be placed on an equal footing with England.

The Earl of *Rosebery* said, that he would not, on that occasion, follow the noble Lord through all his arguments. The noble Lord had presented a petition from Selkirk, and had told their Lordships that the petitioners would be disfranchised by the Bill. He had a petition to present from persons similarly circumstanced in all respects, but their prayer was, that the Bill might pass into a law. The petition was from Linlithgow. The petitioners expressed their joy and approbation at the measure, and declared, that they were not only most willing, but most desirous, to surrender their individual privileges and interests for the sake of what they and the majority of their fellow-subjects believed to be a great public benefit. There was one observation which had fallen from the noble Lord (Montague) opposite, which he could not allow to pass unnoticed. The noble Lord had expressed a hope that, if the Union were to be violated at all, Scotland would at least be allowed a fair relative proportion to England in the new system of Representation. He would say nothing then about violating the Union, but he must remind the noble Lord that by the proposed measures Scotland would gain five, while England would lose sixty-two Representatives. Surely, then, Scotland would be better off than it was at present.

Petitions to be laid on the Table.

PETITIONS IN FAVOUR OF REFORM.] Lord *Goderich* presented a Petition from the Mayor, Sheriffs, and Commonalty of the City of Lincoln, praying that the Ministerial Plan of Reform might become a law. The petitioners said, that, as this

Bill had been considered by some to be an invasion of corporate and municipal rights, and as they were persons participating in such rights, they were anxious to declare it to be their opinion, that such an argument, however well founded, ought not to be an obstacle to a measure which had the public voice in its favour.

The Duke of Norfolk presented similar petitions from the borough of Horsham, from Cove, from Waterford, from the Corporation of Barbers in Glasgow, from Perth, and from several other places.

Lord *Farnham* said, that as some of those petitions came from Ireland, and as he had received petitions from that country of an adverse nature, he could not refrain from making one observation upon the subject. He considered it a most extraordinary thing that, while the second reading of the Reform measure for England was fixed for that night in the other House of Parliament, the Bill for Ireland had not yet been introduced into Parliament. The noble Lord who had brought forward the plan of Reform elsewhere, had opened it as an entire measure, and yet they were now proceeding to deal with it in a mutilated form. He did not think that it was possible to debate the general measure fairly without having the details of the Irish measure before them. He begged, therefore, to know from the noble Earl (Grey) opposite, when the Irish measure would be produced by the Ministers. At present their Lordships were totally ignorant of the nature of that measure. It had been supposed, indeed, that the Irish measure would be analogous to the measure for England, but there were peculiar features in Ireland which would render such a measure wholly inapplicable to that country, and which would cause such a measure to be productive of very detrimental consequences.

Earl *Grey* said, it appeared to him that the course which the noble Lord had pursued was somewhat irregular. The noble Lord had asked him when a Bill—which could only be brought into the other House of Parliament—would be introduced by the Government. Now it was quite impossible that he, consistently with the respect which was due to the other House of Parliament, or consistently with the proceedings of that House, could answer the question of the noble Lord. It was a Bill, however, which those who were employed in framing it were using all diligence upon, and which would be brought in without loss of time. As to whether the measure would be productive of very detrimental consequences, if it were analogous to the measure for England, that was a matter which could not be properly discussed at present. Allow him, however, to observe, that this was the first time he had ever heard it said, that a general measure of Parliamentary Reform could not be fairly discussed without debating at the same time that part of the details of such measure as applied to Ireland. He old enough to have voted with Mr. Pitt when Mr. Pitt supported Parliamentary Reform, and to have strongly opposed Mr. Pitt, when Mr. Pitt opposed a similar measure to that which Mr. Pitt had supported at the outset of his political career. But in all those discussions, he had never heard it said, that it was necessary for them to know what Reform it was proposed to make in Scotland before they could debate the principle of Reform fairly. No; the measures had always been allowed to rest on their own merits; and he must say, therefore, that there was no foundation for the complaint of the noble Lord. As far as he could be permitted to state any thing regularly in answer to the noble Lord, he had no objection to inform the noble Lord, that the Bill was prepared, and that it would be produced at the first convenient opportunity.

Petitions laid on the Table.

The *Lord Chancellor* said, that he had to present a mass of Petitions to their Lordships on the subject of Reform. He could do no more than read the names of the places from which these petitions came, and he took that course, not out of any disrespect to the petitioners, but because he felt that it would be impossible to do more without occupying far too much of their Lordships' time. The petitions, which were fifty-six in number, came from different corporate bodies in various parts of the kingdom, all of whom would be affected by the Reform Bill; that was to say, they would all be disfranchised, either wholly or in part; and yet the prayers of the petitioners were, that the measure might be passed into a law. After reading the names of the thirty places from which the petitions came, being chiefly in Scotland, the noble and learned Lord said—"After presenting these petitions to your Lordships, I spare your Lordships the presentation of eighty or ninety more which have been intrusted to me, because I am desirous not to encroach unreasonably upon the time of your Lordships. I selected these from corporate bodies, because I wish to give an illustration of that noble disinterestedness which so many classes have displayed upon this momentous question. While, my Lords, we cannot be too grateful to those distinguished individuals—Members of this House, and of the other House of Parliament—who have come forward so gallantly with expressions of their readiness to sacrifice their personal interests, and to give up cheerfully the most enticing of all possessions—I mean the possession of political power,—while I say, my Lords, we cannot be too grateful to those high-minded individuals, we must not forget to award the same meed of praise to persons in a lower class of life, who have displayed the same disinterestedness and public spirit. From this display, my Lords, I would fain, with your Lordships' permission, draw one moral. How grievously mistaken, my Lords, those persons must have been, who, either in Parliament or out of Parliament, have endeavoured to stir up a feeling of opposition and discontent to his Majesty's Ministers. [*A slight laugh.*] This is not the first time, my Lords, that I have been witness to a premature laugh,—to a laugh, my Lords, which if those who indulged in it had only had the patience to wait a little, the laugh would most assuredly have been postponed *sine die.* However, my Lords, I do not complain, and I trust that my noble friends who are inclined to laugh will forgive me if I go on with my moral to this,—not fable,—but, happily for the honour and the character of our country, —passage of history. This shows, then, how great is the delusion under which those persons labour who have attempted to excite feelings hostile to this great measure among—the lowest classes I was going to say, but I will not call them so, for their conduct has placed them above their tempters and seducers, and I will call them, therefore, the humblest classes, not the lowest. They who have resisted the arts and snares of the seducers must be higher at least than the seducers themselves. These tempters have gone among the people, and endeavoured insidiously to excite them against the Bill, by holding the following language to them:—'You common people will get no votes, for the Bill is founded on the principle of property, and you have got no property.' But the people turned round upon them and said, 'This is the first time that you, or any of your kidney, have shown that you ever thought about the welfare of the people, or their want of property.' This, my Lords, is not the first time that such an argument was addressed to the people. It is an old argument, my Lords,—as old as the commencement of the Christian era —and the person who used it is well known in sacred history. The moral that I would impress upon your Lordships is to be found in a passage of the sacred writings, and is this:—'Then saith one of his disciples, Judas Iscariot, Simon's son, which should betray him, why was not this ointment sold for three hundred pence and given to the poor?' 'But this,' adds the sacred historian, with indignation, and contempt, and scorn,—'this he said, not that he cared for the poor, but because he was a thief.'"

The Duke of *Wellington* thought, that their Lordships would do well to adhere to their original resolution of not discussing this measure until it came regularly before them. He should have thought that the noble and learned Lord on the Woolsack would have adhered to that resolution, but the noble and learned Lord had not done so, and had referred to arguments which had been used in the other House of Parliament.

The *Lord Chancellor.*—No, indeed, it was an argument which was used at two county Meetings.

The Duke of *Wellington* said, well the argument was one which had been adduced to the common people; and, since the noble and learned Lord had thought proper to go so far, he wished the noble and learned Lord had gone a little further, and adverted to certain other arguments which had been used to the same class. One of those arguments was, that this measure would lead to ulterior measures; that the measure must undoubtedly and inevitably lead to Radical Reform and Universal Suffrage. If the noble and learned Lord thought proper to allude to one part of an argument, let him allude to the other part of it also. However, he disclaimed any desire to continue the discussion of this subject, and he thought that their Lordships would do well to confine themselves to the statements of the petitioners.

The *Lord Chancellor* perfectly concurred in the propriety of the rule, generally, which the noble Duke had advocated, and assured the noble Duke, that he should not have deviated from it, except that in presenting fifty-six petitions from persons so circumstanced as the petitioners were, he had thought it right to do justice to the disinterestedness which the petitioners had displayed. Whatever argument had been addressed to the people with regard to ulterior measures, he was wholly at issue with the noble Duke, if the noble Duke meant to say that the people supported this measure with the view of procuring by means of it such ulterior measures of Reform as the noble Duke had designated. He would not go into the argument of this point now, but content himself with stating one fact. He knew that thousands of those who had signed the Edinburgh petition had said,—" We are aware that we can get nothing by this Bill, but we will petition for it, because it will give to the country a proper system of Representation."

Earl *Grey* presented Petitions to the same effect from Greenwich, from Birmingham signed by 21,000 inhabitants, and from Manchester, signed by 20,000 inhabitants. Though he felt that the occasion of presenting petitions was not the most fitting for a discussion of the great measure of Reform now in progress through the other House of Parliament, he could not but observe with reference to the imputations against the supporters of that measure thrown out by the noble Duke (Wellington)—namely, that they supported it as a step towards the attainment of " ulterior views," extending to a very extensive change in our Representative system; that the chief object which Ministers proposed to themselves in bringing it forward was, to effectually put an end to the clamour and discontent which the withholding of a sound and constitutional Reform had generated, and thereby add to the stability of the existing institutions of the country; and that, even as far as they had gone they had been eminently successful, for that the demand for Universal Suffrage, Vote by Ballot, and Annual Parliaments, had been silenced since their plan of Reform had been promulgated.

Petitions laid on the Table.

LAW OF DIVORCE (SCOTLAND).] The Earl of *Eldon* rose for the purpose of moving the first reading of a Bill on the subject of the Law of Divorce in Scotland. It had long been a question whether children, born of English parents not married, could be legitimized by the parents going to Scotland and being married there. That question, however, was now set at rest. Repeated judicial decisions of that House had settled, that children so circumstanced could not be rendered legitimate. Another question, one which had been repeatedly recommended to the consideration of their Lordships on arguments at their bar, and one which it was most desirable to set at rest, was this—if parties, having been married, and lived together in this country, took it into their heads to go to Scotland to be divorced, what period of domicile in Scotland should be necessary, in order to give the Scotch Courts the power to divorce the parties, *a vinculo matrimonii?* It was right that he should tell their Lordships, that the twelve Judges of England had decided, that a marriage solemnized in England could be dissolved only by an Act of Parliament. He would give no opinion upon the subject, but certainly the opinion of the twelve Judges had no slight weight with him, and he was sure their Lordships would agree, that when the Scotch Courts and the twelve Judges were at issue, they ought to interfere.

The Bill read a first time.

BANKRUPT COMMISSION BILL.] The Earl of *Eldon*, on the Order of the Day being read for receiving the Report of the Committee on this Bill, rose to request the noble and learned Lord on the Woolsack to postpone the Motion till the return of a noble and learned Chief Baron (Lyndhurst) from Circuit. The Bill was one of great importance—involving most serious alterations in the legal institutions of the country—requiring, therefore, a calm and deliberate and unhurried investigation of its provisions and principle. It was to procure for it this deliberate discussion—and because it was due to the country that those who had filled the high office to the jurisdiction of which it related, should state their views of its character and tendency, and not from any motives of party, or for the purpose of throwing needless obstacles in the way of the Government, that he requested the noble and learned Lord to agree to having the Order of the Day postponed.

The *Lord Chancellor* could have no objection, founded on views of personal consideration, to acceding to the noble Lord's request. He was himself anxious that the noble and learned Chief Baron should be present at the discussion of the Bill; that, in fact, the Bill should be thoroughly examined and debated in its every detail; for he was convinced that the more it was investigated the more their Lordships would be convinced that it would be an amendment in our commercial law which could not be too soon effected. Besides, he was not a stickler for a day; he cared not, so far as he individually was concerned, when the discussion would be taken; only he hoped that, for the sake of the public interests, the delay would be the shortest compatible with that calm and deliberate investigation so justly insisted upon by the noble and learned Earl, whom he acquitted altogether of being actuated in his request by any paltry or contemptible motives of party. The only hesitation he had in acceding to the request for further delay was, that he feared that such a short one —say a week—as their Lordships might with reason assent to, would not be sufficient to ensure them the presence of the noble and learned Chief Baron now on Circuit. [The Earl of *Eldon* expected Lord Lyndhurst in town next week.] He apprehended that such would not be the case, and that the noble and learned Lord would not be able to attend before the Recess. He, however, hoped to be able to speak more decidedly on this point to-morrow, when he expected an answer from the noble and learned Lord to a letter which he (the Lord Chancellor) had written to him on Friday last, with a view of ascertaining his intentions respecting the Bill, and in order to promote them as much as lay in his power. To-morrow, then, when he expected his noble and learned friend's answer, he should fix a day for taking the discussion on the Bill; for the more thoroughly it was discussed, the more his object would be accomplished.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Monday, March 21, 1831.

Minutes.] The Report of the Civil List Committee was laid on the Table.

Sir R. Heron brought up the Report of the Colchester Election Committee, which declared the election of A. Spottiswoode, Esq. for that Borough null and void; and on the Motion of the hon. Baronet, a new Writ was ordered to issue for the election of a Member to serve in Parliament for the Borough of Colchester.

Petitions presented. In favour of Reform, by Mr. Kennedy, signed by 31,020 residents of Edinburgh:—By Mr. Traill, several from Glasgow, Ayr, Selkirk, Kircudbright, and various Incorporations and Societies in Scotland:—By Mr. Alderman Winchester, from the Ward of Vintry, and from Maidstone, also hoping that the interests of that place might be protected:—By Mr. Slaney, from Shrewsbury:—By Mr. J. Stewart, from Cowbridge and Meath:—By Lord J. Russell, from Southwark, St. Ives, (Huntingdon), Woburn, Leighton Buzzard, Lymington, and Wigan:—By Sir H. Bunbury, from Woodbridge: By Sir W. Folkes, from the Inhabitants of the Hundreds of Forehoe, Launditch, Blofield, South Erpingham, Shropham and Guiltcross, Norfolk:—By Mr. M'Namara, from the County of Clare:—By Lord Viscount Newark, from Burgesses and others of East Retford and Bassetlaw: —By Lord Morpeth, from Halifax, signed by 12,000 persons, Bristol, Easingwold, Doncaster, the Minister and Freeholders of the Chapel of Horbury, the inhabitants of Pateley Bridge, Howden, Morley, Wakefield, Keighley, and Carlisle:—By Mr. Bouverie, from the Householders of St. Martin's-in-the Fields, Westminster:—By Mr. Maberly, from Abingdon:—By Mr. Denison, from Surrey, signed by 2,000 persons, Bermondsey, Clapham, Croydon and its vicinity, Kingston-upon-Thames, Wimbledon, Godalming, Christ Church, Surrey, and Fareham: —By Sir R. Price, from Hereford county:—By Sir J. D. King, from Bridgewater:—By Sir R. Heron, from Epworth:—By Mr. Whitbread, from Ledbury and Bedford:—By Mr. F. Buxton, from Weymouth and Melcombe Regis, signed by 600 persons:—By Lord Althorp, from Manchester, Birmingham, Worcester county, and Derby:—By Mr. Mildmay, from the parishes of St. Maurice and St. Mary Kalendar, and St. Peter, Colebrook, Winchester. Against the Plan, by Captain Harris, from Grimsby:—By Mr. Freshfield, from Penryhn:—By Sir R. Peel, from the Magistrates, Clergy, and Freeholders of Cambridge, and the Isle of Ely:—By Mr. Ure, from Weymouth and Melcombe Regis:—By Sir C. Wetherell, from Great Yarmouth and Plympton Earle. For Indemnity in case of Negro Emancipation, by Sir R. Peel, from persons interested in the West Indies, resident in Edinburgh. Against any Alteration of the Timber Duties, by Colonel Cavendish, from Cardiff. For the Repeal of the Union (Ireland), by Mr. Macnamara, from Kilfarboy, Glynn, and Carrah; for the extension of the Galway Franchise, from Justices of Peace in Galway.

Breach of Privilege—Case of the Times.] Sir *Robert Inglis* said, that he rose under a sense of duty, though with much reluctance, to point out to the attention of the House a breach of its privileges, which was of a peculiar tendency, as it had been committed on the eve of such a discussion as the House had recently been engaged in, and which it was about to renew. He alluded to a publication of a libel upon the character of that House; but before he entered into the subject, he should beg leave to premise, that personally he was not the party directly affected by it, nor had he in his own person any reason to complain of any paragraph in the public press, in which his name had been mentioned. Notwithstanding this, he should feel himself totally unworthy of a seat in that House, if, when there had been put into his hands such papers as those which he now held, he could refrain from calling the attention of the House to them at the very earliest opportunity. At the eve of such an important discussion as that upon which they were about to enter, every man must agree with him, that Members should not come to vote under threats of popular abuse, conveyed in language which required some degree of nerve on the part of any Member to divest his mind of its effects. The publication he alluded to had attacked Members as constitutionally chosen—until the measure of the noble Paymaster shall become a law, which God forbid—as any person who had a seat in that House. The paragraph he complained of had appeared in a newspaper called *The Times*, of respectable talent, he believed, but what respect it was entitled to in any other point of view it was not for him to state. It was, however, well known to be a newspaper of very large circulation, and it had arrogated to itself the merit of being the "Leading Journal" of Europe. From these circumstances he was naturally more anxious to call the attention of the House, than if the objectionable matter had appeared in a newspaper of an inferior character, and not of so large a circulation. He was not one of those who was in the habit of reading *The Times* newspaper, (and he did not consider this a misfortune), or he might earlier have called the attention of the House to the subject; but he should now lay before it only one paragraph, which was part of a series of articles upon the same subject, and of an equally improper character; some of those articles did not come under his notice till this very day. These articles had appeared in *The Times* successively from the 1st of March—from the day on which the noble Lord (the Paymaster of the Forces) had introduced the Reform Bill, to that hour in which he was addressing the House. *The Times* newspaper had attacked the Members of that House, depreciating them in the opinions of the people, and holding up large bodies of them, for the part they took in the deliberation upon Reform, as totally unworthy of occupying the seats to which they had been elected. Members were, therefore, carrying on their deliberations like the National Assembly with the *poissardes* in the gallery. No person who did not utterly disregard public opinion, could say that he was placed in that situation for deliberation in which a Member of that House ought to be placed. They would betray their duty to the people, they would betray their duty to themselves and to the whole Constitution, if, as Representatives of the people, they suffered any Member to be outraged in such a way—if they suffered Members to be insulted in the way in which they had been insulted. He could make many extracts from the paper in question, but he should content himself with one single paragraph. In that journal (*The Times*) there had been continued articles upon the same subject, and in one paper there was a list of members who were supposed to be introduced into that House by the nomination of individual borough-holders. This list having connected the paragraph to which he objected with the persons and privileges of this House, he should now, with the leave of the House, proceed to read it. Here the hon. Member produced a copy of *The Times* newspaper of the 14th instant, and proceeded to read as follows:—"The unanimous enthusiasm of the people of England in defence of the national rights and liberties [*cries of "hear, hear, hear," and at length loud and reiterated cheers.*] The hon. Member recovering himself from this interruption, proceeded to say, that if any Members meant to insinuate that he had any wish whatever to check the fair and free expression of the opinions of the public upon any measure in Parliament, they utterly mistook his object and his general character. The paragraphs which he meant to read, would hardly have been understood without the introductory lines which he had quoted, but he had no intention of founding any motion upon the lines themselves. The hon. Member resumed his reading—"The unanimous enthusiasm of the people of England in defence of the national rights and liberties was never so manifest within our recollection, as on this present question of the Reform Bill: nor have we found recorded a single instance of rich and poor, high and low, men of all conditions, professions, and fortunes, feeling an equal sympathy in any cause, except, indeed, that of war against some hated public enemy. That enemy is now the usurper of the people's franchises,—the cut-purse of the people's money,—the robber of the public treasury under the forms of law—of law enacted by the plunderer himself to favour his own extortion—his own systematic conversion of the fruits of other men's industry to selfish or criminal uses." [*hear, hear.*] Sir R. Inglis, turning round to Mr. O'Connell, said, that there was one lawyer, and but one lawyer, in that House, who cheered, and that lawyer was the hon. member for Waterford. Now came (continued Sir R. Inglis) the passage to which he was most desirous to call the attention of that House:—"When, night after night, borough nominees rise to infest the proceedings of the House of Commons with arguments to justify their own intrusion into it, and their continuance there, thus impudently maintaining what the lawyers call 'an adverse possession' in spite of judgment against them, we really feel inclined to ask why the rightful owners of the House should be longer insulted by the presence of such unwelcome inmates?" There was no lawyer he was happy to find, who cheered that. Sir Robert proceeded to read—"It is, beyond question, a piece of the broadest and coolest effrontery in the world for these hired lacquies of public delinquents to stand up as advocates of the disgraceful service they have embarked in." If there was one man in that House who would state that what he had read was not a gross and scandalous breach of their privileges, he should be much surprised. He would ask, was not such a paragraph a violent endeavour to disturb the freedom of debate? was it not an attempt to degrade the House in the judgment of the community? On this point he trusted that not a single Member could be found in that House who would oppose him. An instance of a similar case being brought before the House occurred in the time of Mr. Fox, who had moved the House against a libel upon its character, which had appeared in the *Public Advertiser*.* He should have contented himself with being silent on the subject, and certainly should have abstained from bringing the matter under the notice of the House, if this were a paragraph which only affected himself individually. Under such circumstances, he should probably have shrunk from the duty (notwithstanding he might have felt it to be a duty) of bringing the matter forward. But because he did not feel himself individually affected by the attack, he considered it the more open to him to raise the question, and because he thought the dignity and privileges of the House would be materially affected if such a paragraph were allowed to pass without attention. He had acted under this feeling in calling the attention of the House to the subject. If it were said, "Wait a little longer before you proceed to extremities, and see whether a better tone may not be adopted," he rejected the proposition at once on this plain and simple ground,—that further forbearance would only give rise to an idea of impunity, and to fresh, and perhaps more violent attacks, under that idea. Under all the circumstances of the case, he thought he had no option, having brought the subject before the House, than to proceed as it was now his intention to do. He should move, first, that the paragraph complained of be now read by the Clerk at the Table; and that done, he meant to follow up the reading with another motion, expressive of the opinion of the House on the subject.

The Clerk then read the last passage which Sir R. Inglis had quoted, beginning "When, night after night," &c.

Sir *R. Inglis* felt it unnecessary to add another sentence to what he had before taken the liberty to submit to the House, except this Motion—"That the paragraph now read by the Clerk at the Table is a false and scandalous libel on this House, directly tending to deter Members of this House from the discharge of their duty, and calculated to alienate from them the respect and confidence of their fellow-subjects."

Sir *Roger Gresley* seconded the Motion. He was understood to complain of having been himself a victim of the attacks of the editor of *The Times* newspaper, in a report made of certain proceedings at a meeting in the City, in which he was pointed out as being either a fool or a knave. It had been insinuated that he had a large sum of money embarked in an undertaking, and that his vote had been influenced by that consideration. At the suggestion of some hon. friends, he had turned it over in his mind, whether or not he should introduce the subject to the notice of the House, and it was in consideration of the advice of persons more experienced than himself, that he had passed the matter over, it being the opinion of authorities to which he felt bound to yield, that it might be thought to argue too much sensitiveness in so young a Member of Parliament to act differently. He accordingly abandoned his intention. He bore his humble testimony, and with the utmost sincerity, to the remarks of the hon. Baronet, the member for the University of Oxford, who had so properly brought this Motion before the House and he declared it was his firm and hearty conviction, that the extravagant lengths to which the public press had gone, required correction. He thought the present a case well deserving of the attention of the House, whose duty it was to take some course by means of which we might defeat and put a stop to the licentious and unwarrantable attacks of the Press. It was not that Members of the House felt their own bosoms reproach them,—it was not that they experienced any alarm at the menaces held out,—but there were considerations affecting their constituents, and ignorant persons out of doors, which rendered it desirable, and, indeed, made it the duty of the House, to check the coarse abuse and scandalous libels in which the Press habitually indulged.

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* See Hansard's Parl. History, Vol. xvii, p. 1054.

The Question having been put

Lord *Althorp* merely wished to put it to the hon. Baronet, whether it was taking a proper course to press a Resolution, such as this, without previous notice. He suggested to the hon. Baronet, that it would be better to delay his proposition, so as to postpone the discussion upon it till after the other important motion fixed for that evening should be disposed of.

Sir *R. H. Inglis* begged to state, that he had carefully followed the precedents established in such cases. The noble Lord would find that it was not usual, or according to the practice of the House, to postpone discussions on such subjects as he had then brought forward.

Mr. *Calcraft* thought that the hon. member for the University of Oxford ought to feel satisfied with having his motion read by the Clerk at the Table. It would be much better to avoid a discussion upon the matter, particularly as the words of the Motion could not be borne out, for the paragraph had no tendency whatever to prevent hon. Members from doing their duty. He resisted the Motion, because he felt quite sure that the paragraph in question could have no such tendency as was imputed to it. He begged to have the Resolution read, in order that it might be seen whether his notion of it was correct.

The Resolution having been read—

Mr. *Calcraft* resumed. In his opinion, and speaking on his knowledge of the spirit which animated the Members of the House of Commons of England, he did not think the paragraph in question had any such tendency as the hon. Baronet supposed; he could not believe that it would have the tendency of deterring the Commons of England from a proper discharge of their duty. With him, this alone afforded a sufficient reason for rejecting the motion of the hon. Baronet. Besides, he thought it impossible to proceed in a more unbecoming or ungracious manner than to attempt by discussing a subject of this sort, to divert the minds of Members from the great question of Reform which was that night expected to come before the House. He was not prepared to defend the course taken by *The Times* on the occasion in question, or upon any other occasion,—he was not prepared to defend the course taken by any other newspaper in relation to this or any other question,—neither was he prepared to pass a vote of condemnation upon them; but he said boldly, that the Press of this country must continue free, and he had never known the House of Commons gain any thing in the opinion of the country, or finally in its own opinion, by controversies of this sort. If these were libels so scandalous that it was impossible to pass them over in silence, the Attorney General was the proper person to take the matter in hand and prosecute them [*"no, no," from the Opposition benches*], and he would rather have prosecutions originating in that quarter, than see the subject taken up by a Member of that House. He hoped the hon. Baronet would withdraw his Motion.

Mr. *Baring* concurred with the right hon. member for Wareham, in the hope that the hon. Baronet would withdraw all further proceedings in this matter, but for a different reason, and under different feelings, from those which actuated the right hon. Gentleman in making the suggestion; for he maintained, that if the lower House of Parliament, as now constituted, or in the altered shape proposed by the noble Lord (J. Russell), suffered itself to be insulted and trampled on by the Press, the liberty of discussion within those walls (one of the most valuable privileges of Parliament) must necessarily be infringed upon and shackled. Moreover, he did not concur in the right hon. Member's recommendation to leave the matter to the Attorney General, because he was of opinion, that nothing could be more fatal to the freedom of Debate than to adopt such a course. He differed from his right hon. friend opposite as to the principles on which the House should be governed in matters of this kind; nevertheless, he joined in the recommendation that the hon. Baronet would not press his Motion; but his reason for his recommendation was, because he thought they should recollect a little the nature of the subject which they were about to debate in the course of that night: that subject was no less than the future constitution of the Parliament of this country, and if they debarred the public writer or the public voice from declaring that the present Constitution of the House of Commons was vicious and defective, they in reality said to the country that there should be no freedom of discussion, no liberty of opinion among persons out of doors, on this important subject. Was this a course desirable to be taken at such a moment as the present? Unlike the hon. Baronet, he was a reader of *The Times*, and he freely admitted that this paragraph, and it might be many others, went very far, and was perhaps extremely injudicious,—so much so, that if it referred to another subject, it might be the bounden duty of the House to notice it. But upon this subject he had no disposition to do any thing calculated to impede discussion out of doors: he saw no symptoms in the country encouraging or calling for such a hindrance. For his own part, he had no apprehension in consequence of the vote which he should give on the question of Reform. A good deal had been said that sounded like intimidation, although it might be that it was not so intended. He should give his vote with as much confidence as if he were voting upon a turnpike-bill. With respect to the subject before the House, if the hon. Baronet's Resolution were pressed, it would be impossible for the House not to notice the paragraph in the proper manner; but he hoped that his hon. friend, seeing the inexpediency of carrying the question further, would abandon his Motion, which, however, might serve as a notice to public writers, that although the subject of Reform was to be discussed with freedom, it must be treated with a little more decency in future.

Mr. *Perceval* felt great difficulty in addressing the House at all times, and under whatever circumstances, on account of his inadequacy to do justice to the subject, that came under discussion. He found it necessary to rise on this occasion, however, because he could not at all agree in the sentiments of the hon. member for Callington, who had just sat down, still less in those of the right hon. member for Wareham. He said this without hesitation, and with the most perfect conviction of the correctness of the opinion, that this question having now been brought forward and mooted by his hon. friend (the member for the University of Oxford), if the House attempted to get rid of it in the way proposed by the two hon. Members who had last addressed them, it would lose, and justly lose, its authority and character in the State. He repeated, the question having been mooted, having been once presented to the attention of the House,—if they declined to proceed to vote the paragraph a gross breach of the privileges of the House, they would give an ascendancy to the Press which could not be obtained by any other means. It might be, and was, open to hon. Members to question whether the Motion ought to have been brought forward at present, with the question of Reform so near at hand; but it having been brought forward, there was left to the House only one course to pursue,—namely, to vote the article a breach of privilege, and proceed to notice it as such breach of the privileges of the House. He was not present at the commencement of the hon. Baronet's speech, and, consequently was not aware whether his hon. friend had called the attention of the House to this paragraph as part of a long-continued series of attacks which could not have been written by any intelligent human being with any other view than to deter the Members of that House from the performance of their duty. That, and that alone was the obvious tendency of the long series of articles and paragraphs industriously persisted in from day to day by *The Times* and other papers. With respect to *The Times*, the paragraph of which his hon. friend complained was only the climax of the attacks; and it was impossible for any honest man to read the series of libels, and doubt the intention of the writers to endeavour to deter Members of Parliament from the discharge of their duty, and to hold up to the scorn of the country such Members as ventured to perform it according to the dictates of their consciences. Had it no tendency to deter Members from the discharge of their duty to call them infamous boroughmongers, who dared not to show their faces at a popular election? Had it no tendency to render Members contemptible in the eyes of the country, if the people were told that they had no right to vote on a question of

Reform?—that they were slaves and hired lacquies—the hired lacquies of public delinquents, and the offspring of corruption? It could not be pretended for a single moment that such paragraphs had not the tendency imputed to them, or that they were not written with the intention of bringing the House into contempt. He thanked his hon. friend, the member for the University of Oxford, for having brought forward this Motion; whether the present was precisely the fittest moment for introducing it might admit of some difference of opinion; but now that the matter was broached, how could the House deal with it, except as proposed by the hon. Baronet? It was a duty which they owed to the country to vindicate the character of Parliament from such aspersions, and Members could not shrink from voting for a proposition in the main such as that of his hon. friend. He would not object to any trifling verbal amendment if a slight alteration would reconcile the critics of his hon. friend's Motion to the spirit and substance of the proposition, satisfied as he was that they could not suffer the subject to pass over without further notice, particularly after the long series of libels that had been emitted from the quarter referred to: they could not allow the matter to pass over in silence and quietness, without a great dereliction of their duty to the country and the constitution.

Sir *F. Burdett* said, the public press of this country had most industriously, carefully, and laboriously, with the most persevering industry, with great talent, with unabated zeal and patriotism, and with unbending integrity, advocated the great and good cause now at issue between the boroughmongers and the people. He was not afraid of any course that might be taken by the House on this occasion; he did not tremble at its effects on the cause of Reform, for the course proposed by the hon. Baronet opposite, if adopted, would only bring the people and their enemies more speedily to an issue. As to the merits of the case in question, he had no apprehension for the result—he would trust any Jury with it—any body of men who had the feelings of Englishmen and loved their country—in a word, any collection of men in the realm, except those whom he had now the honour to address. He felt the utmost confidence as to the way in which the question would be disposed of any where beyond those walls. As to the conduct of the House on the subject, he was perfectly indifferent to its vote: he would say the same of Reform. The fiat had gone forth from the people, and obeyed it must be. And as to the character and dignity of the House being violated by this honest writer, Members themselves must be secretly ashamed of the assertion. Who would deny this, after the fact having been so repeatedly and publicly stated, that the corruption of that House was as notorious (it was admitted and allowed to be as notorious) as the sun at noonday? After this, it was ludicrous to hear Members talking of the privileges of the House being violated, and its character lowered, because the Press dared to speak out and tell the truth. He should like to learn from the hon. Gentleman who had just sat down, and who was so tender of the dignity and privileges of the House, whether he had overlooked a Resolution lying upon the Table, declaring that all interference in the election of Members of Parliament, whether the jobbers and proprietors of seats were Peers of the land, or trafficking knaves of an humbler grade, was a violation of the privileges of the people of England as well as of that House? Did the hon. Gentleman, in his zeal for the dignity of Parliament, overlook the privileges of the people,—privileges which would be equally the rights of that House, and which, as such, would be carefully guarded and defended by it, if it did indeed represent the people of England? Let the hon. Gentleman bring forward this true question of privilege, and let not a subject like the present be converted into a question of privilege, with a degree of hypocrisy which made him sick of discussing it. No man had a right to a seat in that House but as a Representative of the people, and all purchasers and traffickers in boroughs, all who nominated to such places, or in any way interfered with the election of Members (setting aside the baseness, illegality, and wickedness of the traffic), were guilty of an infringement on the privileges of the House and of the people. Let the great men who exercised an undue influence at elections think of this, and let the Gentlemen who were so anxious to defend the rights and privileges and dignity of the House make motions on the subject. For his own part, he was, upon principle, averse from proceedings such as that now proposed; feeling that they involved an infringement on the privileges of the people, particularly as the House was constituted at present, and being moreover persuaded, that even if the House were differently constituted, still a proceeding like this would be an invasion of the people's rights. He deprecated a course which made the House of Commons judge in its own cause—accuser, trier, and punisher of offences against its own dignity and privileges,—especially at a moment when, in the eyes of the public at large, the House of Commons did not possess a single particle of confidence. He repeated, the House had utterly lost the confidence of the people—that confidence had been destroyed many years ago. This was now generally admitted, and so was the corruption of the House the true cause of the loss of confidence. But though those facts were on record at present, and perfectly undeniable, when he first came into Parliament no man ventured to state them openly; and if any Member hinted at certain modes of getting into the House in violation of the laws of morality and the laws of the land, he was compelled to speak with great caution, care, circumspection, and circumlocution on the subject:—he might perhaps say, "it was known, that certain influences existed in certain quarters;" but if he dared to be more explicit, one of the predecessors of the right hon. Gentleman in that Chair would not have hesitated long in calling the Gentleman, whoever he might be, to order. They had since then been avowed. Since 1807, when Mr. Maddocks detected Lord Castlereagh and Mr. Perceval in practising this corrupt traffic, they having turned out a Member, Mr. Quintin Dick, he believed, because, holding his seat for some borough under their influence, he would not vote as they wished on the subject of the charges brought against the Duke of York in that House, they requiring only Members as tools in that House—when these Ministers were detected practising the vilest system of borough patronage and traffic—when they were discovered *flagrante delicto*—taken in the manner as it were—what did the House (now so prudish) do? what then was the defence set up? By the way, the case which he had in his eye bore out, to a certain extent, a suggestion that had appeared in *The Times*, and of which he cordially approved. This suggestion was, that the Members for certain boroughs ought in decency to retire, nor vote on a question in which they had so strong a personal interest. In the case alluded to, the Ministers, those who were concerned in the traffic, did as was now recommended to the borough Members to do—they had the decency to walk out of the House into the lobby, sure that the persons they left behind would whitewash them—they had the decency to go out, and did not vote on the question. Let the boroughmongers imitate that conduct when the subject in which they were interested was discussed, and let them do it with a good grace—for whether they did it with a good grace or a bad grace their votes, he could tell them, would have no more effect than whistling to the winds. But to return to the case to which he had alluded, what was the defence of those Ministers, who intended to commit an offence, but who had not completed it—who had begun a bargain, but had not concluded it, because they were caught in the fact—who were found with the hand in the pocket, but had not drawn forth the pocket-handkerchief—what was the defence of these Ministers? Why, they escaped by the great argument, that bribery and corruption were as notorious as the sun at noon-day, and it was thought unjust to visit the crime on the heads of the unfortunate Ministers, who were detected in the commission of their offences. When we stood in this situation,—when the corruption of the House was admitted, —what folly to pretend to find fault with paragraphs like the present, on the ground of disparagement to the character of the House as it at present existed, that character being pretty well and pretty justly estimated on all hands! It was a matter of indifference to him, and to other lovers of the liberty of the Press, what decision the House might come to in the present case, because—and he asserted it with the utmost solemnity on constitutional grounds —the determination of the House would have no weight with the country at large. He himself had been condemned as a libeller of the House, and had suffered under its unjust sentence. He denied the competency of the tribunal appealed to in this, as in his own case: he denied that it was a matter of any great consequence what course the House took in this instance. If, instead of constituting itself accuser, judge, and avenger, in its own cause, the House took a more constitutional mode, and sent the case to a Jury, its character did not stand so high with the country as to make it likely that any great amount of damages would be obtained in a civil action, as compensation for the injury sustained by it in its reputation, in consequence of the publication of this article; and if the House took another course and proceeded criminally, he did not think it probable that a very vindictive sentence of imprisonment would console its wounded virtue. As to the motion of the hon. Baronet, coming to the vote, he supposed the House had not the folly and imprudence, in the present excited state of the public mind, to put itself at issue, not with the Press, but with the people on this subject. He felt that he should not be doing justice to his own feelings or to the public, if he did not express his sentiments, and the sentiments of those who were prepared to maintain the public cause, in this manner; and, acting upon that impression, he had been induced to make these observations.

Sir *C. Wetherell*, who spoke with considerable warmth, said, no man in the House who possessed the feelings of a gentleman,—no man who was disposed to do his duty in Parliament,—no man who was not utterly destitute, who had not been robbed of both these qualities,—could sit there and permit such a speech as the hon. Baronet had just presumed to deliver in that House to pass unnoticed, and without due animadversion. The hon. Baronet gave himself out as a man of popularity—a great theorist and practitioner of the doctrines of liberty and equality, yet since he (Sir C. Wetherell) had first sat in that House, a more dictatorial speech, more dictatorial in language—more dictatorial in manner—more dictatorial in principle—more dictatorial in matter—more dictatorial in the arrogance with which it was delivered, he had never heard. Yes; he asserted without fear of contradiction, that the dictatorship of the hon. Baronet, the member for Westminster, and man of the people,—the tyranny transferred from the hustings to the floor of that House, which the hon. Baronet had displayed,—he had never heard nor seen equalled. According to the hon. Baronet, the Members for the boroughs to be disfranchised must retire. He was one of them. Did the hon. Baronet dare to tell him,—did he presume to call on him—did he venture to insult the House and the country, by calling on him,—equally a gentleman,—equally independent in principle as the hon. Baronet himself,—to quit the House? Did the hon. Baronet dare to call upon him to go out of the House when the House was voting upon a question of privilege? [“*no, no!*”] He said “yes:” those words, or words, tantamount thereto, were used by the hon. Baronet in this his ultra dictatorship of language,—or, as the noble Paymaster of the Forces would term it, this plus-ultra dictatorship—this dictatorship surpassing and outraging all former dictatorship, of phrase. Could the hon. Baronet imagine—could it enter into the hon. Baronet's mind—to suppose that he would condescend to retire from any place where the hon. Baronet was a Member? Could the hon. Baronet suppose that he would leave those benches while the hon. Baronet had a seat upon them? He could not sufficiently admire the arrogance of any Member in calling upon him to walk out of those doors while the hon. Baronet was sitting upon the leather-covered cushions of those seats. Where was it, in what portion of the doctrines of liberalism, that the hon. Baronet found this single and individual superiority of opinion, entitling him to blackball every Member who did not happen to concur with him in his revolutionary principles of jacobin revolutions? The hon. Baronet had suffered for his sins; had he repented his criminality? Not in the least. On the contrary, he gloried in and avowed it, wishing to conceal his shame by involving in that criminality as numerous a class of persons as he could. Those who sat for boroughs were not, perhaps, all of them invested with the hon. Baronet's large territorial possessions,—they, did not represent Westminster, nor possess the various honours that at various times had been accumulated on the hon. Baronet. Assuredly the hon. Baronet had arrogated to himself considerable latitude of thought and speech. But, disclaiming the hon. Baronet's dictatorship, he considered himself on a footing of perfect equality with the hon. Baronet, and, in spite of the hon. Baronet's dictatorial assertions, he said that no man could too freely exercise his liberty of speech in that House. Let the hon. Baronet, on the hustings at Westminster cry down what doctrines he pleased, and stamp them with the seal of his indignation; but in the House of Commons all the Members were equal to the hon. Baronet, no man would submit to the degrading distinction which the hon. Baronet, the member for Westminster, the man of the people, attempted to establish, when he called upon certain Members of the House to walk out of it. He had been led to this, and compelled to say what he did, by the arrogance of the hon. Baronet. As long as any man maintained the independence of a Gentleman he would not succumb to the hon. Baronet; if he did so, he ought never again to enter that House. On the subject before the House, before he came to a conclusion, he must examine the premises of the hon. Baronet, and in doing so he was compelled to say, that the hon. Baronet's premises were every thing, and his conclusion nothing. For some time past he had read *The Times* newspaper,—indeed, it had long been his habit so to do, and, if for no other reason, for this very sufficient one, that the foreign articles in that paper had long been written with greater ability than similar articles in any other journal. As far as he was individually concerned, his name was not mentioned in the paragraph complained of. That paragraph, and others of a like nature, in the journal in question, did not apply to A, B, or C,—to this man or that,—who might care very little about the attack; but the passage applied to the whole mass of Members to be excluded by the Bill of the noble Paymaster of the Forces,—to the entire 168,—to 168 independent Members, who were to be turned out of the House if the Bill ever passed into a law. The hon. Gentleman asked whether any Member had been prevented from delivering his opinion by the attacks of the Press? But this was not the question: look at the paragraph as a libel—on principle. Consider that this House should exercise its privileges freely and without constraint,—that it should be unharmed in its functions and deliberations, unrestricted in speech: did libels like the present tend to promote those ends? But probably the hon. Baronet would say, "I can exercise my right of latitudinarian speech. I am not afraid of the censure of *The Times*, and other papers of a like kind: they will not assail me, because I harmonize with them; my cadences run in equal euphony with theirs; my language flows along with them *eodem flatu*." But had not those who differed from the hon. Baronet as good a right to express their opinions as he? Being one of that corrupt class, that large mass of persons which the hon. Baronet audaciously called upon to walk out of the House,—be it observed, that invitation applied to nearly one-third of the existing Members of the House of Commons, who were brought within the reach of this scandalous libel—being one of that class, he declared that he never concurred in any vote of the propriety of which he was more deeply and decidedly convinced, than he was with respect to that proposed by the hon. Baronet, the member for Oxford.

Sir *Charles Forbes* was not surprised that the hon. Baronet had brought this subject before the House; he only lamented that the hon. Member had not brought it on a little earlier, and gone back a little further in the pages of *The Times*. Had the hon. Gentleman gone back to *The Times* paper of the 2nd of this month, the very day after the introduction of the revolutionary measure of Reform into the House, he would have seen that those gentlemen press-men had stigmatized,—had dared to stigmatize as infamous,—the Representatives of the boroughs to be disfranchised by the noble Lord's Bill, and further told them, that if they dared to show their faces in the House, they would justly call down upon their heads popular indignation and condign punishment. Those were the words used by the editor in the paper of the 2nd of March; and, not to allow it to be misunderstood to whom he applied these terms, he went on to say—" Let the public cast their eyes over the list of rotten boroughs, as contained in Lord J. Russell's speech: their mock Representatives will not much longer insult the common sense of all mankind, by retaining seats in a British House of Commons, to pass laws which are to bind the men of England." These expressions were so infamous,—so contrary to the just liberty of the Press,—so licentious, that he came down to the House, intending to call its attention to the paragraph But desirous of having the opinions of more competent judges than himself, he consulted with several hon. Members of the highest authority with regard to the propriety of bringing the subject before the House, and he was disappointed to find that those hon. Members differed from him in opinion, and preferred treating the paragraph with silent contempt, on the ground that to notice it would only give it greater publicity, which probably the editor of *The Times*, or other person who wrote the paragraph desired to obtain. There might be much truth and force in that argument; but there was, as appeared to him, great danger in taking a course opposite to that which he wished to pursue; for he apprehended that, encouraged by silence and neglect, and finding no notice taken of their calumnies, this and other papers had proceeded from bad to worse. It had been observed to him, and he admitted there was considerable force in the remark, "What are these paragraphs but the sentiments of the individual writer in this paper? They are anonymous libels, and as little entitled to attention as anonymous letters would be." All those infamous paragraphs which were daily published were the attacks of cowardly assassins, who dared not to put their names to their sentiments—cowardly, licentious libellers, who, if they had the spirit, would be assassins. He trusted that the country had more good sense and sound judgment than to be led away for one moment by what these papers stated. He had, within the House and out of the House, heard all well-judging persons who had read the passages in question speak of them in the most decided manner as base and libellous, and in the highest terms of indignation. He had never heard any person defend those attacks, except the hon. Baronet, the member for Westminster; the cause was worthy of the defender, and the defender worthy of the cause. So far as regarded intimidation, he trusted that no hon. Member would allow himself to be prevented from doing his duty by unworthy menaces: they were assembled there to do their duty—they were upon their oaths to discharge it, and he trusted they would stand to their duty, and even hazard their lives to perform it. From the very first moment that this most extraordinary and revolutionary measure was brought forward, he had taken his stand against it, and he would oppose it from first to last. If it should ever be carried, he should never desire to enter a House of Commons so constituted as the reformed House of Commons; and he believed that in such an event, seats would not be so much sought after as formerly by those men who had been the ornaments of the House,—the greatest patriots the country had ever produced. Such men could not have found their way into Parliament, except by means such as were now denounced by the noble Lord with all that consistency with his own previous opinions for which the House and the country would give him proper credit.

Lord *Althorp* said, it was impossible to deny that the paragraph before the House was a breach of the privileges of the House, but that was, he thought, a very different question from the question as to the manner in which they ought to treat the publication. On a subject so interesting to the people as that of Reform, it was true, and less extraordinary than true, that violent and unjustifiable language had been used on both sides. When it was said there were no attacks made except against the opponents of the Reform Bill, was it forgotten that Ministers heard themselves called revolutionary? Did not Gentlemen see that Ministers were attacked for endeavouring to produce revolution in the country? On a question of this kind, it was true, and always had been the case, that the public press would use language which was not to be justified. But he would appeal to the House, whether it was prudent, in a case of this kind, for the House of Commons to put itself in opposition to the feelings of the people, at a moment when those feelings were so excited? Would it be prudent to take those strong measures usually adopted in the case of a breach of privilege? He did think, that if they allowed themselves to be carried away by their feelings on this occasion (and he well knew, that when a breach of privilege was brought forward, it was difficult to look at it temperately), they would, in all probability, do that which would not be creditable to themselves, or increase their estimation in the country. Under all the circumstances of the case, he felt some diffiulty in point of form; but what he wished to do, if consistent with the forms of the House, was, to move the previous question. He wished the House to come to no decision on the subject of breach of privilege; for if it did assent to such a resolution as that of the hon. Baronet, he was convinced the determination would be very injurious in its consequences. He therefore begged leave to conclude by moving the previous question.

Mr. *John Campbell* said, that he should support the amendment of the noble Lord. In times of great public excitement, they ought not to look too strictly at the expression of feeling and opinion. What was the case at the time of the Queen's trial, and pending the settlement of the Catholic question? On these occasions, there was not a Newspaper that did not contain paragraphs as bad as that which was now complained of. But what was the use of prosecuting on such occasions? Did not that course extend the publication, and make the evil worse? This Motion was brought forward by an hon. Member who said that he never read *The Times*, whilst other Gentlemen who admitted that they did read that paper, stated it to be their opinion, that it would not be for the public good to prosecute. It should be observed, that only one paragraph was brought forward specifically on this occasion. It was true, that other passages had been noticed by two hon. Members; but still, only this one paragraph, published a week ago, on Monday, March 14, was regularly before the House. It was singular, as the House sat every day last week, not even excepting Saturday, that no notice had been taken of this paragraph before. He was convinced that no Member had been deterred from doing his duty on account of this publication—no mischief whatever had been effected by it; and therefore he thought that there was no necessity for the interference of the House.

Mr. *C. W. Wynn* said, he regretted that it was impossible for him to give his vote in favour of the proposal of his noble friend. Whether it was desirable, under all circumstances, to bring this subject forward, was one question; but when it was brought forward, and a complaint was formally made to the House, whether they could then avoid doing their duty, and taking proper means for supporting their just rights and privileges, was a very different point. Considering the question then before Parliament, and the great and paramount interest which all classes of the public felt with respect to it, a much greater latitude, he admitted, ought to be allowed in the expression of opinions than would be conceded under ordinary circumstances. If the discussion in this paper had merely been as to how this House was constituted, and whether it ought not to be reformed, more or less, to such a discussion he would allow a great degree of latitude. But here the point at issue was neither more nor less than this—whether a great number of members of that House should be allowed the freedom of debate In support of this proposition, he begged that the second paragraph of the article complained of might be read.

The Clerk accordingly read the following paragraph:—"When, night after night, borough nominees rise to infest the proceedings of the House of Commons with arguments to justify their own intrusion into it, and their continuance there, thus impudently maintaining what the lawyers call an 'adverse possession' in spite of judgment against them, we really feel inclined to ask, why the rightful owners of the House should be longer insulted by the presence of such unwelcome inmates. It is beyond question a piece of the broadest and coolest effrontery in the world, for these hired lacquies of public delinquents to stand up as advocates of the disgraceful service they have embarked in."

Mr. *C. W. Wynn* continued—If this were not part and parcel of that despotic and arbitrary system of liberty which they had seen to prevail elsewhere; if it were not part and parcel of that intolerant system of toleration, which, under pretence of supporting liberty, denied to all others the right of differing in opinion from those who advocated particular doctrines, then was he grievously in error. But it had been said, that this state of things had been induced (and he believed the fact) by the long and patient forbearance of the House. It had been said, that in consequence of this forbearance, these publications had gone on increasing in venom and virulence. Whether they would still go on increasing in venom and virulence, he knew not. But this he knew, that if they did, and the present case being passed over, some individual were complained of, and called before the House, on account of a publication of a similar character, the author of the libel then brought before them might turn round and say, "Can you with fairness punish me, because I have written a libel, when you have passed over such a libel as this?" He, therefore, could not allow this question to be met in the way in which his noble friend had proposed. He well knew the inconvenience to which public men exposed themselves by taking this direct course. They exposed themselves to a penalty, which penalty they must pay; but he, for one, was not afraid of incurring it.

Sir *J. Graham* said, he had heard with regret but, not with surprise, the speech of his right hon. friend who had just addressed the House. He was aware, that throughout the whole of his right hon. friend's parliamentary life, he had shown himself a devoted friend to the privileges of that House. Nothing had ever discouraged him from bringing questions of privilege before the House. Still, however, he had flattered himself that his right hon. friend,—and he could add, up to a late period, his right hon. colleague—would, under the peculiar circumstances of the case, have given his support to the proposition of his noble friend. Therefore it was, that he had heard with particular regret the speech of his right hon. friend that night. He (Sir J. Graham) was sincerely ardent in his desire that the House should assent to the measure of Reform introduced by his Majesty's Ministers. He trusted that he should be allowed to explain himself. If they stood, as many Gentlemen had strongly declared, upon their privileges, he begged leave to remind them, that no freedom was more important, that no privilege was more essential, than the perfect liberty of debate. No man, he repeated, was more ardent than he was, in his wish that the measure introduced by Ministers should receive the sanction of that House; but, at the same time, he must observe, that however anxious his desire was upon that point, there was one feeling in his heart which predominated over every other—namely, that these discussions should be carried on in a manner consistent with the peace of this country, with the safety of its institutions, and without exciting any feelings out of doors, other than those which the question itself was calculated to excite. Impressed with this feeling, he was extremely sorry that the hon. member for Oxford should have conceived it to be his duty this evening, when the great measure of Reform stood for discussion,—when the eyes of the people were on that House,—when the public were anxiously awaiting their discussion,—he was, he said, extremely sorry that the hon. Member, at such a moment, should have thought it to be his paramount duty,—and he (Sir J. Graham) was sure that the hon. Member felt sincerely and conscientiously on the subject,—to arrest this most important discussion, by calling the attention of the House to a breach of privilege, intimately connected with the liberty of the Press. In his opinion, when great questions were agitated in that House, much latitude ought to be allowed to the Press, in discussing them on both sides. And he would ask, was the public expression of feeling and opinion, on this occasion, confined to one side only? He felt no soreness on that point, yet, week after week, Sunday after Sunday, some good-natured friend of his, who, he supposed had recently left the "warm precincts" of office, not without casting

"A longing, lingering look behind,"

assailed him with interrogatories similar to those which had been put to him by the hon. and learned member for Boroughbridge, and constantly repeated, "What will they say to this at Cockermouth?" "What will you (the member for Cumberland) say to your constituents on such and such a point?" He was constantly vilified, his motives were misrepresented, and his public conduct passed under a severe and unjust review: but did he complain? Far from it. Such strictures operated only as a stimulus to make him the more sedulously attend to the duties of his office. They only impelled him to discharge those duties frankly, freely, and fairly, in that manner which appeared to him most likely to prove beneficial to his country. Now, he must be permitted to observe, that if a course of severity were adopted with reference to one side, it would be wholly impossible, in common justice, not to visit, on the other side, those who stigmatized the measure introduced by Ministers as revolutionary, and who abused, in the foullest manner, those who supported it, as individuals who wished to overturn the Constitution. There was, he admitted, a strong feeling on this subject out of doors, but he maintained, that language equally powerful and pointed had been used within the walls of the House. If, however, these attacks were to be taken as questions of privilege on one side, they were equally so on the other; and those who would punish the Newspapers for what they may consider as libels, would be bound themselves to abstain from many of those observations which had been used but too freely in the course of the debates on Reform. It would be their bounden duty to suppress all those passages in the speeches of the Members which stigmatise the measure of Reform now proposed by the Ministers, under the sanction of the Sovereign, as tending to bring about a revolution. Why, it was but the other evening, in the course of the discussions, that a right hon. Baronet the late Secretary at War, (Sir H. Hardinge) declared, that the Reform Bill would, if carried, shake the Crown from the head of the Sovereign. That sentiment had been since repeated in the House, and echoed in the newspapers, and yet no one on that side of the House had thought of treating it as a breach of privilege, or an invasion of the right of free discussion. Better at once shut up the gallery of that House, and proclaim to the world, by a rigid enforcement of the Standing Orders, that no strangers shall be admitted, nor no account of the proceedings of that House go forth to the public. They might as well put an end at once to all free discussion as to attempt, by a proceeding like that recommended by the hon. Baronet (Inglis), to endeavour to prescribe the limits in which it was to be carried on. Of the danger of that course to the country and to the constitution he had not, however, the slightest doubt; and in so much dread did he hold the prospect of such an event, that although the passing of the Reform Bill was one of the objects dearest to his heart, and which he considered likely to prove most beneficial to his country, yet he would be content to forego Reform itself, rather than abandon that freedom of discussion and publicity of their proceedings which was so essential to the preservation of their Constitutional liberties. If he was called on to express an opinion on the subject of the article in *The Times*, he would say with his noble friend, that he could not defend it; but he called on them, at the same time, when they proposed to deal with this question in the manner recommended by the hon. Baronet, to consider that they were a deliberative assembly, and that they could not, as parties, exercise a sound discretion in the capacity of Judges. He agreed in the force of the observations of the hon. Baronet (the member for Westminster), with reference to the language of some of the petitions which had been presented, and which that House had not hesitated to receive and to allow to be printed. The Members of the Duke of Newcastle had been spoken of in these petitions? the boroughs of Lord Fitzwilliam had been alluded to; and could they, after having thus admitted themselves to be nominees, declare they were the real Representatives of the people? The right hon. Baronet concluded by observing, that he thought what had been already said and done on this subject would operate as a salutary warning on both sides; but if the hon. Baronet pressed his Motion to a division, he must oppose it for the sake of the peace of the country, and the safety of our institutions.

Sir *H. Hardinge* thought, that the right hon. Baronet who had just spoken, although he deprecated further discussion, was one of those who had done his utmost to prolong it. The right hon. Baronet had gone out of his way to select an illustration for his argument, and had chosen to mix up an expression of his in reference to the Reform Bill, with the subject then before the House, as if there was something in his observation in common with that libel which every Member of either side condemned. Was there anything in the expression of an opinion that the Reform Bill had a tendency to loosen the Crown on the head of the King, to be found in common with the language of the libel in the newspaper, that the right hon. Baronet should find it necessary to advert to it so pointedly? Was he to be debarred from the expression of his opinions in that House upon an important public measure because libels were published out of it? Did the right hon. Baronet mean to make it a parallel case, and to say, that the expressions which fell from him with respect to the Reform Bill were like the libel complained of, and that he had expressed his opinions on the Reform Bill as indiscreetly, and coarsely, and improperly as the libeller in the newspaper? Another hon. Baronet (Sir F. Burdett) had stigmatised him as a boroughmonger, who ought not to have a seat in that House. There were, however, some boroughmongers, even among those who were most closely connected with the Government. He saw sitting beside the right hon. Baronet (Sir J. Graham) at that moment, a member of the Government, who sat for a borough closer by far than that which he represented, and, indeed, one of the closest in the country. He begged, however, to remind the hon. Member, that he had represented the City of Durham in that House for more than nine years, and that the number of his constituents were at no period less than 1,200. He now, however, represented a place where the constituency was not so numerous, but he could conscientiously declare, that he was as free to speak his opinion and to give his vote on any subject at that moment as he was before. What right, then, had the hon. Baronet to stigmatise him as unfit to sit in that House from being a boroughmonger's nominee? If it was possible for him to forget the courtesey which was due to the hon. Baronet (the member for Westminster), he would say, that if the hon. Baronet presumed to insinuate he (Sir H. Hardinge) was not at liberty to express his opinions freely and fairly in that House, he flung back the imputation with scorn. He regretted the Debate which had now taken place. He regretted that the hon. member for Oxford had brought the question before them, and he was sorry for the occasion of it. He was not, however, to be deterred by clamour from the expression of his feelings with respect to the Reform Bill. He respected the opinions of the people, and their claims; but when the Constitution of the country was at issue, he was prepared to come before the people and resist the fulfilment of their wishes on the subject. The right hon. Gentleman concluded by declaring, that he was determined to do his duty, and to express his opinions fearlessly and conscientiously, in spite of the taunts of the hon. member for Westminster, or the clamours and attempts at intimidation of any party, either within that House or in the country.

Lord *John Russell* defended the expressions of his right hon. friend, and denied that his right hon. friend intended to draw any comparison between the expressions of the right hon. Gentleman (Sir H. Hardinge), and those of the writer in the newspaper. His right hon. friend merely wished to show the heat and strength of expression which had been occasionally drawn forth by the discussions in which they were engaged. In his opinion, the House should pause before they committed themselves to sanction the proceedings now recommended—for they who proclaimed the language of the Newspaper to be false and seditious—they who were attacked, were now about to inflict the punishment; and, with their passions inflamed by hearing the offensive passage read to them by the hon. Member, they refused even a day for consideration before they came to their vote of censure and condemnation. He confessed that he thought the course they were pursuing would have an effect the reverse of that which they anticipated. The people at large, who disapproved of that House constituting itself at once an accuser and Judge, were too much in the habit of taking a very different view of such proceedings, for they frequently pronounced those who suffered by them to be martyrs, and elevated them into heroes. He had at one time in vain pressed the House to pass over a vote of the same description as that which was then recommended. An hon. Member had written a pamphlet which gave great offence to that House. It was determined that he should be committed to Newgate; and what was the result? He was returned most triumphantly as member for Westminster at the next election. If he could suppose that, by supporting the Motion of the hon. member for Oxford, he could deter others from similar offences, then he should not hesitate; but as they could not hope for that, he thought that the preservation of freedom of discussion would be materially affected by consenting to the course as proposed.

Sir *F. Burdett* said, he was always disposed to adopt that course which he thought best fitted to secure the rights of the people. The right hon. Gentleman (Sir H. Hardinge) said, he had no constituents, and however much he might be disposed to regard the hon. Member, he must be permitted to say, without intending to give him any offence, that when the state of the representation, and the vital interests of the people, were under consideration, as he understood them now to be on the question of Reform, he was determined to do his duty, in spite of all the clamour and in defiance of all consequences. The hon. Member had placed himself in an awkward situation, by telling the House that he was one of those who had no constituents.

Sir *H. Hardinge*, in explanation, said, the hon. Baronet made a mistake, in persisting to assert that he had no constituents. The borough he represented had now, in the year 1831, a greater number of voters than it possessed at the time the franchise was first conferred on it, and many more than it had in the year 1688, when the Representative system was settled at the Revolution: and he might add, that for the last fifty years, the number had gone on increasing every year.

Sir *F. Burdett* said, that however distinguished the hon. Gentleman might be as a Member of that House, and however honestly and efficiently he might fulfil the duties of office, still he wanted the essential quality of a Representative of the people—a large body of constituents. With respect to the Reform Bill shaking the Crown from the head of the King, he must say, that, in his opinion, it would fix it more firmly on his brow without that diminution of its lustre which was the consequence of its participating in the abuses of those who had properties in boroughs.

Sir *R. Inglis,* in reply, said, he might have concurred in the proposal of the noble Lord if there had been a single individual found in that House to defend the language of the passages he had brought under its attention. But as that was not the case, he could not abandon his Motion, for, if he did so, he thought he should be abandoning his duty. The House had a jurisdiction on the question of its own privileges which it was bound to support; and unless it was prepared to renounce the rights it possessed on such occasions, it must, when a subject of this kind was brought before it, be prepared to do its duty. It might be a question whether he had exercised a proper discretion in bringing the matter before the House. In his own opinion he believed he had done his duty, and he therefore persisted in his original Motion, adding to it, "that certain passages in *The Times* Newspaper of the 1st, 2nd, 7th, 8th, and 14th of March are false and scandalous libels, and that they be handed over to the Attorney General with instructions to prosecute the writer."

Mr. *Hunt,* amidst loud cries of "Question," persisted in addressing the House, notwithstanding the noise by which he was assailed. He said, their patience must be great to overcome his, for he was determined to speak unless the Speaker told him he was not in order. The hon. Baronet who brought forward the Motion wished the Attorney General to prosecute; but were they sure, although they might pronounce the articles to be libellous, and the Judges agreed with them, that twelve jurymen could be found to agree with them? Notwithstanding the coarseness of the language used by the writer in *The Times,* he asserted, that every word of the article was true. The question was, whether they would agree to a Resolution declaring assertions false which every man in that House knew to be true? [*A Member intimated to Mr. Hunt that he would only do The Times mischief.*] He repeated what he had said; and he thought that House, in the last act of its life, would be true to the character it had maintained through its career, if it came to a vote pronouncing that false which every man in the kingdom knew to be true.

Sir *R. Peel* said, that as the hon. Baronet (Sir R. Inglis) had in his Motion referred to papers which he had not read, these Papers should be also read and laid on the Table before the House came to a decision on their contents.

Sir *R. Inglis* said, that they contained passages of the same tendency as that already read; and his Motion now was, that they be delivered to the Attorney General, to consider the nature of their contents, and to prosecute, if he found that a prosecution could be supported.

Mr. *O'Connell* said, if he understood the hon. Baronet, his Resolution was first to call on the House to pronounce the article in question a libel, and then direct the Attorney General to prosecute the proprietors of the paper for the libel. But he would ask, if this was anything like justice, to prejudge a question in this manner, and then order it to be tried, after having been so prejudged? He was ready to admit, that some parts of the article could not be justified, but it was substantially true. The writer in the paper says there are nominees for boroughs, and could any one deny that such was the fact? Could the hon. and learned member for Boroughbridge deny this? He could not. On the contrary, he had defended the practice; and could there be a grosser libel on that House, than to admit a practice by which part of the Members were the nominees of Peers? They might attempt by a side-wind to deny the fact that they were nominated by Peers, but, nevertheless, there could be no doubt of the fact, and he, therefore, thought, that as judges in their own case, it would be more decent for them to retire. It had been laid down, by one of the highest authorities in the law, that it was contrary to all law to constitute any man a judge in his own cause. In his opinion, it would be much more decent not to go to a vote on such a question. The House was following the practice of Rhadamanthus—they pronounced an accused man guilty, and then sent him to be tried.

Sir *R. Peel* said, he regarded the present proceeding as purely preliminary, and it should be marked by a spirit of regularity as well as justice. Reference had been made to other papers which were not before the House; and he confessed he could not make up his mind on the question with respect to them, for he had not read them until they were placed in a connected series before him. He had heard the first, but the House was about to commit itself on several others, of which it was presumed they knew nothing. He suggested that these papers be also read.

Sir *R. Inglis* said, they were all of the same character and tendency, and he wished to save the time of the House by abstaining from reading them.

The *Attorney General* expressed his surprise that the hon. Baronet (Sir R. Inglis) complained now, for the first time, of language contained in papers, not one of which was less than a week old, and found nothing offensive in any of the preceding or succeeding days' papers; and he was the more surprised, because the hon. Baronet had spoken to him on the subject, and even put the papers into his hand, without intimating his intention to proceed in that manner. He would not say he had expressed an opinion that it was or was not a libel; but coarse he had admitted it to be, although false he really could not call it. He thought, and he said, that it was highly desirable that no proceedings should be taken on it with respect to any supposed breach of privilege; and so far from believing that language of that kind would induce any Member to abstain from opposing Reform, he thought it would have a directly opposite tendency, inasmuch as it induced men, from a sense of pride and of honour, to persist in supporting that system which had subjected them to such attacks from their connection with it. He thought, on the contrary, that attacks in language such as that of which the hon. Baronet complained, were calculated to defeat the carrying of the measure of Reform, and to confirm the opposition of those Members who, although not accountable to large bodies of constituents, were, he believed, acting on a principle of honour, although he must say, that he thought their opinions were liable to be biassed by their situation. The question could not be carried unless all the passages referred to were read, and he would ask, however, whether it would be proper to occupy the time of the House in reading long extracts from newspapers, and whether it would not be better to abandon the question altogether? To refer to all the series of the papers on the subject, and read extracts to the House, he should consider extremely inconvenient, and he would therefore oppose such a course. He must express his regret that a question of this kind had been brought forward on the eve of the great Debate, and under circumstances which bore the appearance of a disposition to delay the decision on the most important topic which ever came under their consideration.

Sir *C. Wetherell* said, whatever course might be adopted, he wished the House to remember, that the motion was precisely like the precedent of the case of Mr. Fox and the *Morning Advertiser*, which had already been alluded to.

Sir *R. Peel* disowned, for himself, an intention to obstruct the Debate which was expected, and observed, that he had not even heard of an intention to make such a Motion until he entered that House, and heard that it was commenced. He trusted this explanation would clear that side of the House from the prejudice which might be raised against them by the learned Gentleman's observations.

Mr. *Slaney* recommended the House to postpone the discussion to another time. He could not help saying, that after it had been allowed to sleep for ten days, to bring it forward on the night of a Debate on which the eyes of the whole nation were fixed, was very like a plan for obstructing the measure.

Sir *R. Inglis* thought the learned Gentleman (the Attorney General) should not have referred to the conversation he held with him on the subject of these papers, unless he had also repeated the nature of that conversation. He (Sir R. Inglis) would not follow his example by detailing it. All he would say was, that he had seen some of the papers that day for the first time, and he was ready now to read the passages to which he alluded, if the House thought proper.

The previous question was put and carried without a division.

BUSINESS OF THE DAY.] Sir *George Clerk* rose to present a Petition, very respectably signed, against the Bill for Legislative Reform—[*cries of "Order, order."*] The hon. Member said, he was willing to do his duty to the petitioners, if the House would allow him; if not, he must attempt it on another occasion.

Sir *Henry Hardinge* observed, that as the measure of Reform consisted of three Bills—one Bill for England, another for Ireland, and a third for Scotland, it would be very desirable, since they were all three parts of the same measure, that some idea should be given to the House as to the particular details of each measure, before they came to a division on the second reading of the Reform Bill for England.

Mr. *Stanley* intimated, that the Bill for Ireland was ready, and might be brought in at any time that was deemed to be convenient; but as it was agreed amongst his colleagues, whenever that Bill was brought forward, that it would be desirable that he should enter somewhat more extensively, and more in detail, into the subjects of the Bill, than had been hitherto judged advisable, it was also concluded, whilst there was so much anxiety abroad on the subject of the Reform Bill before the House, that there should be no fresh topic of excitement introduced upon another branch of the Reform measure, and he had, therefore, abstained from bringing forward the Bill at present.

Sir *Henry Hardinge* expressed it as his opinion, that the House would be better prepared to come to a decision on this Bill by being informed what were the principal enactments of the Bill for Ireland.

Lord *J. Russell* said, he had forty or fifty Petitions to present in favour of the Bill; and other friends of his had each a number of similar petitions to present. Under such circumstances, he could see no reason why the House, acting on an understood Order for its convenience, after choosing to proceed only to further business after such an hour as had now long since elapsed, should violate that rule solely to let in the anti-Reform Petition of the hon. member for Edinburghshire, whilst so many persons had been precluded from an opportunity of presenting those in favour of Reform. He trusted, therefore, there would be no objection made by the hon. Member to the Order of the Day being read.—Agreed to.

THE REFORM BILL—SECOND READING.] Lord John Russell moved the Order of the Day for the second reading of the Reform Bill.—On the Order being read, Lord John Russell moved, that the Bill be now read a Second time.

Sir *R. Vyvyan*.—Before I make any observations upon the question which bears particularly upon the county I represent, I beg permission to make one or two remarks which may be supposed to relate more particularly to what concerns myself; because it may be supposed that, in consequence of my connexion with the county of Cornwall, I may feel affected by this measure to an extent which may, perhaps, exceed its supposed influence upon other hon. Members. I venture to do this, Sir, incurring all the risks of misconception, and all imputations of egotism, to which, in pursuing such a course, I may by possibility be exposed. I must, then, in the outset, declare, that I have no interest—direct, indirect, or contingent—in any borough in Cornwall, or in any other part of the country. Indeed, so far from serving any interest of mine in opposing the measure, there are certain parts of it which, if passed in their present shape, will rather be a benefit to me than otherwise; for instance, if that division of counties, which it proposes in some cases were to take place, it would be an advantage to me, standing as the Representative for Cornwall; for it would be much more convenient, and less expensive, for a man to canvass that part of a county in which his own property is situated than to canvass the county at large. Besides, it is obvious that in cases of small boroughs, where the Corporation, a very small body, exercises the chief power in the return of a Member, it is much more difficult for a person of property, residing in their vicinity, to obtain an influence amongst them than a stranger. But this Bill, by extending the franchise to householders of a certain rate, would necessarily extend the influence of persons having property in the neighbourhood of such boroughs. So far, then, as personal interest, I have none to support by opposing the Bill, which in some points would be rather an advantage to me on personal grounds. I also know, that in the course I am about to take on this occasion, I am opposed to the wishes of my constituents. And in this respect I believe I am in the situation of very many hon. Members who object to the Bill, for it cannot be denied, that the speech of the noble Lord (Lord John Russell), which has circulated in every part of the kingdom, has produced a very strong excitement in its support, and in this respect has very fully answered the anticipations of his Majesty's Ministers. Notwithstanding, however, that the rejection of the measure would be no benefit to me, and with the certainty that in opposing it I shall displease my constituents, yet I think the measure one so full of danger to the institutions of the kingdom, that before God and my country I feel bound in conscience to oppose it. Since the year 1793, when Mr. Grey, now the Prime Minister of this country, proposed his celebrated plan of Reform,—involving a Reform of this House,—there never has been an occasion in which Reform of any kind could be more difficult or dangerous; and, what is more, infinitely more important; there never has been a concurrence of circumstances, from that hour to the present, which bore so close a resemblance to the position in which the country was placed in 1793, as the delicate and dangerous situation in which England now stands. At the present moment, there are difficulties in the way of Reform, far more imposing, in my opinion, than any difficulties that have at any previous period presented themselves. I would beg of the House to recollect the spread of knowledge which has taken place since that time. Let the House remember how, since that time, the power of the Press has been extended, and how readily, and boldly, and indiscriminately every man would be stigmatised in these days as an aristocrat who ventured to utter a word in any public place in support or advocacy of the institutions of the country. Hence, then, I will affirm, paradoxical as it may appear, that to carry the question of Reform would be a greater difficulty, and surely to accomplish it without hazard and with advantage, an achievement of infinitely greater moment, than it ever could have been at any period since the supposed abuses in the Representation of the people became an object of complaint. What, Sir, are the grounds upon which this measure is urged upon our acceptance? Have we become so embroiled with foreign countries, as that Englishmen fear to meet their enemies upon terms which, in times past, assured them of conquest? Not but that I am as willing as any man, for I feel it deeply, to acknowledge that the noble Lord at the head of his Majesty's Government has now a more arduous task to perform than has commonly fallen to the lot of a British Minister—that Ireland, though lulled, is in a state both dangerous and deceptious; that at no one period of its history were its worst agitations more to be dreaded than its present repose. Hence, then, I look with the deepest apprehension to what may hereafter occur. Hence, then, I affirm, without the slightest fear of successful contradiction, that Ministers have chosen a most unfortunate time for a measure of this nature. Yes! it may be held that it is in one sense unfortunate, but I hold it to be unfortunate in every point of view. Were the measure just in the abstract, which I affirm it is not, at least to the extent to which the noble Lord proposes to carry it—were it necessary, which under no circumstances I am disposed to acknowledge—I should still say, that the time chosen for bringing it forward had been most unfortunately selected. Had this measure not been brought forward under the authority of a Minister of the Crown, I should certainly have contented myself with giving a silent vote. During the six years I have had the honour of a seat here, I have abstained from voting upon it. I mean, whenever the question of Reform was brought forward by the proposer of the present Bill. The only exception to that course of conduct on my part, was when the hon. member for Waterford made his proposition last year on the subject of the Ballot. It must, therefore be obvious to hon. Members, that I might with perfect consistency give my support to the present measure. But at any period I must take leave to say, that that support could never be conscientiously given to such a plan as this, and least of all could it be given at a period in my opinion, most unsuited to alterations of any description. The Bill now submitted for a second reading is not only revolutionary, but abounding in every element of public discord. It goes to the abandonment of our colonial system, to the abatement of the dignity of the Crown, to the annihilation of the privileges of the Peerage, to the abrogation of the High Council of the Realm, and to the destruction of all that constituted our happiness, and rendered us an example to the other countries of the world. But come what may—confiscation, proscription, all the frightful calamities of popular violence, I will oppose it now, and to the last. I will oppose its principle; but even if I were to confine my opposition to its details, I should still find myself in the situation of one who opposed it on principle; since it is now understood from the noble Lord that a resistance to the one will be considered as equivalent to an opposition offered to the other. Am I, therefore, to be called one of those who at all times, and under all circumstances, is disposed to object to the abstract principle of Reform? No such thing. I never supported the doctrine that Reform was to be invariably resisted. I never supposed the Constitution so perfect as that it should work well at all times. I have ever been, on the contrary, free to admit, that now and then material modifications might be advantageously proposed. It is chiefly on the question of time and extent that I take my stand. It is present expediency, as well as abstract right, that throws a difficulty in the way of the changes proposed. It is the position of our affairs at home, and the state of our policy abroad, that I think might well swallow up minor objections. If experience is to be admitted as throwing any light upon a question of this nature, I will ask the supporters of this dangerous innovation, to show a single instance in which the general remodelling of a political constitution, for the purpose of increasing the democratic influence, has been effected without revolution—has been effected without throwing the supreme sovereignty of the State into the hands of an absolute King, or a military despot, to the utter annihilation of all that before went to constitute a legislative body? I might be asked, am I, therefore, opposed to all Reform? I might be taunted with the supposed opinion of the King. The King, and the King's name, which has been so often improperly used for the purposes of excitement during this Debate, might now be turned against me; and I might be told that, we had no choice between Reform and Revolution. Why, Sir, this Bill is revolution. Take care that the time is not at hand when we may be brought to the bar of some future legislative body as traitors, for defending our country in the present emergency. I confess, when I contemplate the dangers towards which this measure is hurrying us forward, I cannot but tremble at the awful responsibility which the King's Government have assumed, in the excitement which they have been instrumental in creating from one end of the country to the other. Has my noble friend opposite, the Secretary for the Foreign Department, risen up to tell us, that there is any negotiation pending abroad, or any condition of our relations with foreign Powers, which has rendered this a measure of necessity? I am aware that there is not one of his noble or right hon. colleagues who has not risen to inform us of that which we knew to be a grievous truth, namely, that the present is a most eventful crisis. But how, then, do they justify themselves for having raised, as they indisputably have done, so strong a feeling as that which at the present moment animates the whole public of England? Let me not be told that the feeling which has arisen proceeds from this or that declaration of the Duke of Wellington in another place. Let me not be told either that we are to look for its cause or origin in the recent French Revolution. The Birmingham Union existed six months before either of those events. Petitions praying for Reform were presented to that House throughout the whole of last year. A vague and indefinite desire of change had long been engendered among the people; and that desire had been inflamed by the denial on the part of the last Parliament of the existence of distress in the country. The late House of Commons denied the distresses of the people, and the assembly which I have now the honour to address, elected under the influence of the Duke of Wellington's Government, is called upon to remodel the Constitution of England, and that at a moment so immediately after the remarkable occurrences in Paris and at Brussells. But I now have the satisfaction of thinking, that the people of England begin to understand those events, though we are called on to prepare for the consequences that might ensue on the rejection of such a measure as that which has been proposed to us by his Majesty's Ministers. But let us for a moment turn our attention to other considerations, and first of all to the character and conduct of that Ministry from which we derive this piece of legislation. They came into power upon giving three distinct pledges,—first, Peace, when the very mention of peace was deeply dangerous to the honour and independence of this country; secondly, Retrenchment, when they ought to have known that retrenchment was perfectly and utterly impossible;—thirdly, Reform. But then not one word of the distresses of the people; not a syllable with regard to our monetary system; or the real causes of the disturbances which then prevailed throughout the country; not a single proposition to alleviate the sufferings of the people, or to administer to their wants. If you refer to the people of England, and ask them what advantage they gain by it; if you meet men in their shops, in the street, in public or in private, not one amongst them can explain in what respect his situation will be improved by this so called Reform. France, in similar circumstances, looked to make a change for the better, and the next hope which engaged her attention was by making another change to avoid being worse. So it will be with us. Sir, it is not Reform that the people so much demand, as a change in that which more immediately and personally affects them. They cry out for an alteration in the tithe system. There is, I believe, at the present moment, greater discontent excited with respect to tithes, than has, perhaps, ever been called into activity on any similar subject. The contagion upon that point has spread from Ireland to England. Let us, above all things, not overlook the manner in which the Press of this country treats the question;—in which it proceeds as if the present constitution of Parliament formed an outwork, which, in order to be broken down, requires but one united and vigorous assault. Will the measure of Reform afford contentment or happiness to the lower orders? Will it give them more employment or better wages? If the noble Lord (Lord J. Russell) thinks so, he will not only find himself wofully mistaken, but in twelve months after the Bill shall pass, he will find the general condition of the people to be much worse than at present. This question of Reform, as every one knows, is much talked of outside of as well as within the House, and I have heard in different quarters, that one of the first results of the Reform Bill, when carried, will be, to cause an alteration in the tithes. Previous to the agitation of the Reform question, the great outcry which prevailed in Ireland against tithes had found a willing echo in the people of this country. The tithes they said out of that House was the first out-work to be attacked and no doubt in the world they would be so, if this Reform Bill was ever passed into a law. I can see no advantage either to the public, the candidates, or the voters themselves, from the grant of a franchise upon the rental of a house of 10*l.* a-year. Such voters will still continue to be a source of corruption, and such a low value of houses will, in reference to elections, be highly injurious to the general welfare. Once let us grant this Reform, and who can say that the Ballot will not immediately follow it? The tithes of course must be expected to go; and even the noble Lord, in introducing this measure, admitted that the shortening the duration of Parliaments was a matter for future consideration. If tithes were attacked—as no doubt they would be—upon what principle could other property rely for security and support? Attack the tithes and the landed property of the Church, and what will remain but an attack upon the funds and upon the rent of the land-holders? These are some of the circumstances which influence my vote, and by and by I will assign some further reasons to justify me in the Motion with which it is my intention to conclude. Can we imagine that, after the present Parliament has declared itself corrupt and abominable—after it has been guilty of enormities which the hon. Baronet, the member for Westminster, has said that nothing could exceed—can we imagine that the new, the reformed Parliament, will take up what their wicked predecessors had begun or continued? How, then, I will ask, can any man support this measure who wishes to preserve the institutions of the country, and who sees that tithes, rent, funds—all must be destroyed, by the system of which it forms the first step? Can any man support it who sees this, and who also sees that, with other property, all the accumulations of the Savings' Banks, amounting to 20,000,000*l.* of the poor man's hoardings, must likewise be sacrificed in the general wreck—for there is as much danger to these small sums invested in the funds, as to the larger ones belonging to a different class of individuals. There is a common danger for the rich as for the poor. Of course, if one description of property goes, all will go; small sums are held by the same title as the thousands and the millions. Such a result of the measure is plainly indicated by the propagators of those doctrines in compliance with which the measure is avowedly brought forward. They describe the present Parliament as a set of men incapable of legislating for the interests of the people, and ignorant of the principles of commerce and of government. And who are the persons expected to come in their places after the passing of the measure, and who have been pointed out for the choice of the people by the "*Aide toi Societè?*" Yes, we can guess from what class they were to come, for we already see many of those individuals pointed out. One is qualified by having written a pamphlet upon political economy—one by being the author of a leading article in a newspaper—one for having written a history of India which contains the doctrine that land was anciently the property of the people, and that rent was a tax paid to the Kings. Let the House consider the effect of such principles if instilled into the minds of the people by their Representatives in Parliament, and what the state of the country will then be, and what will be the security for all property. In order to put the House in possession of Mr. Mill's sentiments on the subject of rent and tithes, I will read an extract from this work, observing, however, incidentally, that we shall not only have to meet him on that ground, but also upon the various questions of our East-Indian policy. The extract to which I propose to call the attention of the House is as follows:—"The Legislature may, without any straining of language, be said to possess that power, which I have now spoken of only as a fiction." That fancied power was, by an act of its own, all other things remaining the same, to double that portion of the land which was strictly and properly rent; in which case Mr. Mill asserted that there would be no reason, in point of justice, why the Legislature should not, and great reason in point of expediency why it should, avail itself of this its own power, in behalf of the State; should devote as much as might be requisite of this new fund to defray the expenses of the Government, and except the subjects from any burthen on that account. Mr. Mill then went on to say—"By all those measures which increase the amount of population and the demand for food, the Legislature does as certainly increase the nett produce of the land, as if it had the power of doing so by a miraculous act. That it does so by a gradual progress in the real, and would do so by an immediate operation in the imaginary case, makes no difference with regard to the result. The original rent, which belonged to the owner, upon which he regulated his purchase, if he did purchase, and on which alone, if he had a family to provide for, his arrangements in their favour were to be framed, is easily distinguishable from any addition capable of being made to the nett produce of land, whether it be made by a slow or a sudden process. If an addition made by the sudden process might, without injustice to the owner, be appropriated to the purposes of the State, no reason can be assigned why an addition by the slow process might not be appropriated." These were Mr. Mill's sentiments upon the subject of rent; he is one of the class who in future are to be called upon to regulate our affairs, and I will ask any hon. Member if, after land has been so treated, the funded property can last a single hour? Rent is sure to be attacked in a reformed Parliament, because we are told by such men as Mr. Mill, whose book I have quoted, that it is within the power of Parliament; and that class of men are the class of whom the reformed Parliament will be composed. We have been told also by the hon. member for Middlesex, that the army, which is as nothing compared to the preparations of foreign Powers, with whom we may soon be called upon to enter the field, and that our fleets, which are but just sufficient to perform the peace duties of the country, all ought to be reduced, and their cost applied to the emergencies of the country. Why, then, rent must be so applied also; and every other description of property which can be made available. I do not mean to impute any bad intentions to the hon. Member, but he never alludes to the fundlords when he attacks the landlords. But I wish to point out what that portion of the hon. Member's constituents who have an interest in the Savings' Banks must expect, if his doctrines upon rent and tithes came to be acted upon by a reformed Parliament. We have before us examples pregnant with instruction upon this subject. Let the hon. member look to Portugal. Let him look to Spain. Let him look to Ferdinand not recognizing for so long the bonds of the Cortes, and then only doing it in the shabbiest way. Let him look to the instance of the French Revolution. There we have written, in letters of blood, all that can happen in a State where those in command, from intimidation, surrender the power they have in their hands, and cease to regard themselves as possessors of the sovereign authority, and look beyond themselves for assistance. There we shall see how, through every step of degradation, a constitutional body becomes a national convention—a constituent assembly—call them what you will, till anarchy rules the land. It may be asked, can I point out any period in the history of France, before the great Revolution to which I allude, which bears a similarity to our own condition at present? I think I can. That period was 1788, when the great discussions arose between the King and his Parliament, and the people refused to pay his taxes. We are arriving very fast at that same position. In that year the King and his Parliament having quarrelled, the States General were summoned, Necker being at the head of affairs. In the first instance, the Notables devised an alteration in the constitution of the States General, which was, in fact, a French Parliamentary Reform, and the King was advised by Necker to give a double vote to the *Tiers Etat.* What was the consequence? Men were in that body who were never before in the possession of power, who had to pay the taxes whilst the nobility paid nothing. Thank God we are not in that position, for the rich, in almost every instance, contribute to the burthens of the State in equal proportion. These were the men to whom this new power was given, and was it to be expected they would allow matters to remain as they were? Having the double vote, the first thing they did was, to get the other Houses to join them, so as to form one mass. The nobles and the priests resisted, but in vain. The next thing they did was, without consulting the King, to change their name, and call themselves the National Convention. Then came the points of intimidation to which I would particularly call the attention of Ministers, as they appear to me most peculiarly applicable to the present case. The uncertainty, the instability of all affairs in France was urged; massacres were excited by the most infamous means. Thousands of pamphlets were printed and published, all urging one point; the Press was bribed; persons even were paid in distant villages to read the most revolting and outrageous articles to those who could not read themselves. Every means was resorted to, to excite and inflame the minds of the peasantry, and make them believe that all superior to them were diabolical tyrants. Thus things went on till that fatal day, the 4th of August, 1789, when, after one great debate—one great vote given under the influence of one overwhelming panic, the National Convention at once conceded tithes, manorial rights, the rights of chase, and the Game-laws (for real evils and imaginary ones generally go hand in hand), the rights of fishery, and every thing that before constituted privilege. Tithes were at last abolished, but it was not till the clergy for three days had been threatened with massacre. These things being conceded, bills were brought in, and the blessed Reform was carried, and the King, the saviour of his people, went with the National Convention to sing a "*Te Deum*" for this happy result. Is this nothing? Is this no lesson to some individuals now pressing matters in the manner they are. Let them see this popular king, this idol king, on the 4th of August—nay, all through the month of August, 1789, within three months taken in his carriage to Paris, with the heads of two gendarmes, (who had nobly died defending his person from the attack of an infuriated rabble) carried on pikes one on either side of him. This was a popular king, the king of the people in the month of August! Trust to passing popularity and there is no safety for the State; for the very persons who hate you will praise you at the moment you do that which is to accomplish your own ruin. Those who look to the property of others for gain, who have lost all character and honesty, will praise you in such moments, and is that a popularity to be courted? I must repeat what I have already said, that I defy any man to prove an instance in which a constitution has been forced from below, that has had any other result than revolution. Take our own Revolution of 1688, for example. It cannot be doubted, that Judge Jeffries had complely terrified the land; and, unless William had landed with an army at Torbay, we should never have had the family of Brunswick upon the throne. That was a revolution effected by a power called in by the aristocracy, and is abused by those who want one now. That was a revolution of the aristocracy; that which they want to bring about is a revolution of the democracy. In all new assemblies there are many good men,—many real patriots, who are easily gulled and led away, and of course there are many profligate politicians. In the French National Convention, the good were at first the majority, and the bad the minority; and so it happens in almost all assemblies, that in the first instance the bad are in the minority, but at last they get to be the majority, because they have a spirit of movement, of determination, which makes them more resolute in the prosecution of their objects. If we were so placed (which I am not willing to take for granted), that we must make some mighty change, is this the course great nations have pursued in similar crises. Rome, in days of peril, had a Dictator, and God grant that the time may never come when the world, weary of the tyranny of many, may sigh for one. In Venice, where the most complete system of aristocratic tyranny ever invented was in full play, where the aristocracy were at once Peers and Commoners, what did they do to give stability to their government? Did they try to enlarge the basis of the executive government, and call a certain number of persons from the senate? No—they first created the Council of Ten, and afterwards the Inquisition of State. Although they knew perfectly well when they appointed both those terrible councils, the last, the most remarkable instance of absolute authority given to invisible men ever known; although, I say, they knew, in appointing them, that they themselves were subject to them, we find that the State of Venice was saved, and that in all cases of dictatorship, till the last, Rome stood. Whilst upon this question, I would wish to refer to something that fell from the noble and learned Lord Advocate, whose speech, clever as it undoubtedly was, offers ample room for animadversion. The noble and learned Lord told us, that we had increased in wealth, and should therefore increase in freedom; and quoted to us the cases of the Italian republics, and the history of our own country after the civil wars. But has the learned Lord reflected either upon the history of Greece or of Rome? Has he seen that liberty has there followed wealth? Has he looked to the history of Persia? Did he find that freedom followed wealth there, or did a brave and hardy people, becoming enervated with wealth, fall under a tyrannical government? What did he find to be the case in Athens and Sparta?—What in Rome? Does he recollect the eloquent thought of a noble poet, now no more, perhaps one of the greatest this country ever produced—Lord Byron, who with the ruins of the Palatine Hill before him, of the Capitol on his right hand, and the Coliseum on his left, said,

> "There is the moral of all human tales;
> 'Tis but the same rehearsal of the past,
> First freedom, and then glory—when that fails;
> Wealth, vice, corruption, barbarism at last;
> And history, with all her volumes vast,
> Hath but one page."

It is my intention to move that this Bill be read a second time this day six months; but, before doing so, I will shortly explain my reasons for that step. The Bill before us appears to me radically bad in all its details, and so impossible to be moulded into any form, supposing that, which I do not believe to be the case, the present Government, or any other in a similar position, would consent to modify such a Bill; but so impossible is it that it can be substantially altered in Committee, that I consider it of no use to let it go into one. I think I could point out such a list of erroneous principles, as forming the very basis of the old Bill, that to amend it at all, a new bill must be brought into the House. This measure is so radically bad, that even if Ministers were beaten in detail upon it, it could not be made what I wish it to be. I think their plan gives an undue influence to towns. As they were determined to remodel the Constitution, and frame a new legislative body, they might have taken if they pleased, the whole of the population, or taxation of the country, and divided it into departmental divisions, as in France; or they might have kept the same system of boroughs, without attempting to introduce one universal qualification. They have adopted neither of these two courses, but have done away with all the advantages which arise from the variety of our elective franchise. They have done away with that system by which all classes, all professions, all interests, were represented in this House. I do not enter into the question of abstract right, but it is certain that the House of Commons, as it is now constituted, represents all the interests of the empire, which it certainly will not under the Bill of the noble Lord. When we look round and see all the great interests of this country which must come under discussion here—the judicial, military, and naval questions that must be adjusted here—are there not advantages in bringing persons into this House fully acquainted with their details? Have we not in the House now always persons representing the most remote colonial interest? If you wish to have a Representation of the United Kingdom merely, there may be some appearance of consistency in your proceedings; but if you wish to have a virtual Representation of a great colonial empire, containing 120,000,000 of inhabitants, you are not going the way to obtain it, but rather to obtain a tyrannical assembly to rule over it. How, Sir, under this Bill, can any one representing a colonial interest, except by bribery, get into this House? How is the Bank of England, or any other great interest, to be represented here, under that Bill, unless bribery be resorted to? With regard to property, I see not what right that gives to interfere in the administration of the government of the country. The hon. member for Preston says, consistently enough, that every man who is drawn by the ballot for the militia has a right to vote, and if you once admit the principle of a right, be it upon what it may, you will find that universal suffrage follows. But to come to another point. If the supreme government thinks it right to delegate to certain interests in this country the trust of returning to this House Members who may be supposed indirectly to represent all the great interests of the State and of the Colonies, we can easily understand why there should be this great variety of franchise applicable to all possible cases. Now, the Bill of the noble Lord goes at once to destroy all the advantages we had from that variety in the franchise; and this is my great fundamental objection to the principle of the Bill, and my reason for believing that nothing we could do to it in the Committee could make it a palatable or useful measure to the empire. With regard to the property which is made the foundation of the franchise, does the possession of a freehold of 10*l.* qualify a person to choose a proper Statesman to make the laws which shall govern the land? A man with a 10*l.* freehold, rather than a man with one of 9*l.* 19*s.* 6*d.*? The property, then, is taken as a guarantee; yet we hear of population. The wisdom of our ancestors, in framing this Constitution, now so much derided, thought it right to scatter the franchise through the different boroughs of the country, and did it in every possible variety of form, so that every description of persons might find the means of election. That this somehow obtained the guarantee so much desired, is clear, for the system has gone on working marvellously through many ages, although against all the theories of all the books written upon it. I must say, however, knowing what the feeling of the country is, and seeing the great interests which have sprung up in large towns, celebrated for their manufactures, celebrated for their population, but which were not thought of in 1688, or before that, at the last period of granting original franchises, I never was of opinion that such large towns should be without Representatives; but in advocating their interests I wish not to destroy those of others. It is one thing to destroy boroughs, and another to give the franchise to great towns—one thing to do away with all franchise in a place with less than 2,000 inhabitants, and half the franchise where there are only 4,000 inhabitants—and another thing to grant the franchise to 100,000 inhabitants. Upon what principle are towns with 4,000 inhabitants to retain a Member, whilst others with more than that number have none given them? Indeed, these limits of 4,000 and 2,000 inhabitants have been most capriciously laid hold of, seemingly with no other reason, if it be one, than the attainment of an uniform system. My intention is,—after this Bill has been disposed of, by being rejected on the second reading, as I trust and feel confident it will,—to propose some Resolution which will give an assurance to the country that this house is determined to strengthen its Representation, I do not give the exact words of the Resolution at present, but I pledge myself to do so; nor do I give my plan of Reform, for it is absurd to suppose that any man can improvise a constitution in a day. Indeed the noble Lord himself has found some difficulty in it, and has not failed to fall into some great blunders. Some instances come within my personal knowledge of towns which are not rated at the population they possess, not from any wilful mistake in the noble Lord, but from want of local knowledge, having taken into account too few or too many parishes. If the noble Lord, with six months' time to arrange his plans, and acquire a knowledge of the details, has fallen into an error of this kind on the matter of fact, I may well be excused from now offering any new constitutional plan to the consideration of the House. The Resolution I shall propose, however, will show, that those Members who reject this Bill as revolutionary, and having a tendency to destroy the King's authority, have still an inclination to go to a certain extent in Reform,—to that extent which I understand was originally intended, before certain individuals stepped in and altered the first plan. Of course, I only speak from hearsay; but this is a plan I certainly cannot accede to; and as long as I have a vote in this House, I will vote for the maintenance of the basis of the fabric of the Constitution. When I see around me generals who have fought the battles and raised the military glory of the country to the highest pitch of greatness—when I see naval commanders, who have preserved to the country that undisputed supremacy which she possessed—and when I see around me Judges from abroad, who came amongst us qualified to inform us of the manners and customs of the various races of mankind for whom they are called upon to legislate—and when, in addition to these, I see every complicated interest of a community, unexampled in its enterprise, duly represented by persons practically conversant with that interest—and when I reflect that many of these would have been deprived of sitting there and contributing to the honour and dignity of the House, if this Bill had been passed some years ago—I am determined to resist it now, and above all to resist the reiterated, *usque ad nauseam* reiterated arguments of intimidation by which it has been supported. The hon. Baronet concluded by moving, " That the Bill be read a second time that day six months."

Mr. *Cartwright* rose to second the Motion, and said, he regretted that a more moderate reform of the defects existing in the Representative System had not been proposed by his Majesty's Ministers, for to such he would have gladly given his support; but he could not assent to a measure which tended to the levelling of all established institutions, and which, nevertheless, as had been admitted by the hon. member for Preston, did not concede any one of the things prayed for by the numerous petitions presented to that House. The hon. member had stated, that only two of the whole number of petitions prayed for anything that was granted; and as to what was the feeling of those who advocated that measure strenuously, in the House and without its doors, they might judge from a printed letter of the hon. member for Middlesex, addressed to some persons in Scotland, and advising, above all things, to beware of mentioning the Ballot. He would not attempt to go into the details of the Bill; for him it was enough to say, that he could not consent to a plan by which rights and property were done away with, and which took off so many of the Members of that House. One objection to this measure, which he considered unanswerable was, that it could not be a final measure. He thought it more manly to oppose the whole measure, therefore, than resist particular parts of it. Members of that House should do their duty, notwithstanding the excitement which might happen to prevail outside its doors, and he was resolved to do his though he lost his seat by it. And if there should be any disturbance consequent upon the rejection of the Bill, the responsibility would rest upon the heads of the Ministers, who brought in the measure without sufficient reflection. The Bill would introduce too large a portion of democracy into the Constitution. It would, in fact, confer universal suffrage. He was, consequently, glad to hear from his hon. friend that he intended to suggest a plan of moderate Reform, by which injuries might be repaired and defects removed without injury to the stability of the structure. He considered that the existing evils did not justify the danger of the attempt which the Government were diposed to make, and he felt great satisfaction in seconding the Amendment.

Mr. *Sheil* said, that on this tremendous question he was sensible that he stood in a most difficult position, and in now addressing the House, for the first time, he stood in need of its most indulgent consideration. At the same time he felt a strong conviction, that in giving his support to this measure, which he considered a constitutional, and not a revolutionary one, he was not only acceding to the just demands of the people, but contributing his humble part to add lustre and stability to the Monarchy, which he, for one, considered the main stay of British liberty. The hon. member for Cornwall appeared to him to have embraced in his speech a great variety of topics. He had commenced with referring to Ireland, and had brought, in his (Mr. Sheil's) judgment, a singular charge against that country. He said that Ireland was lulled. He confessed that he (Mr. Sheil) was surprised at that being made an objection; but he trusted that the hon. Member's apprehensions as to an interruption of tranquillity there would not be realised. The hon. Baronet had then proceeded to descant upon the evil effects which would arise from the propagation of the doctrines of Mr. Mill. He (Mr. Sheil) did not say that Mr. Mill's arguments were not pertinent to the subject, but the present measure was supported on grounds distinct and independent of those. The hon. Baronet had passed in rapid transition from India to Athens, and thence to Italy, in reference to this question. When the hon. Baronet spoke of Venice and its dictatorship with praise, it reminded him of the lines of Lord Byron:—

> "I stood at Venice, on the Bridge of Sighs."

The hon. Baronet had then proceeded to animadvert on the French Revolution, and would seem to have consulted Menai's history for all his details of that event. He had taken a most discursive view; he had embraced Ireland, India, Venice, and the whole empire of France in his comprehensive disquisition. Was it not wonderful that he should not have said one word of Cornwall? He (Mr. Sheil) expected that the hon. Baronet, having peculiar opportunities of knowing the advantages of the close-borough system, would have illustrated them by some peculiarly felicitous reference. He could only account for his entire omission of this almost personal topic, by supposing that, placed on a great political elevation, from which an immense horizon was opened upon him, he did not see the petty objects immediately beneath. The hon. Baronet had talked of the subversion of Thrones and Altars, the fall of Crowns and Mitres, and had indulged in all sorts of lugubrious vaticination. He saw horrors in the past, beheld nothing but anarchy in the present and ruin in the future. It was his (Mr. Sheil's) opinion, that this measure was justified by example—that it was required by existing circumstances and the state of the national mind—and that it was calculated, as far as it was possible to penetrate the obscurity of the future, to be productive of great and lasting good. In supporting this Bill by a reference to changes which had already taken place, he should not take any distant retrospect. He would limit himself to a single fact. The disfranchisement of 200 Irish boroughs by the Act of Union had been already mentioned by his hon. friend, the member for Waterford, and he would not, therefore, dilate upon it, but observe, that there were also 100 Irish Members incorporated with this House. By this proceeding, not only was the Irish Parliament abated, but the whole structure of the British Parliament was changed. Was not this a greater innovation than any which could result from the proposed additions to the county Members, and was not the incorporation of 100 Irishmen, differing in habits, and having at one time distinct interests, a change more violent than the intended substitution for the Representatives of places of which the streets (to use the expression of Edmund Burke) "can only be traced by the colour of the corn, and of which the only manufacture is in Members of Parliament?" If it should be suggested that there is a difference—and he would admit that there was one—the Union was carried by expedients which, in the judgment of a rigorous moralist, must, to employ the softest term, be considered questionable; but here the Minister endeavours to accomplish a noble object by exalted means. Instead of appealing to the sordid passions, he calls for their suppression. He calls on the trustees of the public interests and the arbiters of the national destinies to dismiss every selfish consideration, and to raise up their hearts to a level with their lofty duties. He had been heard. A proud mention had been made of those who had given strong evidence of disinterestedness at a time which, beyond any other, put professions of public virtue to the test. One name he had heard with peculiar pleasure. Proof had been given that there was nothing in the religion of the premier Peer of England to disqualify him for the love and the service of his country. He should, he trusted, be pardoned for this momentary deviation, into which he had been hurried by his personal feelings, from the course which he had proposed to himself to pursue. He had shown that there was, in the year 1800, a very material modification of the structure of this House. In 1829 there was a still greater change in its constituency. If he adverted to the disfranchisement of the 40*s*. freeholders, it was not to go over an argument which had been already so much relied on, but to ask what answer had been ever attempted to this important precedent. The former Ministers did not prune, but mowed down, with a single sweep, the franchise of 200,000—Irish peasants if they pleased, but British subjects after all. Defects, imperfections, vices necessarily incidental to their condition, these persons might have manifested; but call it fanaticism, call it agitation, call it superstition, or anything else, it must still be owned that these men, in a great emergency, did great things, and that it was a fine spectacle to see them throwing off in an instant the serfship of centuries—standing up in the attitude of freemen—withstanding with a dauntless intrepidity the little tyrant of their fields, and, in a cause which they felt to be a just one—looking ruin in the face. And if to them the House showed no mercy—if to them they dealt with a relentless, though he was sure that it was with a reluctant rigour—he might be pardoned if he presumed to ask, in the name of plain consistency and of British justice, what peculiar virtue could be detected in burgesses and corporators which should excite a sympathy so profound—which should awaken so much parliamentary tenderness, and stir to their depths the springs of legislative commiseration? But it might be urged that necessity justified the disfranchisement of the 40*s.* freeholders. He would see whether Reform did not impose an equal need. This brought him to the consideration of actual circumstances. It was insisted that the country prospered—that the machine worked well—that England, with that fiscal prodigy, a debt of 1,000,000,000*l.* on her back, still stood erect and firm—that the countless expenditure of countless treasure and the spendthrift prodigality of her life-blood were not too large a price for freedom; that whatever may have befallen, she might proudly contrast her condition with that of the Continent, and survey the "mighty labour" of other nations, who were tempest-tost in revolutionary agitation, with a pleasurable consciousness of her own security. To all this he answered, that there existed within herself a settled and general discontent, which was derived from causes of a permanent nature, and which, instead of being the mere ebullition of transitory passion, flowed out of a deep and constant source. It was idle to say that it had not long existed, because it had only recently appeared. The sudden force with which it had burst forth was a proof that the materials of eruption had been long accumulating. It was of little avail to say, that it was connected with the events on the Continent. Were we to omit to strengthen our own institutions because this island had not felt the tremor of that great shock which had levelled the governments of France and Belgium to the ground? It was equally nugatory to say that the Press had done all this. Then would the Press relinquish its natural vocation? And was it not much wiser to consider, instead of inveighing against its influence, those materials, in the shape of abuses, upon which it exerted its powerful operation? Was the discontent well founded? That was the main question—almost the only one. Were all the evils of which the press and the people complained merely imaginary? Had they no existence except in the distempered fancy of political hypochondriacs, or was there a gangrene that could be felt and touched, and that was visibly and palpably eating its way into the vitals of the State? He would abstain from going through the beaten track in which so many had gone before him, and from expatiating upon the gross abuses of the present Representative system in detail. He would not repeat what had been already so frequently reiterated. He would not go through what would certainly be a tedious and unprofitable repetition of what others had powerfully and minutely pressed. This single broad fact was, in his mind, sufficient to call forth the national repudiation of the House of Commons, its majority was returned, not by the people, but by 150 individuals. Some four or five great proprietors of boroughs were enabled to control the Minister, and by their oligarchical coalition, to dictate to their Sovereign, and to lord it over the people. That such a system should exist was a great calamity in itself, but the evil was heightened by many sordid accompaniments. Seats in Parliament were made the subject of bargain and sale, and an almost open mart, a common staple, a parliamentary bazaar, was established for the vendition of the franchises of the people. A parliamentary broker was a customary phrase; nay, matters had been carried to such a pitch, that boroughs had been made the subject of marriage settlement, and had been put, by the ingenuity of conveyancers, through all the diversities of matrimonial limitation. The House had all heard that a Sultana on her marriage usually had one province awarded to her for her necklace, another for her bracelets, and a third for her girdle. Under the system of parliamentary proprietorship, it would be no matter of surprise to see a lady of fashion receiving Old Sarum for pin-money and Gatton for her dower. The people thought it a perfect mockery to call this a national Representation; and instead of seeing in Members of Parliament the mirror of the public mind, they beheld in them pocket-glasses, in which the images of a few great nominators were faithfully reflected. By these means the moral as well as the political interests of the country were affected. The notorious sale of boroughs generated a general habit of venality. These spots were not only full of distemper, but they communicated contamination. When Lords transmuted their interest in Parliament into money, by what an easy process of imitative alchymy the humbler voter could convert his miserable suffrage into gold! How could we condemn bribery in the one, when we gave it a countenance in the other? Was the grossness of the prostitution palliated by the largeness of its wages: and was the enormity of the offence in the inverse ratio with the magnitude of its remuneration? There were Statutes, indeed, against it. So much the worse. Hypocrisy was superadded to corruption, when the law occasionally immolated some incautious offender, who committed a larceny of the people's rights, and whose guilt, upon the principles of Spartan morality, was not determined by the delinquency of the theft, but the folly of the detection! And was it to be wondered at that a nation, who prized virtue as well as freedom, should feel indignant, and even exasperated, at these misdoings? Was it matter of surprise that there should exist through the empire but one feeling of reprobation at this flagitious traffic, and that England should start up to expel from the temple those who have driven in its sanctuary their unholy and sacrilegious trade? But gross, nay, monstrous as these abuses were, there were men who found advantages in their existence, and whom these deformities in the Constitution inspired with the perverse admiration of the love in the Roman poet—

> "Turpia decipiunt cœcum vitia, aut etiam ipsa hæc
> Delectant, veluti Balbinum polypus Agnæ."

It had been urged that the close boroughs had supplied the means of admitting men of distinguished abilities, who could not otherwise have obtained an access to this House. They were represented as the postern gates by which talents which would have been excluded from the legitimate avenues, contrived to get in. The answer given by the member for Calne was a strong one. Was it not probable that, if the doors of this House had been thrown more widely open, genius and knowledge would have found, through the more constitutional entrance, an honourable way? But who were those that pressed round the back doors of Parliament? How were the crowd made up? How few were the statesmen, the orators, and political economists, compared with those by whom they were surrounded! He admitted that a splendid catalogue, an emblazoned muster-roll of genius, had been produced by the advocates of the borough system. Mark, however, over what a vast space they were dispersed! In how black a firmament they sparkled. But was it not very remarkable, that so many of these illustrious persons, who were cradled in close boroughs, and who preserved their political soundness, although they were nursed by corruption, were themselves opposed to the very system to which it was alleged that they owed their parliamentary existence? What would be said of Chatham, Dunning, Pitt, Fox, Sheridan, and so many others? Try this case not by the votes of the living, but by the votes of the dead; enter the sacred repository within whose echo the House deliberated, count the graves of the illustrious men who were opposed to Reform, and of those who were its advocates, and on that division it would be found that the majority of sepulchres was in its favour? But even if he were to admit that they were against it, and that this House would lose the chances (for they are but contingences) of receiving men like them through the medium which is the theme of so much panegyric; yet what would be the loss compared with the certain deprivation of the public confidence? Place in one scale the antique genius of the elder Pitt—the extraordinary abilities of his illustrious son—the impassioned logic and inspired humanity of Fox—Sheridan's wit—Grattan's integrity—the sagacity of Windham—Tierney's eloquent common sense—and the multifarious endowments of the accomplished Canning, and crown the splendid accumulation with the surpassing name of Edmund Burke; and after you shall have hoarded and heaped up virtue, patriotism, wisdom, and eloquence together, throw in the opposite scale, the confidence, the affection, the devoted allegiance, the enthusiastic sympathy, the entire hearts of millions of the people, and where was the man who would for a moment hesitate in determining the preponderance? It was alleged by the hon. member for Cornwall, that this measure destroyed the influence of the Aristocracy. How? There were fifty-five new county Members. From what class were they likely to be selected? Would they seek to build their fortunes out of the ruins of their country? Members were to be given to large towns. Would their inhabitants show no regard to opulence, to hereditary dignity, to ancient neighbourhood? and instead of looking for Representatives amidst noble demesnes and venerable halls, would they accept every wandering knight-errant of sedition, and itinerant visionary in codification? There was a singular variance between the logic of the non-reformers and their sarcasms. They spoke of Tavistock with emphatic signification. They meant that the influence of the House of Bedford would continue. If so, why should not the influence of other great families continue elsewhere? Thus their syllogisms were overthrown by their satire, and their argument evaporated in their vituperation. This Bill would only wrench their despotism from the oligarchy—it would not touch the legitimate influence of property, and birth, and station, and all the other circumstances which create a title to respect. It would take power from individuals, and give it to a class. It would cut off the secret and subterraneous conduit pipes, through which aristocratic influence is now conveyed to this House, and would make it flow in a broad, open, constitutional, and national channel. Away with the charge that it would weaken the monarchy. The Throne would be built on the confidence of the People, and find new pillars in the Nobility; and so far from the Crown being loosened on the head of the King, the diadem would be fastened by another band on the royal brow. But it was said that this measure was not final; not final—what was there in human affairs that was? It had in it as deep a principle of permanence as could be perhaps desired. The people ought not to be contented with existing abuses, but they ought to be with their proposed remedies. All just grounds of complaint would be taken away; and it was reasonable to anticipate that the characteristic good feeling and good sense of the British nation would take upon this measure a firm stand. The objection that the measure was not final, embraced all change, and comprehended all Reform. It was the favourite ritual of every idolater of every abuse. Beware, they exclaimed, of innovation. "All this," said Lord Bacon, "would be true if time stood still, which, however, moveth so round, that a froward retention of custom is as turbulent a thing as innovation." Were the dangers all on one side? He had observed that the opponents of Reform looked only at the possible dangers of concession, without any regard to the evils of denying it. They should not forget the principles which they themselves applied to Catholic Emancipation. It was with a very timid and cautious step that he ventured to approach that great transaction, which appeared to him to furnish the principles on which this House ought to decide on this equally momentous question. He begged to deprecate the most remote intention of availing himself of it (he was not so ungrateful) in order to turn it against a man whom he considered as a benefactor of his country, and who, in his judgment, had earned for himself a lasting renown. At that instant he felt with a peculiar force the value of his services. He trusted that he should not be considered to make any undue or thankless use of the event to which he had referred, when he said that every argument which applied to the exigency of Emancipation applied with still greater force to Parliamentary Reform. He was convinced that, when it was conceded, it was a lofty mitigation of any pain which might have accompanied its concession, that what was necessary was also just, but that it was granted from a well-founded apprehension of the consequences which might have followed from the adoption of an opposite course, was beyond all doubt. What single circumstance that rendered it unavoidable, did not meet the present case? The Irish Roman Catholics were strongly confederated; millions were in league; the popular passions were arrayed and marshalled. He passed over many incidents, to which it might be painful to revert. This dreadful agitation could not longer continue; at last the Minister came down and said, "Much as it costs me, I sacrifice my feelings to my country; and to the salvation of the empire I make an immolation of myself." God forbid that he should refer to this acknowledgment for the purpose of making any idle and thankless vaunt. He had fought for liberty with a strenuousness proportioned to the nobleness of the acquisition: and having won it, he flung every factious recollection, as he would a viper, from his heart. It was, then, in a fair and candid spirit that he ventured to ask whether, if the pressure of the Catholic Question was such as to bear down all impediments before it, here were not as much accumulation of political necessities—as deep a mass of imperative urgency—in Parliamentary Reform? There were many obstacles in the way of Emancipation; a large proportion of the Irish Protestants, much of the property and intelligence of that country, and the deep, but honest and conscientious, and therefore the more formidable, prejudices of the English people. Compare these obstructions with those that stand against Reform. What were they? Where were the petitions against it? Who were its opponents? They might be counted. Who were its advocates? Millions of Britons, with their Sovereign at their head. If they had listened to the voice of Ireland, would they be deaf to English invocation? If Ireland had force enough in her arm when she struck at the door of the Cabinet to make the mighty Captain start, was the land of England so feeble and so powerless that they would not awaken at the thunder of her knocking? If Ireland was now in a state of evil susceptibility, the House should recollect that it was their own doing. These were the results of years of agitation, produced by the madness of delay. Let them beware how they put England through a similar process of excitement. What! would they wait till all England should have been organized? Would they tarry until a great confederacy should have sprung up? Would they abide until the rostra of agitation should have been raised in every district? Would they procrastinate until the popular passions should have been maddened by ferocious eloquence, and infuriated by revolutionary harangues? then, indeed, they would have cause to speak of the influence of the democracy;—then they would find the demands of the nation swollen into perilous enormity;—then they would behold the power of the people dilated beyond its just, and natural, and constitutional proportions, and ascending into a gigantic magnitude. He said concede; and that they might concede in safety, concede in time. He had done. His most fervent prayer was for the happiness and prosperity of this great and glorious country, and he would say with the patrician *Esto perpetua.* Might that prayer be more happy in his mouth than in the mouth of its original author.

Sir *Robert Lawrence Dundas* said, that he should certainly oppose the measure. He was surprised that the subject of the disfranchisement of the Irish 40*s*. freeholders should have been so often referred to by the advocates of the measure, and especially that it should have been referred to as a case of injustice, for, if he remembered rightly, many of those Gentlemen who were now the supporters of the Ministry, had at that time praised it as a liberal and necessary measure. It was said that this measure would satisfy the people. He doubted that assertion very much; and if this measure should be passed, he wished to ask the noble Lord, what security we had that fresh attacks would not be made on the rights and privileges of the higher classes of society? He feared that such would be the case, and he should, therefore, agree with the proposition of the hon. member for Cornwall, reserving to himself the power, if any moderate measure of Reform should be proposed, to give it his support.

Mr. *Pendarvis* said, that as a Representative of that county which would be most affected by this measure, he could not but be anxious to express the sentiments of the great majority of his constituents. He was happy to say, that the present measure had their highest approval. He hoped to see it pass triumphantly through that House, and he trusted that Ministers would not consent to lose any part of the Bill in order to gain a few votes, but that they would insist on retaining all the details of the Bill as they now stood. When he said, that in supporting this measure, he was expressing the sentiments of his constituents, he made the assertion in consequence of the great number of petitions he had presented from the county of Cornwall, all of which were in favour of the measure. At the commencement of the Session he had presented a petition from the largest meeting he had ever seen assembled in that county, declaring the necessity for a Reform of an extensive nature, that should vest the elective franchise in the hands of the middle classes. That petition was signed in a very short time by several thousand persons; and several others had been presented by him from the large towns of the county, all praying for Reform. Since the provisions of this Bill had been known in the county, he had received other petitions, stating the perfect satisfaction felt by the petitioners with this measure, and their hope that this House would carry it into effect. Another county meeting would take place in Cornwall in a few days, convened upon the requisition of 1,200 persons, among whom were no less than forty Magistrates of the county. The Sheriff, in obedience to such a requisition, had called the meeting for Wednesday, and its declared and avowed object was, to express the approbation of the people of Cornwall of this measure of Reform. The loss in the Representation of Cornwall would amount to more than two-thirds of its Members; and some hon. Gentlemen might be surprised that that county should be such a firm supporter of the measure; but he could assure such hon. Gentlemen, that the system of borough representation in Cornwall was no benefit to the county at large. The persons whose petitions he had presented were those who had seen with disgust and abhorrence the evils which accompanied the present system of borough election in that county. He need not enumerate the evils of that system, for its infamy and abominations were well known. It was an objection made to the Bill, that it would disturb the settled institutions of the country. He denied it—he did not admit that these close boroughs formed any part of the settled institutions of the country. In many of these Corporations the original right of voting had been in the burgesses at large, but that right was now vested in the Corporations, because the latter had usurped it, and long continuance of enjoyment, and the decision of Committees of that House, had sanctioned and confirmed these usurpations. The patrons of these boroughs went to Ministers and gave their votes in order to obtain influence, and Ministers were obliged to keep up places for these persons, and so these small Corporations became the cause of great evils. If this measure should be passed, the county he represented would have its interests better protected than they were now with all its numerous close boroughs. He would not further trespass on the patience of the House. He knew there was a strong and almost universal feeling among the middle ranks of society in favour of this measure: and on behalf of his Constituents, as well as himself, he declared his sincere approbation of it, and his thanks to the Ministers for having introduced it.

Lord *Valletort.*—Sir, I have long been anxious to offer a few observations on this important question. In the course of this discussion many attacks have been made on Gentlemen who hold seats for boroughs about to be disfranchised, and I have been, and am now, most anxious to rise in my place in this House, and to trespass on its attention for a short time, for the purpose of defending those Gentlemen on whom these attacks have been made. Sir, I must disagree in one observation that fell from my hon. friend the member for Cornwall; he said, that he advocated this question from no interested motives, or biassed feelings, but that he advocated it with the idea that the sentiments of those who were opposed to this measure would not have a due and proper weight. Now, Sir, I most humbly contend, that, although the observations of myself or any other individual Member, rising in his place in this House, on whichever side of the question they may happen to be made, are not to be expected to carry conviction with them, yet that the argument of any individual is entitled to that attention which it deserves; and therefore I do confidently trust, that any observations I may offer on this question although it is not very probable that they will merit much consideration, will be listened to with the attention they deserve, and that they will not be rejected because they emanate from so humble an individual as myself. I am sure, Sir, that I should be the last individual in existence to cast any invidious or unworthy imputation on the conduct of any man; and when such imputations are made on the conduct of those who are opposed to this measure, I would appeal to those Members of this House who represent large populations in support of my doctrine, and I say. that a Member of this House is bound to act in accordance with the dictates of his own judgment; and although he is a delegate from the people, he is bound to act as his judgment and conscience direct him, even though his opinions may be opposed to those of his constituents. I would appeal to any man whether this is not a proper course—I would appeal even to the hon. Baronet, the member for Westminster (Sir Francis Burdett), whether, if a man is convinced in his own mind of the propriety of the opinion he adopts, he is not bound to act upon that conviction, even though by so doing he should, when it again became necessary for him to apply to his constituents, lose the great object of his ambition,—namely, the honour of Representing them in Parliament. I would make no sinister observation on the conduct of any individual whatever; but when I look to the opposite side of the House, I see hon. gentlemen who are possessed of great honour, great power, and high emoluments, and who sit there solely because they support this measure; and I tell those hon. Gentlemen, that by supporting this measure they act in total variance with the whole tenor of their political life. I say, Sir, that we have heard them advance arguments in support of this measure, which we have all at former periods heard them meet and treat as if totally unworthy of consideration. I will make no imputation on the conduct of these hon. Gentlemen, as I have already observed, but I would beg to ask them, if they can get over this observation? Now, Sir, let us look again to those hon. members who are, not the projectors, but the advocates, of this Bill;—do they support this measure from pure and disinterested motives? Do they consider this subject only with reference to the measure before the House? Why, Sir, they themselves admit that they make use of this measure only as a stepping-stone to the attainment of other objects. The change that has taken place in the opinions of some of these hon. Gentlemen has certainly proceeded with great rapidity; and I think they will be ready to admit, that their conduct in this respect is totally at variance with the whole tenor of their political conduct. I do not wish to make any attack upon these hon. Gentlemen, but I certainly think that they might condescend to act with some little fairness towards those Gentlemen who think proper to act as I do on this subject. I shall now proceed to offer some observations on the Bill itself. It is not my intention to trouble the House by going into any of the details of the measure; indeed, so much has been already said on the general measure, that it would be almost impossible for any man, much less so humble an individual as myself, to advance any new argument upon it. I have, since the nature of this measure was first made known to the House, regarded it, and still do, as one which can be productive of no benefit whatever. Is it beneficial because it will extend the elective franchise? The noble Lord, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, has asserted in this House, that he would give every individual a voice in the Representation of the people, and yet, Sir, by the operation of this measure, three-fourths of the people of this country will be excluded from the exercise of that privilege. This principle is certainly a very different one from that which the noble Lord formerly stated his desire to act upon. Now, Sir, the noble Lord proposes to limit the elective franchise to householders rated at 10*l.* Is that to be the limitation? On what principle does the noble Lord draw that line? Do hon. Gentlemen think that that will afford a security to the happiness and welfare of this country? Who is there that will stand up in his place here and say, even if this Bill does pass, it will give satisfaction to the country? The right hon. Baronet opposite (Sir James Graham) said on a former occasion, that this was a measure which would be productive of great satisfaction to the country, and that we might pass it without the least danger. Sir, how can that be the fact? How can it be expected that this measure will give satisfaction to the people which excludes one half of them from the exercise of a right they already possess? When I say one half of the people, I mean a very large portion of them will be excluded from the exercise of a privilege they now possess, and to which they have an undoubted right. The hon. Gentlemen, on the other side of the House will tell us perhaps, that the numberless petitions on this subject that lie upon the Table of the House are proofs in support of their statements. Now I will tell the hon. Gentlemen who support this measure, that I have taken the trouble of examining many of those petitions, and I deny that they do express satisfaction with this measure. Some of them may express joy and exultation at the plan of Reform which has been introduced, but I say, that none of them venture to express satisfaction at it. Will the noble Lord, or any hon. Gentleman, tell me that they are acting upon the sure principles they have hitherto professed? Now, Sir, I find the principle has been laid down by a noble Lord, that those who speak in favour of an established government should be listened to, because they speak of that which they already enjoy, and therefore know how to appreciate. Will any body deny that that is a principle which has been almost invariably acted upon? There are many anomalies in this Bill which cannot be got over; there are many boroughs in which the elective franchise is taken out of the hands of the people, while in others it has been allowed to remain, and I assert, that no just cause has been shown for this partiality. Before I sit down, Sir, I will beg to answer a question that has been often put to the opposers of this measure by the Gentlemen on the other side of the House. It has been often asked, "Do you oppose every species of Reform? would you oppose every proposition for Reform?" I answer, Sir, I might not; though, at the same time, I do feel that a change of this description is very, very important, and I am also willing to admit, that a want of confidence on the part of the people in this House is to be lamented. We shall presently see to what that want of confidence is to be mainly attributed. An hon. Member who addressed the House this evening (Mr. Sheil) alluded to the Catholic Question. I must say, in regard to the part I took on that question, that though I was opposed to it in the first instance, I changed my opinion after very great deliberation, and I experienced great difficulty in coming to the conclusion at which I ultimately arrived; and, in arriving at that decision, I must say I was influenced by no ordinary feelings, or by any base or unworthy motives. I have been led into urging thus much on that question, Sir, as I really do feel strongly on the subject; and I cannot submit to hear an individual's conduct or opinions adverted to without taking an opportunity of noticing that allusion, as it is but just that I should be permitted to say one word in reply. I must now beg leave to express the extreme surprise I felt on hearing such an observation as that made this evening by the learned Attorney General. I heard that hon. and learned individual say, in his place to-night, as a Member of Parliament, and in his quality of Attorney General, when the question was, whether he should prosecute the author of a libel—a positive libel—as gross a libel as was ever heard either within the walls of this House or any where else,—I say I heard him say, on a question of this nature, that he would not undertake to assert that the statement introduced in that libel was not true? What was not true? Why, that "a large portion of the House of Commons were the hired lacqueys of delinquents." Sir, I would ask the House, is that the language that ought to be used by the man who ought to stand forward as the first to repel such a calumny? Sir, I confess I feel warmly on this subject, because I am persuaded that of the many evils that exist at the present moment there is none so great as that those who are in power—those to whom the defence of our rights is confided—think fit to hold the language of the members of the Opposition; and, instead of attempting to allay excitement, doing every thing in their power to increase it. I say, Sir, that the want of confidence which at present exists between this House and the country is greatly, mainly, to be attributed to many individuals whom I now see on that (the Opposition) side of the house. I say that those men who are bound to do every thing in their power to allay animosities, have, on coming into office, increased instead of allaying the prevailing excitement; for I confidently assert, that if any thing could be by possibility devised to increase that excitement, it is the Bill now before the House. In making these observations, I beg it to be understood that I am actuated by no personal feeling towards the noble Lord at the head of the Administration; indeed, if I were influenced by any such feelings, they would be decidedly favourable to that noble Lord; but still I must say that the history of the country cannot supply an example of the introduction of such a measure as this. My opinions may be erroneous, Sir, I dare say they are, but still I maintain that I have a right, as an honest and I will say, independent Member of Parliament, to give utterance to them, notwithstanding any expressions of disapprobation, to which I will bow with the most perfect calmness. I know there are many hon. gentlemen who hear me, who conceive that this measure goes too far, and who are yet prepared for some Reform. I will ask those hon. Gentlemen to state again the situation in which they would place themselves by persevering in that respect without going too far. I think they will find it utterly impossible. I ask these hon. Gentlemen if they would trust themselves to make a voyage in a vessel carrying too much sail without the power of shortening that sail? I ask them, how would they dare to trust themselves under such circumstances to the fury of the tempest? And I ask them how dare they trust the institutions of the county to the operation of such a measure as this? The circumstances are perfectly analogous. This is not a time to try experiments of this description, the failure of which must produce destruction to the institutions of the country, and that will be a destruction of no common description. You must look to the situation of the country, and the probable consequences of the measure, and you cannot make the slightest change without producing consequences of a most lamentable description. In this state of society, experiments of this kind will affect millions and millions of people. It is impossible even to guess the probable results of this measure, and I must declare, that in justice to the country and the people generally, I can take no other part in respect of it than that I am now arguing. I would ask hon. Gentlemen what benefits they can expect to be derived by the people from this measure? I must again say, that I cannot understand them, and will now sit down, again declaring my intention of opposing it.

Mr. *Charles Grant* said—Sir, although the House is necessarily exhausted by the discussion which has taken place on this subject, and its attention has been so long absorbed by the eloquent speech of the hon. Gentleman below me (Mr. Sheil), yet I trust I may be permitted to make a few observations. I am the more anxious to do so in consequence of some observations which have fallen from the noble Lord who has just sat down. The noble Lord has no reason to deprecate the imputation of unworthy motives. I am sure that no one at this side of the House thinks of attributing anything else but correct and proper motives to the noble Lord—nor am I one of those who complain that hon. Gentlemen, the Members for boroughs about to be disfranchised, should take part in this discussion. As Members of this House they have a right to express their opinions, whatever those opinions may be. However one Gentleman may happen to represent a borough, and another a populous town or county, we are all on a level in this House, and any Member has a right to state his opinion fairly and boldly. I conceive, too, that those Members who represent boroughs may be actuated by a laudable and generous feeling to speak on the part of those who return them. I attribute none but proper and correct motives to those who oppose this Bill, and I claim the same just construction to be put upon the motives which influence me, and other Members who support it. It has been said, in the course of the evening, and also in the discussion which took place a week ago, that no question was ever brought into this House under more favourable auspices. If the question entered this House under unfavourable auspices, I am confident that the lengthened Debate which took place left the question in a far more favourable position at the close of that Debate than at its commencement. When I heard the observations made as to the suspicious circumstances under which this question entered the House—when I heard the strong expressions that were applied to it—when I heard it designated as "revolutionary," called "a new Constitution," and "a measure tending to overthrow the Peerage and the Monarchy"—when I heard these expressions applied to the measure by hon. Gentlemen opposite, I did expect they would have barred the door against the measure.—But no; they allowed it to enter. They said, "Appeal to the country." Well, Sir, that appeal has been made, and those who brought forward this measure can safely and fairly refer to it. The measure has been received by one universal shout of acclamation through the whole country. If the conduct of his Majesty's Government in introducing this measure required explanation, that explanation has been found in the answer which the country has given to the appeal made to it; and allow me to add, it has also been found in the conduct of the opponents of this measure in the House, as well as out of doors. The opposition to the principle of the measure has been pretty well abandoned. Scarcely one Gentleman who has spoken seems prepared to take his stand on the principle of Anti-Reform. The hon. Baronet who opened the Debate this evening (Sir Richard Vyvyan) gave us an able and impressive speech, and I did conceive, from the course of his argument, that, if any one could do so, the hon. Baronet would plant himself on an impregnable position, that he would step forward as the opponent of the principle of this measure; but at the close of his speech, as was ably and skilfully remarked by the hon. Gentleman (the member for Milborne Port), the hon. Baronet admitted that he himself had a plan of Reform, which he should afterwards submit to the House. Even my right hon. friend opposite (Sir Robert Peel) admitted the necessity of Reform when he regretted that my noble friend who introduced this Bill had not introduced some measure which he might support. The question as to Reform or no Reform, then, I consider is absolutely decided; and the question we are now called upon to decide is not whether we are to have Reform, but what ought to be the nature of that Reform, and at what time we should adopt it. The hon. Baronet who opened this question admitted the state of general excitement and agitation which prevails. He ascribed much of that agitation to other causes, and disclaimed the circumstances of France and Belgium, and to which the excitement has been ascribed by some hon. Members. The hon. Baronet seems to me very much to mistake the character of that agitation to which he alluded. He described it as an excitement of a transitory character, though he admitted it was general throughout the country. Now, Sir, I think even a transient excitement ought not to be entirely disregarded; but I think the excitement on this subject is not transient nor local, but partakes more of the character of a general and settled sentiment. It does not merely ruffle the face of the waters, but the agitation is real, and springs from the deepest sources. Can any man doubt that the agitation on this question is more than transitory, who considers the great progress which the question has made within a few years? Is there any one who has spoken or written on the subject within the last four or five years, however he may be opposed to Reform, that has not felt himself called upon to make this admission, that the question was making so rapid a progress, that it must soon compel attention from Parliament and the country? The decision of Parliament on this question within a short time is inevitable. It is not merely as a question of policy or of expediency, then, that this measure is brought forward. Public opinion has taken the character of a settled sentiment, and is founded upon principle. No statesman worthy of the name will say that public opinion ought to be disdained or disregarded. No statesman will say, that public opinion should not mainly influence the decision of this House. Then, I ask, can any man question that public opinion exists in a strong degree in favour of this measure? The attention which the House and the country has paid for the last fifteen years, since the conclusion of the war, to every measure of inquiry, examination, and improvement into the state of the laws and Constitution of the country, shows the progress which this question has made. The way was opened for the progress of this question in public opinion by various circumstances, of which I shall only mention one. I consider that the measures introduced by my right hon. friend, Sir Robert Peel, have done much more, perhaps, than any thing else, to direct the attention of the public to this question. They have done much to remove the prejudices which existed in the minds of many persons only a few years ago, by showing that the most ardent affection for the Constitution was not incompatible with a determination to correct its obvious and acknowledged defects. There was a repugnance previously felt, to make any attempts towards correcting faults in our laws, but the course of events, assisted mainly by the example set by my right hon. friend, in improving the laws, has done much to remove this stupifying prejudice. The removal of this prejudice has done much to advance the progress of this measure, and in this sense, its rapid progress within a few years, may be referred to the exertions of my right hon. friend opposite. He taught the country, by his wise and salutary measures for the improvement of the law, that the highest respect for those laws, and the most sincere attachment to the Constitution, were not inconsistent with the most anxious solicitude to correct admitted evils; that allegiance to, and regard for, existing institutions were entirely compatible with an anxiety to examine the evils which existed, and to remove them with a cautious and reverential, but a firm and a reforming hand. My right hon. friend was amongst the first who drew aside the veil fron British justice, and showed how that venerable system of ancient laws could be rendered more valuable, by being fitted to the period in which we live. Even the ecclesiastical establishments to which we are all attached, and which we are all anxious to uphold, have received the advantages which flow from the adoption of more enlightened principles. Those who would have turned pale at the thought of any interference with institutions so ancient, so venerable, and so admirable, regarded the progress of improvement with composure when those improvements were directed by my right hon. friend. Those improvements opened the eyes of the people to other evils, and the defects in the Representation became apparent even to sober-minded persons, who had a religious attachment to the Constitution. When those evils first presented themselves, it was thought that the defects might be remedied by a gradual process; and that, when corruption was discovered in one place, by a transfer of the franchise to other places a sufficient Reform would in time be effected. It was found impossible, however, to introduce any effectual Reform by such means. All the efforts made proved unsuccessful. When a case of gross corruption was brought forward and punished, instead of suppressing, it had only the effect of inducing the corrupt to resort to new arts, and to render the practices of corruption more successful. The friends of Reform found they were met by difficulties in this, and still more in the other House of Parliament; and at length it was found hopeless to carry into execution, by those means, that Reform which was desirable. The events of last year, and the mode in which the House treated a question then brought before it, compelled all the friends of Reform to take refuge in some general measure, as the only thing from which there was a prospect of relief. Such has been the natural and gradual progress of the question of Parliamentary Reform. When the hon. Baronet describes the excitement which prevails on the subject as merely temporary, and says it only requires firmness on the part of the House and the Government, I think he is mistaken altogether in the character of that excitement. He forgets the effect which education and enlightened principles have had on the minds of the people. He forgets that for thirty years every description of machinery has been resorted to to enlighten and instruct the people. We have now, therefore, an enlightened and instructed people to deal with, and all our measures should have reference to their enlightened feelings. I say, then, Sir, that there is a deep and settled principle, resting on conviction in the minds of the people, who call upon us in this instance to restore to them their just rights and privileges. What the public opinion is on this question no man can deny, but I admit it is not merely public opinion, it is the opinion of Parliament that must decide this question. Parliament, however, is bound to listen to, and be influenced by the just representations of the people. The people of England look to the state of the Representation, and lay their complaints before this House. They complain of the direct influence of other branches of the Legislature. They say that this House but partially represents the people; that instead of representing only the people, it represents but partly the people, and partly the two other branches of the Legislature. They look back to the common-law—to the spirit of the Constitution—to the declared and recorded sentiments of all those just men who have passed away, and they find all decisive against the continuance of the present system. All those decide that the present state of the Representation is hostile to the spirit of the British Constitution. It is on this ground the people of England make their objection to the present state of the Representation. They come before us as claimants, and we are bound to deal with them justly. I do not call upon the House to defer to the wishes of the people from any apprehension of the consequences. I know the people of England's loyalty and fidelity, and I believe they would submit in this instance, as in every other, to the will of the House. I can never admit the argument of intimidation. That was stated as one of the grounds which induced the late Government to bring forward the measure of Catholic Emancipation. I have heard it said that the Duke of Wellington, in that instance, was influenced by intimidation. I believe the Duke of Wellington was afraid—not of force—but of committing an act of injustice, or rather of not performing an act of justice which had been too long deferred. In the same spirit I should fear the rejection of this measure, because I conceive that it would tend to alienate still further the confidence of the country from this House, and by so doing would paralyse industry, and inflict a deeper wound on the national prosperity, than any measure I can imagine. Nothing has been done to conciliate the people on this question. How have their complaints been met? They have not been told that the evil was lamented—it has not been admitted that there was an evil calling for correction, but that a difficulty was found in correcting it. On the contrary, hitherto the people have been told that the evil was the beauty—that what they complained of as a defect was the source of all the splendor and the greatness of the country. The people, however, Sir, are now too enlightened to be longer satisfied with this. They know that it is not to this defect of the Constitution they owe their greatness—that it is to be ascribed to other sources, and that weakness results from the want of adequate Representation. At this late period of the night, and of this discussion, anxious as I am to express my sentiments, I shall not trespass on the House further, except to advert to one observation which fell from the hon. Baronet. The hon. Baronet (Sir Richard Vyvyan), referred to the state of Foreign Europe as an argument against this measure. Now, I have watched with care and anxiety what has occurred in other countries, and I have seen with him what has been the conduct of the people and the governments in those countries; but from that contemplation I draw a very different lesson from the hon. Baronet. If it be true that a democratic spirit is abroad, and that the people are encroaching on the privileges of the Government, some portion of that spirit and of those encroachments is to be attributed to the effects of disappointed hope, and the delay of concession too long deferred. What is the inference to be drawn from the occurrences of foreign Europe? Do they not call upon us to ask ourselves, is this the time when we should disregard the complaints of our own people, and exasperate them by disappointment? Or rather, is not this the very moment, above all others, when those just concessions, too long delayed, should be granted? We need not go, however, to foreign countries for an example. We have seen in our own experience, how inexpedient it is to delay till the hour of counsel has past, and the hour of necessity has arrived. We know that by the delay of a just measure we have only sown the seeds of agitation, which have brought forth an abundant harvest. This moment, in my opinion, is, above all others the most fitting for making this concession. I shall not trespass longer on the attention of the House, nor delay it from coming to that conclusion on this question, which I trust will confirm the anxious wishes of the people, and by doing so, tend to the accomplishment of a work, eminently advantageous to the country, and highly honourable to ourselves.

Mr. *W. Bankes*.—I protest against any conclusion being drawn from the opponents of the Bill not dividing on the first stage; it was but a deference due to the petitions and the excitement of the people, not to reject all consideration of the measure; but now that that tribute of preliminary respect has been shewn, the time is come for exercising our individual judgments, and we have the precedent of the Administration itself for this course, since they have made these petitions and this clamour only their point to start from; and when their prayer was for one experiment they have favoured the people with another. The word experiment is justly applied, for it is not a return to any state of things that has previously existed; yet one feature of an experiment, properly so called, is wanting, and that an important one—that if it fail it is difficult or impossible to retrace our steps. But even if I were in love with experiment, and would embark in this voyage of discovery (begging pardon of the First Lord of the Admiralty for a nautical allusion), I would look to see that my vessel was steered and manned by practical men, good navigators, men of experience and success—but if, at some remote period, those benches were filled by an Administration, whose every measure and project was a failure, at that distant and hypothetical period, the mind of man must be very differently constituted from what it is now, if any reasonable being should trust himself to such conductors. No, Sir, I would not choose them for my guides through the obscurity, though they should be furnished with "that new and burnished article" of the noble Paymaster, which will, I think, prove no safety-lamp to this Administration—and accordingly I observe that, as to the provisions of this measure, all find fault with it, aye, even those who support it in the main, exactly in proportion to the local and precise information which they possess; for what says the member for Waterford, upon whose support we have heard the Government congratulated, ironically, I confess, as it appears to me? He thanks you, in the name of England, from the bottom of his heart, but then he candidly tells you, that he knows very little of England; for Scotland, he thanks you with the same fervour, but then of Scotland he tells you that he knows still less; but then, when he comes to Ireland—Ireland of which no man can be a better judge than himself—he tells you plainly, that it is unjust and abominable—and so say most of its supporters, speaking of their respective neighbourhoods. I will, therefore come to that point, and shew, as a sample, how it affects the county with which I am most connected. In his celebrated reforming tour, the noble Paymaster, earlier upon his road than Callington, will hardly have failed to observe the neatness and opulent appearance of Dorchester, our county town, unless indeed (which there is but too much reason to fear) his blinds were closed fast thus early; it has never been a manufacturing place, but has an affluent and respectable population, and is rather on the increase than the decline. By this "popular" measure, that county town is to lose one of its Representatives, and when it looks round for consolation, sees ten Representatives struck off from the list of that county, and not one added, so that if gratitude is there felt, it must be on the principle of

"Blest be the Gods, for what they take away!"

It is the largest county which receives no additional Members, nay, I will shew that it is larger than Nottinghamshire, which will receive two; for, subtract the six boroughs which are to continue represented in Dorsetshire, from its gross population, and there remain 119,830; and from Nottinghamshire, subtracting the population of Newark, Bassetlaw, and Nottingham, the remainder will be only 104,349, leaving an excess of upwards of 15,000 in favour of Dorsetshire. Again, compared with Cumberland (with which the First Lord of the Admiralty is well acquainted) when the represented places are deducted, there remain only 124,420; so that, because Cumberland has an excess of a little more than 4,000, and exceeds therefore by about one-sixteenth, it is to have double the number of Representatives. I will accuse no man of partiality, but much has been said about the line that has been drawn, and it will be confessed, at least, that there are some lucky accidents: it is drawn at 150,000, and Dorsetshire is the largest county that falls below that line; had 160,000 been chosen, Cumberland would have been added to the excluded, and no other county; if 170,000, Northamptonhire would have been added, and no other county. Now, Sir, I think, even the Members for those two counties, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and the First Lord of the Admiralty, will admit, that these are singular and lucky accidents, similar, a little, to that of Malton, where, like the place recorded in Scripture, "peradventure there were five found, it should save the city." What principle is there in all this? and as for the permanence of modern legislation, look to Yorkshire, the only great case where in modern times an alteration has been made: we added two Members to that county by a vote of this House, and it is an object of this Bill to do that very provision away; two are now to be given to each of the Ridings, so that the West, which has nearly 800,000 souls, is to have no more than the East or the North, which, both added together, do not amount to one-half of that population. If such gross disproportion previously existed, it might be borne, but all this is to be set up on the principle of symmetry and proportion; and with such results, so glaring, so obvious, where symmetry and numerical proportion are the professed object, what permanence can be hoped for or expected? Even if the schemes of Ballot and Universal Suffrage should subside, which they will not, can any person dream or imagine that the theorists will not attempt to rectify and square these anomalies? And surely no greater inconvenience can be conceived, than that a deliberative assembly, with its hands over full of business already, should be occupied during the half of every Session in debating what is to be its own nature, and what Members it shall consist of. I am reminded, indeed, of that Spanish king, of happy memory, who said, that if he had been consulted at the creation he would have made several useful improvements. For my own part, I am very glad that Don Alfonso was not consulted, for surely it is more useful and more natural that we should be using the limbs which nature has given us, and considering how best we can exercise our intellectual faculties, than to pass our lives in debating how the soul could be better constituted, or whether four legs might not be more suitable to our figure than two, which was a favourite opinion with Don Alfonso. I make no question that he would have found proselytes; when theory is once on foot, there can be no guarantee from experiment; but some guarantee from mischief at least has been held out to us by the right hon. Secretary for Ireland, whose speech cannot yet be forgotten on either side of the House, when he, pointing to some of his colleagues, reminded us of the great stakes which they possess, and the noble names they bear, and then asked, whether we could believe that such men would overturn the institutions of their country. With that good taste which characterizes him, he abstained indeed from all allusion to himself; but the mind of every man in this House supplied the deficiency, for to talent, eloquence, and industry, he adds in an eminent degree the advantages of high birth and ancient inheritance. But I will ask him in turn if he believes that my Lord Essex, and Lord Northumberland, and Lord Warwick, he who stooped at last to carry the Sword of State bareheaded before an usurper, when they in their day talked of their Reforms, ever dreamed that the blood of the head of the monarchy, that the blood of the head of the Church, the blood, the innocent and heroic blood of the right hon. Gentleman's ancestor, the Earl of Derby, would have reddened the scaffold and stained the annals of their country? Led on by a fanaticism differing perhaps somewhat in discretion, but similar in effect and principle, some among them might be men of abilities, some were weak, some vain, some rash, some ambitious, all misguided; in ruin, in poverty, in proscription, in confiscation, in exile, and some of them in contempt, rued the day when they had lent a hand to propel an engine which they could neither stop, nor moderate, nor direct, till it had borne down before it every trace of their institutions and every semblance or hope of their freedom. Do we live at an early and infant period of the world? No, our state has long reached its manhood and maturity. If, indeed, I were living some three generations after the Flood, somewhere about the time of King Nimrod—had I still the hod upon my shoulder from the building of Babel, I might then, indeed, call about me a little knot of fellow workmen (such as spoke the same language) and run up a snug little constitution for our compact society. But happily now we are not reduced to be theorists and inventors—we have the examples before us of ages to select from and to imitate. And shall we not select that which all times have conspired to praise, and all nations to copy? Shall not the British Constitution, this very Parliament, which has been styled the noblest assembly of freemen in the world, be our model? No, and my friend from Babel (used as he is to confusion) will find it hard to believe, this is the very Constitution and the very Parliament which we are met to alter and to disparage! Alas! there are morbid paroxysms with States as with men; but when we see one far advanced in years growing restless at last in his habitation, and finding that narrow and inconvenient which sufficed for his forefathers and his own better days; altering, pulling down, moving and removing, are we not apt to suspect that it is the restlessness of decline and dotage, and to surmise that his end is not far off? Would to God that with our body politic the analogy may not hold, and that this appetite for change and reconstruction be not the symptom of decay, and the forerunner of constitutional extinction!

Mr. *Slaney*, in supporting the motion for the second reading of the Bill, was understood to reply to the arguments of the hon. member for Callington. It had often been said, before it was pressed on that House by that hon. Gentleman, that all the various interests of the country were virtually represented in that House; as, for instance, that the member for Gatton was an effectual Representative of Manchester and Leeds, and that the four or five cottages of Midhurst fairly represented the commerce, wealth, and intelligence of Birmingham and Sheffield; but he could tell the hon. Gentleman, that such was not the opinion held in those towns, all of which demanded a more efficient Representation than that which the hon. Gentleman considered so excellent for them, and were unanimous in approving of that which his Majesty's Ministers were desirous to give them. He could speak for the town which he had the honour to represent. In Shrewsbury, although he would admit that some of the lowest class complained that they were to be deprived of their privileges by the Reform Bill, and some of the highest were reluctant to part with influence, yet the middle class, which was the most virtuous, the most intelligent and patriotic, were unanimous in their approbation of it. He exhorted the House not to take upon them the heavy responsibility of refusing the united prayer of twelve millions of the people. If a stranger should come into this land [*cries of* "*Question!*" *laughter, and other interruptions, which* *prevented Mr. Slaney from completing the sentence. He afterwards proceeded.*] They ought not, should not, dare not reject the prayer of a united nation. The hon. members for Gatton and Old Sarum might reject the prayer of the people with little apprehension, but [*renewed interruption, "hear, hear!"*] he did not wish to say anything offensive to those Gentlemen, but as the Representative of a large body of the people, he felt himself bound to speak out his sentiments manfully upon a question so momentous to his constituents. He did not doubt that the Representatives of the close boroughs acted conscientiously in defending what they considered the interests of their constituents. He was sure that was the case with the hon. member for Boroughbridge. But he hoped his hon. friend (if the learned Gentleman would allow him so to term him) would well consider the grounds of his opposition, and, taking his Patroclus by the arm, retire from the contest; for that hon. Gentleman was learned in law, and must be acquainted with the maxim, that no man is a proper judge in his own cause. Whatever might be said of those who made objections to the details of the Bill, and yet were willing that it should go into a Committee, it was evident that they who would vote against the second reading were opposed to the principle of Reform. [*No, no, no!*] The people of England, from one end of the country to the other, were calling for that measure of Reform which had been proposed to them, and with friendly feeling he would warn the House not to deceive the just expectations of that class which most of all deserved the attention of the Legislature, on account of their conduct, industry, aggregate wealth, and influence.

Lord *Norreys* said, that he came down with the intention of voting for the Bill, but he could not conscientiously vote for what he believed to be mischievous—that which he felt persuaded could not fail to destroy the balance that ought to subsist between the different orders of the State, and the several interests of which the community was composed. In his opinion, the Bill, if carried into a law, would have the effect of giving a preponderance to the manufacturing interest. He was further strengthened in his opposition to the present measure in consequence of the announcement made by his hon. friend, the member for Cornwall, that he would himself bring forward a measure of Parliamentary Reform. In expressing thus his conscientious persuasion, and in thus declaring his determination to act upon that persuasion, was he, therefore, to be considered as opposing himself to the interests of the middle class? Quite the contrary; he merely opposed the Bill for that portion of it which he believed would endanger the institutions of the country. It had been said, with reference to the peculiar provisions of the Bill, that the framers of it must have drawn a line somewhere: true, but he must be allowed to say, that that line was drawn most unfairly, though, at the same time, with great ingenuity and adroitness. There could be no sort of doubt that the effect of the measure would be to increase the influence of Ministers in that House; for there could not be a question that the exclusion of sixty-two independent Members must increase the ascendancy that, he regretted to say, was used most disadvantageously for the country. Those Gentlemen who had large constituencies were menaced with a dissolution: he disregarded any threat of that nature; no consideration of that description should induce him to compromise his principles. The true interests of the country should be with him the primary consideration, and that which he should never be brought to sacrifice for the sake of any temporary popularity. In the discharge of his duty he would stand or fall; and he trusted that the day was not distant when the eyes of the country would be opened to the gross deceit and delusion which was attempted to be practised. Looking, then, to the approach of that period, and to the time when the hon Baronet, the member for Cornwall, would redeem his pledge, he thought he should best discharge his duty to the country and to his constituents by voting against the Bill.

Mr. *Villiers Stuart* would only occupy the attention of the House during a few minutes, while he briefly accounted for the vote which in duty he felt himself bound to give. He had hoped before that night to have transferred to other hands the trust which had been reposed in him; but circumstances, over which he could assure the House he had no control, had placed him in this painful dilemma, that either he must on the one hand leave the electors of Banbury without a Representative at the very moment when their rights and privileges most wanted support, or, on the other hand, he must, if he seconded their views, sacrifice his own individual feelings. He conceived that he was bound in honour to act upon the wishes of his constituents, and he entreated the House to believe that that consideration, and that alone, induced him to adopt the resolution of voting against the second reading of the Bill. Having thus pledged himself to discharge the point of honour to his constituents, he felt that it was due to his own character to declare, that his own opinions were decidedly at variance with those of his constituents. He also had to declare himself as holding his seat only till the electors of Banbury had time to select a successor to that seat which he had then the honour of filling. He trusted that the statement of the feelings and motives with which he then took the liberty of troubling the House would procure him the credit of disinterestedness. His vote belonged to his constituents, but his opinions were his own, and those opinions, he had no hesitation in saying, were favourable to the measure; and in voting against the Bill he hoped and trusted he should vote in a minority.

The *Solicitor General*, owing to the low tone of voice in which the hon. and learned Gentleman spoke, and to the noise which prevailed in the House, was nearly inaudible. He was understood to deny, that there was any thing in the present measure of a revolutionary tendency, and as no one imputed any thing like revolutionary intentions he therefore thought it needless for him to assure the House, that he was the most decided enemy to anything revolutionary. The whole of the argument as against the Bill seemed to proceed upon the assumption that there was something in the British Constitution inconsistent with change, and that to make an alteration would be nothing less than to effect a complete destruction. Now, if hon. Gentlemen would only take the trouble to cast a retrospective glance over the parliamentary history of this country, and over the history of its institutions, they would find that there had been an almost uninterrupted series of conflicts between the principle of democracy and despotism, with alternations of success, and the inevitable consequence of that, a system of perpetual change. The present Bill was, therefore, in every point of view, in perfect harmony with the whole current of our Legislature, and instead of deserving to be designated as revolutionary, deserved rather to be called a great and healing measure—not a departure from, but a recurrence to the great principles of the Constitution. It followed most faithfully in the steps of their parliamentary predecessors, neither destroying nor innovating, but falling back upon the fundamental principles upon which our ancestors acted. He had said, that the whole course of our parliamentary history presented nothing but a series of changes. He believed that, with respect to the period antecedent to the Revolution of 1688, there would be no difference of opinion; and he was sure that, when they came to consider the period which had elapsed since then, they would feel there was equal ground for assuming that, to take away from the British Constitution the principle of mutability, would be to deprive it of an essential attribute. In six years after the Revolution, the Triennial Act was passed, distinctly admitting, on the part of the Legislature of that period, that the Revolution was not a settlement to be permanently unchangeable; neither was the Triennial Act itself treated with undeviating respect, for in the year 1715, its repeal was sanctioned by some of those identical Statesmen, such as Lord Somers, the great champion of the Revolution, and the author of the Bill of Rights, who brought about the Revolution itself, and afterwards the Septennial Act was passed, and another great change effected in the constitution of Parliament. That Parliament, which, under the principles and by the authors of the Revolution, had its duration and powers limited to three, suddenly, and of its own authority, extended those powers to a period of seven years. Did any one at that period hold that the Septennial Bill was a revolutionary measure—or had any Gentleman in the course of the present Debates so designated it? So far from any such character being imputed to it, the measure had always been treated as one within the constitution of Parliament to enact. He would ask the hon. and learned member for Boroughbridge, who so stoutly defended all boroughs, what he would say to th eSeptennial Act? According to the argument of the hon. and learned Member, that Act must have been completely a revolutionary measure, for it affected all Corporations, which it, *pro tanto*, disfranchised for four years. Under that very Act were those Gentlemen now sitting in Parliament who branded the present measure as revolutionary. But that measure did more than disfranchise a few boroughs—it disfranchised all the people of England for more than half their existence. Neither the 6th of William and Mary was then ever treated, nor was the Septennial Act objected to, as an innovation—it was merely felt that the Parliament of that day was following up the principles of the Revolution, and treading in the parliamentary footsteps of their predecessors. It must even be in the recollection of those hon. Members whom he had then the honour to address, that many boroughs being deemed corrupt, attempts had been made in Parliament to disfranchise them, yet that was never held to be an attempt beyond the legitimate powers of Parliament. In his opinion, however, a general and sweeping measure of Reform would be infinitely preferable to such occasional disfranchisements, for he conceived that nothing could be more dangerous to the liberties of the State—nothing more dangerous to the interests of justice, than to mix, oftener than absolute necessity demanded, the legislative with the judicial functions. To take an example :—In the year 1781, the Borough of Cricklade was brought under the consideration of Parliament—certain electors of it were charged criminally—some were convicted—some were tried and not convicted—and a third class were neither tried nor convicted. Those who were convicted, of course suffered the full penalty of their offence, part of which was, that they lost the right of voting. In the first place, it would, according to all principles of justice to which he had been accustomed, be assumed that those who were tried and acquitted were in every point of view innocent; and with stronger reason might it be concluded, that the parties who were not even accused must be deemed innocent. But how did the House deal with that case? Why, after the trials, the House made these proceedings the foundation of a legislative measure, which completely altered the elective franchise of that borough, affecting equally the innocent and not suspected, as well as those tried and convicted, and who had paid the full penalty of their crime. This was done on the ground that the facts having come to the knowledge of Parliament, it was incumbent upon it to secure the public against the consequences of this abuse of the elective franchise in the borough of Cricklade. It was, therefore, not with a view of punishing the guilty, by an *ex post facto* law, but by a great constitutional principle, that Parliament looking to what might in future take place in that borough, considered that the people of England had no security that the persons returned for Cricklade would be returned by a constitutional constituency. Other attempts of a like nature had been made but, with one or two exceptions, they had failed, and the delinquents had escaped; but the public knew, it had been stated in that House by the highest authority, that it was as clear as the sun at noon-day that seats in that House were bought. All these cases, however, shewed that Parliament never had regarded the franchise as property, but as a trust which it might regulate as was best for the public good. In all the cases of the boroughs mentioned in the present Bill, although there might not be the same evidence of corruption as in the places already disfranchised, there was the same moral certainty. This was the conviction out of doors, founded upon a moral certainty of the fact. The present Bill was founded upon the same conclusion that Parliament came to in the Cricklade case, that the people had not adequate security for the proper exercise of the elective franchise; and he contended that it was as much in the power of Parliament to disfranchise all these boroughs at once, as one after another. He admitted that there must be a just cause for any change that was made in that House. If there was not a just cause, any change must be unjust; but he contended that it was not only as much within the competency of Parliament to disfranchise all these boroughs, as it was to disfranchise them one after another in succession, but it was more convenient, if sufficient evidence could be obtained, to convict them according to the strictness of law. Was it meant to be argued, that boroughs were not to represent the constituency but the nominees? If not, then the whole case was proved against them. But it was said, that no just cause had been made out. Were the people to have confidence in that House—and was the mode of election in those boroughs so secret that the people could not get at it? The Government contended, that that mode of election was against the feeling of the country, and that the people of England complained of it. He was one of the last of those who would yield to popular clamour. But this was not popular clamour. This was not a sudden ebullition. Let Members look at the middling classes of society. Formerly politics were abstained from because it was apprehended that there might be a difference of opinion on Parliamentary Reform, but within the last six or seven years there was felt to be no such need for refraining from the subject, for the necessity of it was generally admitted. The Reformers of this country were an active body of men, and were not to be put off: the cry for Reform was generally diffused, and it would be found that it would not cease till the just demands of the nation were satisfied. The whole House admitted, that Reform of some sort or another was necessary; but those who thought proper to oppose the present measure would not condescend to propose one of their own. In fact, every Member must feel, that they had upon them as strong an external pressure as was consistent with the law—as strong as was at all consistent with the public peace; and if they could not satisfy the expectation that was raised, the consequence would be, that the pressure would become stronger, so as at last to endanger the public peace. One of the great hopes that was built upon this measure was, that it would be the means of separating the respectable part of the community from those who thought they could never demand enough. The opponents of the measure themselves had told them, that they would not rest without the Ballot and Universal Suffrage; but it was certain that the public feeling, as far as the Constitution would allow its display, was decidedly in favour of this measure without the Ballot; and he, therefore, was justified in saying, that if this measure was passed, the more respectable portion of the people would be satisfied. But even if they were not, was that House to refuse justice, because the people might afterwards ask what was more than justice? Was it to resist all that was reasonable, for fear that what was unreasonable should be demanded? He supported the Bill, because he thought that it would be a restoration, not a revolution, and be the means of satisfying the minds of those who felt that they had a stake in the country, and that that stake was not adequately guaranteed under the present Representation.

Sir *E. B. Sugden* rose, amid loud cries of "Adjourn," and "Go on." He was sorry that there was a call for adjournment, especially after the address of the Solicitor General, which, he would venture to say, was the most unconstitutional that had ever been delivered in that House. His hon. and learned friend had mentioned the changes that had taken place in the early days of the Constitution, up to the time of the Revolution, and had contended, that because changes took place then, there ought to be changes now. But his learned friend had forgotten that in those early times there was not to be found that perfection which existed now. And his learned friend had forgotten who it was that had restored the Charters after they had been taken away, under which the Corporations exercised their rights. It was King William 3rd. His learned friend asked, whether the Septennial Bill was revolutionary? It was not a revolutionary, but, it was a highly unconstitutional measure, which those who represented the Administration of the present day had forced upon their constituents; and now the same Gentlemen told the people of England, that they would grant them this measure for the purpose of keeping their places. He would venture to assert, that the great object of the Government, in bringing forward this measure, was to preserve their offices. He did not speak in a personal view, but of the desire of his Majesty's Ministers, who had gained their places on the strength of the popular ferment—who, instead of joining the late Administration in supporting the institutions of the country, took advantage of the popular feeling to turn them out, and now sought, by cultivating the voice of the people, to maintain that power which they had thus won. The hon. and learned Gentleman had told the House, that it was improper to mix the legislative and judicial capacities, and that, though there was injustice in the case of Cricklade, where there was evidence of corruption, therefore it was proper to disfranchise all the boroughs without any evidence at all. The hon. and learned Gentleman talked of moral evidence when he should talk of legal evidence. He talked of the agitation which prevailed, and of the universal cry which was made for Reform; but the agitation had been the work of the Ministers themselves. It was true that a great difference had taken place in the style of the petitions that had been presented to that House. But who had been the cause of that? The present Ministry. They had followed the advice of the hon. member for Waterford who had said, that he wanted agitation for Ireland that the Repeal might be carried, and agitation for England that the Reform might be carried: this hint the Ministers had adopted, and had agitated the country that they might carry this measure. He had looked at the petitions that had been presented, and he would take on himself to say, that the people did not want the Reform that had been forced on the House. The Ministers were forcing this Reform on the country,—the people of England did not want it. [*Cries of* "*Oh, oh.*"] He maintained that such had not been the object of the petitions which had been presented to that House previous to the introduction of this Bill, and which, while nominally calling for Reform, had very different objects in view. He would defy any hon. Member to point out any of those petitions in which the people asked for such a measure as this. All their petitions, before this Bill was brought forward, called for the Vote by Ballot and Universal Suffrage. [*Cries of* "*No, no.*"] They all asked for the destruction of tithes [*Reiterated cries of* "*No, no.*"]. He would maintain, notwithstanding those cries from the benches opposite, that at least a great proportion of those petitions did make such a demand. All the petitions to which he alluded only asked for Reform in vague and general terms, but they distinctly demanded the redress of what they seemed to consider more pressing grievances. [*Cries of* "*Name, name.*"] He could not at this moment name the particular petitions which made such demands, but he would contend for it, for he had read all those petitions over carefully, that the petitioners only asked for Reform, coupling it with the reduction of tithes, and rents, and taxes, and the redress of other grievances which they supposed existed. ["*No, no.*"] It was very easy to say "No" to that assertion; but he would maintain, that the petitions which were then presented had totally different objects in view from those which were now presented to the House. The hon. member for Preston said, "hear hear!" and he, therefore, entirely agreed with his statement ["*No, no!*" *from Mr. Hunt*]. The petitions, however, which he had described as they formerly existed, now wore an entirely new form. They did not now contain a word about Universal Suffrage; and the people who formerly at the meetings were received with applause when they spoke in favour of the Ballot and Universal Suffrage, were now, if they mentioned the subject, received with execrations, lest such a course might endanger the measure. They acted, no doubt, upon the impression, that having once succeeded in getting such a measure as this carried, the other measures which they had in view, the ulterior objects which they contemplated, would of necessity speedily follow. They had been called upon to bear in mind the late proceedings in France: look, then, to France and see what had been the termination of the popular struggle there? It had ended in the annihilation of royalty—it had overturned some of the best institutions of the country. When the noble Lord said, he was for Triennial Parliaments,—[*Lord J. Russell* "No, no!"]. He understood the noble Lord to say, that he had sacrificed certain opinions of his own on that subject,—in the introduction of this plan of Reform. But he would pass to other topics. He believed, that the hon. members for Preston and Waterford were anxious to diminish the powers of the aristocracy, and to increase the influence of the democracy: and was it possible for persons entertaining the opinions of those hon. Members not to require further measures? Many Gentlemen, declared that the measure did not go far enough. He had to express his surprise that no one had entered into the details of the Bill now that it was before the House; no one, however, had thought it to be worth his while, and the House was called upon to agree to the second reading, without any portion of the measure having been explained. As a lawyer, he had carefully read the Bill, and he could conscientiously declare, that he was incapable of understanding many of its details. He, therefore, was not surprised that no one got up to state how it was to be carried into execution. He also begged to deny the moral power of the House to strike off sixty-two Members from the imperial Parliament, when the population of the country was increasing at the rate of a quarter of a million every year. And if sixty-two were to be struck off, why not 100 or 150? Where was the computation, and on what was it grounded? Was it with reference to the business required to be done? But was it not said by the framers of this measure, that the ground upon which they proceed, is that of giving a larger Representation to the people? And yet while there are millions unrepresented, who, it seemed, were calling upon the Government to extend the elective franchise, the Government met their wishes by first cutting off sixty-two Members from the number of their Representatives! It did appear to him to be utterly impossible to maintain any such ground, or defend such an anomaly. It might be said, there was a great many idle Gentlemen among the Members; who seldom attended, and who frequented the House as a lounging place, and therefore, said, the noble Lord, "I will cut off these sixty-two Members." But would the noble Lord shew the House that such men would not be there again; and would he shew upon what constitutional ground he presumed thus to exclude these Representatives? He called upon the House, and upon the country, to declare by what right they could proceed with this measure. It was nothing but a Bill of Pains and Penalties, founded on an inclination to destroy, and having no better principle for its guide than a love of change. The great feature of the British Constitution was, that it adapted itself flexibly to every change of circumstances and of times. That Constitution had worked well for all the purposes for which it was made, and was itself the work of time, and was not created by any man. No man could have created it. That Constitution this Bill was about to destroy. The people were to be disfranchised; even the voters of Preston. Their rights were not reserved by the Bill; there was not even any provision for allowing them to hold their franchise for their lives; they were to be disfranchised at once; and the hon. member for Preston was by his vote prepared to disfranchise his own constituents. The Bill professed to be founded on the principle of population, but it was most wild and extravagant. For example, the boroughs with one Member, not having 300 voters, were to be supplied with voters from the neighbouring hundred. Now it might happen that some of these boroughs might have only one voter, and the other 299 voters must be gathered from the neighbouring county. He did not understand this principle, nor know why the number should be limited to 300. For his statements he had relied on the returns on the Table, which he now understood were wrong, and that showed with what precipitancy this measure had been brought forward. The Government was ignorant of many of the circumstances which it ought to know. The Government, as a Government, was bound to have correct information on every point on which it proposed to legislate. And what was the reason for this precipitancy? Why, the people, it was said, won't be denied; so that the Constitution was to be destroyed with indecent haste, without any body surmising what was to be substituted in its place, because the people were impatient. He did not deny that they were knocking at the door, but he thought if spoken to reasonably, and with sincerity they would wait. He knew the people, he belonged to the middle classes, he sprung from them, and among them he was destined to remain. He, therefore, had no interests separate from theirs, and he was sure that he felt for the lower classes as much as any man, and he would advocate their rights with as much independent zeal as any man. But he would not sacrifice the people of England to their own passions, nor give up to their prejudices their own real interests. By such conduct he should show that he was their real friend. The measure as he understood, was calculated to bribe a large number of persons to support it. It was said, that it would be based on a constituency amounting to 500,000 persons: that he doubted, and he saw no means by which that number could be made out. The advocates of the measure recommended it on various grounds. To the peo- it was said, that it would give them a share in the Constitution; the middle classes were told that it gave the whole power of the country into their hands; and to the aristocracy it was said, see how completely it places the people of England in your power. He could not believe that the member for Milborne Port (Mr. Sheil), whom he had heard that night for the first time, really represented a borough, when he heard him commence a crusade against boroughs. He would ask, what sent learned Gentlemen to the House? That learned Gentleman had spoken of a borough being a dowry for one, and given for a necklace to a second, and bestowed as a jointure on a third fair person, which made him inclined to ask if his own borough had been so bestowed? That hon. and learned Member argued, in favour of the Bill, that it would give additional strength to the county interest by increasing the county Members; but when the hon. and learned Member said that, it showed that he had not read the Bill. Each county Member was now respectable, and of weight and importance, from representing a whole county; but this Bill cut all the counties of England up into petty paltry districts, and destroyed the weight of the county Members, by destroying them as Members for the whole county. The very way in which a county was divided to take the poll would have an influence on the election; and knowing, as he did, the habit of Englishmen to form confederacies, which they sometimes put to a good, and sometimes to an evil purpose, he did not doubt that the parishes on the two or three districts round each polling place, would return the Members for each part of the county. Thus the county Members would be deprived of all that weight they now derived from representing a whole county; and in this respect he believed that the measure would destroy the aristocracy, and root out their influence in the country. The excuse of haste and impatience on the part of the people might be admitted if this Bill could be executed when passed—if it ever should be passed. But what did the Bill provide? Why, after the Bill had destroyed the present constituency, leaving no man in England acquainted with the principle on which he was to give his vote, it provided that a riding Commission of the Privy Council should go round the land to settle the rights and the votes of all the constituency of England. He should like to see such a Commission starting forth from Whitehall. What was the actual operation of the measure, as it now stood? —Nothing less than calling upon them, as the Representatives of the people, to abandon the principles of the Constitution, and to give up all their rights into the hands of the Riding Commissioners, who, according to the proposition contained in the Bill, were to be the future referees of the constituency of England. Why, if the House of Commons were to dare to give to individuals a power so overwhelming as that which would be possessed by these Commissioners, or to confide to them such important functions, it would by that act, and from the moment of the measure passing that House, declare itself incapable of executing the trust confided to it. The Government would thereby be possessed of the power of parcelling out, by the means of these Riding Commissioners, the whole country, into such divisions as might suit the purposes which were to be attained, and individuals might be favoured, as would be found most convenient to their own views, or those of the Privy Councillors to whom these powers should be confided. He was of opinion that the House would not do its duty to the people if it were to confide such powers to the Government, for they would be in the hands of the Government and of the Monarch; and such powers were not based on any one principle of the Constitution, but were an utter violation of all principles. The Government, by this measure, called upon the House to make its will, as it were; and, in answer to the objections urged by the dying Members to an act which signed their own death-warrant, said to them, "Leave us trustees to your will, and we will take care to see all your wishes executed." Was that the part of provident men? He believed not, and he thought the House would say not. The whole Bill was full of inconsistencies. Thus the boroughs were separated from the counties in which they were situated. Thus Leeds, Halifax, Wakefield, Sculcoats, and the other large towns, were quite cut off from any share of the Representation of Yorkshire, and the consequence was, he believed, that many of the County Members would now have much fewer constituents than before. No longer must the Members for York say they represent that county. They will not represent the sixth part of it. The householders who had votes for towns were not allowed to vote for counties, because they were not to have double votes; but at the same time, the copyholders were given votes for the counties, while the freeholders retained them, thus doubling the votes in these instances. The Bill had not been explained by any of the learned Gentlemen who had spoken on the other side. It was not indeed fitted for discussion, and he believed that it was never intended that it should be discussed. It was a monstrous provision of the Bill which gave the King the power, by the advice of his Whig Council, to parcel out the country, for it was known that the King did nothing but by the advice of his responsible advisers, so that to them would in fact, be left the power of rejecting or adopting the whole of the regulations recommended by the Commission of the Privy Council. The Bill, in fact, abolished the whole constituency of England, and gave his Majesty the power, which meant the Government, which meant the men now in office, to organize it anew. That was not sufficient for him; he could never consent to delegate the power of that House to persons who were unworthy of his confidence. Their Budget had shown how incapable they were of providing for the common wants of the State, and was he, therefore, to intrust them with a power to re-model the Constitution by a law, the working of which no man could tell? They did not comprehend their own measure, nor did any body else. There was nothing said in the preamble of the Bill about bribery, or about disfranchising a great portion of the people, and yet the people were disfranchised by the Bill, and the rights of all the Corporations in the kingdom were destroyed. He did not understand by the Bill, nor would the constituency of the country understand, how the elections were to be regulated. Thus the whole Constitution was changed by persons who could not express their intentions and wishes on paper. He could not, in many cases guess at their meaning, and he believed that they were ignorant of it themselves. In one point the Bill gave a great boon to the landlords, and he should like to see the landlord who inserted that clause in the Bill. According to it, before any man was allowed even to register his vote, and that was to be done thirty days before the elections, he was obliged to pay up all the arrears of rates, taxes and rents. It was an excellent Bill for the landlords, and they were careful legislators for rents, rates and taxes. It was quite a relief to find a line so clearly drawn as this which settled the rights of registry by an appeal to the tax, rate, and rent gatherers. So excellent a landlord's bill had never yet been known, which placed the right of registration on the ground of the voter having paid his rent. There, again, was the appointment of the referee on all these rights of voters, which was to be vested in the Lord Chancellor. Was it to be endured that the constituency of the country should be at the mercy of an Assistant Barrister, who would be a functionary of the Lord Chancellor, and, in consequence, of the Ministry, and at whose sittings the attendance of Counsel was forbidden, together with the refusal of all appeal from the decision of this Barrister, except by having recourse to law, which method was open to abuse. Was a measure which struck off sixty-two Members of that House, without any regard to the necessity for so doing, and which doled out five to Scotland, three to Ireland, and one to Wales, as baits, he supposed, to obtain the support of those countries, to be considered as Reform? The hon. Member then made some observations on the conduct of the hon. member for Waterford, and the Repeal of the Union, respecting which he expressed his intention to bring a motion before the House. He contended that a compromise had been entered into by the Government with the hon. member for Waterford, for it was impossible to bring that hon. and learned Member up to receive judgment after he had received the applause and cheers of that House—he repeated that there had been a compromise between the Government and the hon. and learned Member, for no subject would have dared to write letters to the Lord Lieutenant of a kingdom on the subject of proclamations, without either being punished, or some compromise being entered into with him, by which his punishment was obviated.

Mr. *Stanley* rose, amidst confusion, and objected to this question being mooted, and repeated his declaration of a former evening, that no compromise whatever had been entered into with the hon. and learned member for Waterford.

Sir *Edward Sugden*—The letter which was read by that hon. and learned Member had produced a conviction in his mind that such was the case; he should, however, pass on and ask if the state of Ireland was such as to render it necessary, or politic, to give her additional Members at the expense of England, at a moment when it had been declared throughout that country, that, in the event of a dissolution of Parliament, there would be a pledge required from every man who stood forward as a candidate, that he should use every endeavour in his power to bring about a repeal of the Union. Was he to be curtailed of his just proportions to give to another person? and was England to be deprived of her Representatives in order to add to those of Ireland?—In opposing this Bill he had done his duty, and he should detain the House no longer than to declare that, having pointed out what he considered would prove injurious in the operation of the Bill, he should never feel so satisfied, nor experience so great a pleasure as he should in giving his cordial vote to the amendment proposed by his hon. friend the member for Cornwall.

Several honourable Members here rose and attempted to address the House, but one voice was predominant in repeatedly crying for an adjournment of the debate.

The question of adjournment was put and carried.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Tuesday, March 22, 1831.

MINUTES.] Petitions presented. By the Bishop of BATH and WELLS, from Rochdale, for limiting the hours of Labour in Cotton Factories; from Derby, against suffering Idolatrous practices in the East Indies. By the Duke of GLOUCESTER, from the Society of Friends in England, against Negro Slavery. By the Earl of ABERDEEN, from Aberdeen, against any alteration in the Timber Duties, and against the Tax on Steam-Boats. By the Marquis of DOWNSHIRE, from Achrony, for an Alteration in the Grants for Education (Ireland). For Reform, by the Earl of RADNOR, from Ross (Hereford), St. Andrew's, in Wells, Somersetshire, and various other places:—By the Marquis of CLANRICARDE, from places in Ireland:—By the Duke of NORFOLK, from Paddington, Retford, and Andover:—By Earl CAWDOR, from Haverfordwest:—By the Marquis of CLEVELAND, from Shrewsbury:—By the Marquis of DOWNSHIRE, from Down:—By the LORD CHANCELLOR, four lists, one containing thirty-two, another twelve, another twenty-seven, and another thirty petitions, from various parts of the kingdom:—By Earl GREY, from the County of Northumberland, signed at a Meeting held at Morpeth, on the 16th of March, in favour of Reform, and approving of the plan before the House of Commons; and, in the absence of the Duke of Bedford, from the Inhabitants, and from the Mayor and Corporation of Bedford; with forty-three others from Montrose, North Shields, the Tailors of Edinburgh, and from Gateshead, Killarney, Cork, St. Giles's, (Camberwell), the Tower Hamlets, St. Bride's (Fleet-street), Kingston-on-Thames, &c.:—By Lord DURHAM, signed by 25,000 of the Operatives of Glasgow; and from the Inhabitants of St. James, Westminster.

PUBLIC OPINION ON PARLIAMENTARY REFORM.] Lord *Rolle* presented a Petition from Exeter against the Bill for Parliamentary Reform, and said, that some of the petitions which had been sent to that House in favour of the Bill, particularly one from Exeter were signed by boys of fourteen years of age.

The Duke of *Richmond* wished to ask the noble Lord who informed the House that some of the petitions in favour of the Bill were signed by boys, if he had any doubt that the voice of the whole country was in favour of Reform.

Lord *Rolle* could not say whether that were the case or not, but he had the strongest possible objections to the Ministerial measure.

The Marquis of *Salisbury* admitted, that the general sentiments were in favour of Reform, but he denied that the voice of the whole country demanded it.

The Marquis of *Clanricarde* said, he was convinced the voice of the country was of but one accord as to the necessity of some Reform, though many persons wished to qualify the extent to which the measure should be carried. Notwithstanding all that had been said on the subject at public meetings and elsewhere, he had heard of one person only who had the courage to declare that in his opinion no Reform of any kind was necessary. He could only declare, that he believed the desire for the measure was general, and the feeling was participated in most fully by the people of Ireland.

BANKRUPTCY COURT BILL.] The *Lord Chancellor* said, that when asked last night on what day the second reading of this Bill should be taken, he stated that he was in daily expectation of receiving an answer from the Lord Chief Baron to a letter he had written to him on the subject; but as he had not received an answer today, and as he did not wish to keep the House in suspense, he thought the better course was to fix Monday, 18th, at once, which would be the first Monday after the recess, as the House would meet on the 13th of April, the Judges being summoned for that day. He wished to avail himself of the opportunity to acquaint the House that besides the two Bills which he had presented on the subject of Chancery Reform, and which had gone through some of their stages, there was another which had not yet attracted the notice of the House, because he waited until a noble and learned friend, who intimated an objection to it on the evening when he opened the measure generally, and which he must still delay, as he would not wish to put it forward even a single stage in that noble Lord's absence. There was also a fourth Bill which he had not explained, but which he would now state was intended for the regulation and improvement of the Registrar's and Six Clerks' office. He had in the first instance stated, in a concise manner, what extent of saving he hoped to accomplish; but it appeared from what had been said by his noble and learned friend (Lord Wynford), that his noble friend did not agree in his calculations, which had induced him to make still more strict inquiries, and he was happy now to say, that the actual saving would be even more than he had at first expected. He and his noble friend had both taken the average amount of the Commissioners of Bankrupts' emoluments, and he found that their fees or salaries, instead of being 300*l.* a year, was, on an average, above 400*l.* and many of them made no less than 700*l.* or 800*l.* a year. The whole annual expense of the Commissioners of Bankrupts, and of the present system, was 63,197*l.* In former times, it reached as high as 100,000*l.* a year, but the present might be taken as the reduced expense of the system, the business itself having fallen off, and the Insolvent Debtors' Court having appropriated a part of it to itself. The expense of the new system, at the highest computation, would be 34,200*l.* a year, but if he took from it 7,000*l.* a year for the salary of the Lord Chancellor, it would be only 27,000*l.* He would, however, include the 7,000*l.* for the Chancellor's salary, and let the whole charge stand at 34,000*l.* which deducted from the 63,000*l.* left the total saving in the business of bankruptcy alone at 29,000*l.*; and if the Chancellor's salary were deducted, and placed by Parliament on any other fund, the actual saving to the country on this single branch of its judicature would be 36,000*l.* a year. The fees to the Master and Clerks in Chancery, under the present system, amounted to 51,000*l.* Under the new plan the expenses would be 38,000*l.*, leaving a saving of 13,000*l.* The expenses of the Registrar's department was 34,000*l.*, it would be 16,000*l.*: leaving a saving of 18,000*l.* So that, if he saved in bankruptcy 36,000*l.* in the Masters' and Clerks' office 13,000*l.*, and the Registrar's office 18,000*l.*, the whole saving made by his three Bills in Chancery would amount to 67,000*l.* And if he deducted the Lord Chancellor's salary 7,000*l.*, the saving would be at least 60,000*l.* Now a saving of 60,000*l.* a year would be considered by some persons as a trifling reduction of expense, in a country which spent as many millions; but still it should not be under-valued, the more particularly when accompanied by what he hoped it would be—by a better mode of doing the business, and by the striking off what he had already described, and, what no one but a professional man could believe existed, by the striking off the practice of copy-money and gratuities, by which alone the expense of a Chancery suit would on the average be diminished 200*l.*, and by which, in large suits, bills for 800*l.* would be reduced to 600*l.*

Lord *Wynford* said, no one would rejoice more than he was disposed to do, if his noble and learned friend succeeded in actually saving 60,000*l.* a-year to the country: but still he feared that his calculation was founded on erroneous views, and he would be happy to come to a clear understanding about them. In the first place, his noble friend took the average of the Commissioners of Bankrupts' fees at 400*l.* a-year; but surely he must have gone to years of great distress, like 1825, or 1826, to establish such a sum.

The *Lord Chancellor* was unwilling to interrupt, but it would save trouble to state, that the average of the three last years had been taken.

Lord *Wynford* said, that though he was most willing to place confidence in the assertion of his noble friend; still, as he felt that he must have gone on wrong *data*, he would beg of him to put some paper on the Table by which his statement could be borne out. He hoped that his noble friend would give their Lordships an opportunity of knowing from whence his facts came, for they must be, in truth, very different from any that he had been able to meet with in the course of his inquiry. The noble Lord took the whole expense of the Bankrupt Commissioners at present to be 60,000*l.*, but in that he included a number of items which were incidental to each case of bankruptcy independent of the Commissioners. He was sure there must be some great fallacy in his noble friend's calculations, and he was convinced, though he had never had any professional experience in that branch of practice, and though he was not thoroughly acquainted with all the facts, that the true charge did not amount to 21,000*l.* a year, and he would undertake to prove the fact at their Lordships' bar; and, further he would pledge himself to show that the expense of the new ten Judges, two Registrars, seven Chief Clerks, and thirty Assignees, proposed to be created by his noble friend, could never be supported for 25,000*l.*—no, nor even for 50,000*l.* a-year. An allusion had been made, on this as well as on a former occasion, by the noble Lord, to the petition from the City of London on this subject, and he was not surprised that the merchants and traders of the city of London should come forward to support a measure which would relieve them of expense, and throw it on the rest of the kingdom; and he confessed he looked on them something in the light of interested persons. He hoped that some papers would be laid on the Table to prove the justness of the noble Lord's calculations, and he trusted that the scheme of economy would not turn out to be an increase of expense; and as he felt that the country was to be saddled with an expense which belonged to the city of London, so he also thought that the measure ought to have been introduced not in this, but in the other House of Parliament.

The *Lord Chancellor* returned with much satisfaction the compliment which his noble friend paid him, and he begged to assure him, that he believed his assertion, when he stated that he was very little acquainted with the subject, as every word that had fallen from him bore testimony to that truth, and furnished an argument against himself.

Lord *Wynford* begged not to be misunderstood. He did not say, that he was unacquainted with the subject, for he had made such inquiries as convinced him he was right in the view he took, though he could not pretend to a knowledge derived from professional experience.

The *Lord Chancellor*.—Then, for the first time in his life, he could doubt his noble friend's assertion; and he would tell him, that, while he thought he had examined the details, he was altogether in error—certainly not wilfully—but in error he was. The noble Lord should recollect that he himself was the first person to argue the subject on the ground of economy; but, for his part, he maintained that, if the expense was to continue the same, and the business was placed on a better footing, a true economy would be practised, and the interests of the country advanced. He should have preferred debating the question in any other place; but as his noble friend had thrown down the gauntlet, and had endeavoured to put the Bill at a discount by showing that it was expensive, he would do the best he could to convince him—he was sure he could convince their Lordships—that his noble friend was wrong. The inquiries his noble friend had made must have been of the most incorrect nature if the information they furnished him calculated the salaries of the Commissioners at 21,000*l.* But his noble friend, on the contrary, ascribed the errors to him, and thought that he had taken erroneous *data*; but what would his noble friend say if he learned that all his information came from the Commissioners themselves? What would he think of him if he found that he had gone to the fountain head, and sought the fact from the Commissioners of Bankrupts? What would his noble friend say, when he heard that he had taken—suppose twenty of the first answers that came in to the circulars he wrote to those gentlemen, and that the average salary of the twenty, by their own showing, was 410*l.* a year. Would he not admit that that was a tolerable good standard for the other fifty Commissioners—much better than if he had taken any particular list which might be the highest or the lowest? Would not his noble friend admit that these returns were documents by which he could not be misled. His noble friend, however, in his anxiety to make out a case, contended that the average of 400*l.* a year must have been taken from 1825 or 1826; and he said that those years were years of great distress, and productive of much bankruptcy business. Did no one know that these were years of great distress but the noble Lord? And what became of his noble and learned friend's argument, when he was told, that the three years of 1828, 1829, and 1830, were taken to form the average? These years were, perhaps, more than usually unprofitable in Equity; and he was certain that, in taking the average of them, he was not overstating the mark; but, perhaps, his noble friend could only see one side of the question; and as there were none so blind as those who would not see, he feared that while he had presented the truth to their Lordships, his noble friend had shut one eye; and if he did, he could only tell his noble friend that it was not he who deceived him, but that he deceived himself. His noble friend asked for a comparative statement of the expense of the old and the proposed system. He (the Lord Chancellor) had got it, chapter and verse, and their Lordships might clear the bar, and order the proper officer, who had given it to him, to depose it on oath before them. He had said, that the whole expenses of the old system were 63,000*l.*, and that his new plan would cause a saving of 36,000*l.* a year; and he found out by the simplest mode in the world—namely, by subtracting from 63,000*l.*, the expense of the new plan, 34,000*l.*, that there remained 29,000*l.*; and adding to it the Lord Chancellor's salary, which might be placed on another fund 7,000*l.*, it would produce a saving of 36,000*l.* And he assured the noble Lord, if he applied to the proper officer, that he would get the same results. His noble friend still seemed to dissent from him, and feared he had been only misled by him. But how had he come by the information? Why, by means of the proper officers. Let those officers be called to the bar and sworn, if his noble and learned friend wished it. He should have no objection to this. He had shown their Lordships, too, how the saving he proposed to make would be effected; but his noble and learned friend, who had said that he knew little about the matter, and had proved that he really knew nothing, declared that he could not conceive how this saving could be made. But how could he help this? How could he help his noble and learned friend's want of conception? How could he do more than reply to his noble and learned friend in his own way, and say, that he could not conceive how his noble and learned friend could find a difficulty in understanding simple arithmetic. But his noble and learned friend said, that the object of this Bill was, to conciliate the merchants of the city of London. Undoubtedly, he was gratified that his Bill should have been supported by a petition signed by 4,600 persons connected with the mercantile interests of the metropolis, and he must say, that any objection against that petition came with a bad grace from those who were ready to trumpet forth the independence and integrity of the mercantile classes, beyond all endurance of panegyric, when they could receive any assistance from them in their opposition to Reform. If the authority of these classes was good for one thing, it was good also for another: and yet the House was to be told that it must listen to the merchants of London when they presented a petition on political subjects, on which they must know comparatively little, and that it must turn a deaf ear to them when they presented a petition on a subject which they must know best of all,—he meant their own interest in matters of bankruptcy. "Who doubted," said his noble and learned friend, "that all these respectable persons would put their signatures to a petition in favour of a measure which would transfer the expense of matters in bankruptcy from themselves to the country?" Now the old plan was to pay the Commissioners by fees levied on the bankrupt's estate, and these fees were all specified—

Lord *Wynford.*—Is that in the Bill?

The *Lord Chancellor.*—No.

Lord *Wynford.*—Hear, hear.

The *Lord Chancellor* wished that his noble friend would not merely cry "Hear, hear," but would also listen, and not only listen, but inwardly digest what he had to say on this subject. If his noble and learned friend would only bring an equal mind to the consideration of this subject, and would calmly apply his excellent understanding to a full investigation of it, he would see, that he (the Lord Chancellor) could not put this in the Bill, for the Bill related to the future expense of the system. Whoever had heard of such a preamble as this—"Whereas such and such fees are now taken by the Commissioners of Bankrupts, and it is expedient that they should cease and determine, be it enacted, &c.?" Such a preamble must contain every fee taken by the Commissioners, and would, therefore, soon run to a most inconvenient and disagreeable length. No such preamble ever was on the Statute Book, nor was ever dreamt of even in a fairy tale. The fees, moreover, were not taken away by this Bill. If his noble friend could show that by this Bill the fees were to cease and determine, and the Consolidated Fund was to provide for the salaries of the Commissioners, let him show it; but he contended, that all this Bill did, was to say, that instead of 63,000*l.* odd which you now pay in fees in Bankruptcy, you shall in future only pay 34,000*l.* a year. In like manner you shall have a reduction in the fees paid in the Masters' and Registrar's office to that extent which he had already stated. All the expense was, in future, to be raised in the same way as at present; it would, however, be less in amount, and all that diminution in amount would be a saving to the suitor. He could assure his noble and learned friend, that if he wished it, all the minute particulars of the expenses of his new plan should be laid on the Table of the House. Those particulars would be found to be such as he had stated them, and he had got them from the most respectable men in the profession, Their Lordships should examine them themselves, and if they so thought fit, they should have the individuals and their books produced before them. That was, of all things, the thing which he most -sired. "But," said his noble friend, "new Judges were made unnecessarily, with new salaries." Now all that he proposed to do was, to make ten Judges instead of seventy Judges in matters of bankruptcy. The salaries of these Judges would be 21,000*l.* a-year instead of 28,000*l.*, their present amount,—and he allowed 13,200*l.* for the Registrar and his clerks, and all the other expenses. He had been told by some persons that he had pared down these expenses too much: but he had reason to believe, that if he had been even still more stingy, he could have got persons of respectability and talent to perform the duties. He objected, however, to having this Bill considered as a matter of economy. Nothing had done more harm than an unwise regard to a miserable economy; and he had often had occasion to lament, that it should be considered as superior to all other considerations. He believed that cheap justice was a benefit to a country: but cheap justice might in the event, turn out to be dear justice if cheap justice should turn out to be bad justice. He said that injustice was always expensive, and that the country might pay too little for justice.

Earl *Grey* begged leave to ask if there was any question before the House?

Lord *Wynford* expressed his regret that he had been misconceived in some instances, and misconstrued in others, with respect to the observations which he had offered on the Bankruptcy Bill. In his opinion, the saving of money ought not to be made the paramount consideration in a measure of so much importance to the country as this measure. The object which he should rather have endeavoured to obtain would have been to have justice well administered, and, compared with this most important object, economy was a very secondary consideration. In order, however, that a comparison might be instituted on this ground between the existing system of the Bankrupt Laws, and that which was proposed to be substituted by the noble Lord on the Woolsack, he should beg to move at once for a return of the emoluments received by the Commissioners of Bankrupt within the last three antecedent to the present year.

The *Lord Chancellor* so far agreed in what had fallen from the noble Lord, and was so anxious to see that comparison instituted which was intimated, that he would very willingly second the Motion of the noble Lord, in order that the real amount of the receipts of the Commissioners of Bankrupt might be ascertained. He might, however, mention incidentally, that 60,000*l.* was the whole of the money which was now raised for the purpose of paying the Commissioners for the space of one year, including all the expenses of the Court, and assigning, &c. There was, of course, an exception to be made with respect to the fees which these Commissioners received for their private practice, and which, of course, could not be ascertained: nor, indeed, was it necessary that it should. He must, however, beg to inform the noble Lord, that he had already, with a view to ascertain correctly the receipts of the seventy Commissioners, sent round circulars to them all, requesting a return of the money received by them in their capacity during the course of the year. He had received twenty of these returns, and he was in expectation of receiving the remainder to-morrow, when he would lay them before their Lordships, and possibly save their Lordships all further trouble in regard to the motion now before the House.

Lord *Wynford* thought it necessary to press his Motion.

The *Lord Chancellor* explained, that the Commissioners of Bankrupt held no appointment from the Government as such, but merely consisted of a number of barristers, to whom the Lord Chancellor sent round the Commissions in turn. The course was different with respect to the country, where the Commission was directed to any barrister who might be chosen for that office by the attorney who strikes the docket. It would, therefore, be perceived, that if the motion of the noble Lord meant to include a return of the fees received by the seventy Commissioners as practising barristers, it would be going beyond the necessary bounds, though he had no doubt that these gentlemen would have little hesitation in making that statement if it were decorously required of them. On the whole, therefore, he thought that as he was the returning officer, whose duty it would be to present those documents to their Lordships, it would be better to await the communications from the commissioners, and he trusted he should lie under no suspicion of wishing to withhold any documents which were necessary for the information of their Lordships on this important subject.

Lord *Wynford* disclaimed all idea of casting any suspicion on the noble Lord on the Woolsack; but he contended, in opposition to what had fallen from that noble Lord, that the Commissioners, of Bankrupt were *bonâ fide* public officers, and, as such, were bound to make such returns connected with their duties, as were required from them on the part of all competent authorities.

Lord *Ellenborough* agreed in the view of the condition of the Commissioners of Bankrupt which was taken by the noble Lord on the cross-benches; for, in his opinion, any person who receives the public money is a public officer, and, as such, is liable to be called upon for returns which are connected with his official duties.

Earl *Grey* corroborated what had fallen from the two noble Barons who had last spoken, with respect to the liability of Commissioners of Bankrupt to be called upon, as public officers in the receipt of the public money, for returns of their receipts as public officers, but not as to their receipts as practising barristers.

The motion was agreed to and returns were ordered to be made by the Secretary to the Court of Bankrupts of the emoluments of the Commissioners of that Court during the years 1828, 1829, and 1830.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Tuesday, March 22, 1831.

Minutes.] Bills. Colonial Trade, read a third time. Money Payment of Wages divided in Committee into two Bills, Money Payments Acts Repeal Bill, and Money Payment of Wages Bill.

Returns ordered. On the Motion of Mr. Ruthven, information filed in the Court of Exchequer (Ireland), during the last three years, for the recovery of Penalties under the Excise Laws, specifying the nature of the offence, and proceedings, and the cost, with the names of the parties, and dates of the informations.

Petitions presented. By Mr. J. Smith, from Westport, complaining of Distress, and asking Relief. Against the Tax on Steam-Boats, by Mr. Pringle, from the Merchants and Shipowners of Port Glasgow. By Mr. Calcraft, from Protestant Dissenters at Wareham, against the Pilgrim Tax and Idolatrous practices in India. Against Slavery, by Viscount Belgrave, from Dissenters of various places in Cheshire. For Reform of Parliament, by Mr. J. Smith, from Bognor, and another place in Sussex:—By Mr. Alderman Waithman, from the parish of St. Sepulchre; from Bread-street Ward; from the parish of St. Bride; from the parishes of Bloomsbury and St. Giles, signed by nearly 3,000 persons; and from Greenwich:—By Mr. Alderman Wood, from the Wards of Aldgate, Farringdon, Walbrook, Cheap, and Billingsgate, and from South Shields:—By Mr. C. Dundas, from Berkshire, and the Borough of Newbury:—By Mr. F. Palmer, from Reading:—By Lord Stanley, from Warrington, Stockport, Blackburn, and other places in Lancashire:—By Mr. Sandford, from Chard, Wellington, Glastonbury, Frome, and other places in Somersetshire:—By Lord Ebrington, from Bethnal-green, signed by 7,000 persons; from Plymouth, East Stonehouse, Devonport, Ashbourn, and other places:—By Sir H. Howard, from Worthing:—By the Attorney General, from Andover, Monmouth, and Worcester:—By Mr. Hunt, from Newtown, Lancashire, Whitchurch, Hampshire, and from Eldersley:—By Mr. H. Johnstone, from Wigton:—By Mr. J. Johnstone, from Sterling and Dunfermling:—By Lord Norreys, from Henley-upon-Thames:—By Viscount Belgrave, from Stockport. Against Reform, by Mr. W. Peel, from Norwich:—By Lord Villiers, from Rochester:—By Mr. W. Ward, from Merchants and Bankers of London:—By Mr. Weyland, from Hindon:—By Mr. Alderman Winchester, from Maidstone.

Reform of Parliament—Petitions.] Mr. *Pringle* presented a Petition from the Freeholders of the County of Selkirk, adopted unanimously at a meeting convened at a short notice, and signed by most of them. It was directed against that part of the Scotch Parliamentary Reform Bill which particularly affected their rights and privileges. It was proposed by that Bill to diminish the number of Scotch county Members, for what reason had not been explained; and in order to do so, the county of Selkirk was to be added to the county of Peebles, so that they might return one Member betwixt them, though they had each had an independent Representation ever since the lesser Barons were first represented by one of their number in Parliament. This proposal was highly objectionable in principle, and most unfair in its application to this particular case. Neither for this arrangement, nor for the cutting off two county Members, had any adequate reason been assigned by his Majesty's Ministers. They had not explained why they had treated some counties differently from others; and why, having united Kinross and Clackmannan, which formerly had an alternate return, they had acted otherwise in regard to Cromarty and Nairne, and to Caithness and Bute, all of which they had treated differently, though their circumstances were the same. While Kinross and Clackmannan were to return a Member jointly, Cromartie and Nairne were to lose their Member; and while Caithness was to have a Member for itself, Bute was to be merged in Dumbartonshire. But the hardship upon Peebles and Selkirk was still greater, as those counties had always been independent. The only reason assigned was, that their population was less than that of the others, though it greatly exceeded the population of many of the boroughs in England which were allowed to retain their Members. At the Union, the principle adopted was not that of population, but valuation; the valuation of Peebles and Selkirk being greater than that of any of those counties which at present had an alternate return, they retained their independence, of which it was now proposed to deprive them. But though less populous, perhaps, than those other counties, it appeared from the Returns before the House, that they would have more electors. In the county of Peebles, there were more 10*l.* houses than in Sutherland and Caithness together; and they were only less populous, because they were pastoral districts, the population of which never could be crowded, though they might not be less wealthy and important. No reason, however, had been assigned for depriving the pastoral interests of a Member; and, in the absence of all explanation, it was not surprising that partial and unworthy motives had in Scotland been attributed to the Government. It was very remarkable that the whole of the new arrangements of counties and boroughs in Scotland, although full of anomalies and inconsistencies, was calculated to add to the influence of the present Ministry, and diminish the influence of their opponents. This might be accidental; he wished to impute no improper motives to any of the Ministers, and least of all to the learned Lord who introduced this Bill; but he must remark, that if accidental, it was a most lucky accident in favour of Ministers. Selkirk and Peebles, which it was proposed to unite, though contiguous, were very little connected in other respects. They were separated by a wild mountainous country, and had little interest in common, or intercourse; but each was united in interest with other neighbouring counties; and, therefore, the proposed union, while it was displeasing to both, was calculated to occasion constant dissension and rivalry, instead of peace and harmony. But this union was dangerous in principle. It was the first instance of a union betwixt two independent counties, and would establish a precedent which sooner or later might be extended. If this principle were once admitted by Parliament, what was to hinder Ministers from proposing next year to unite Huntingdon with Rutland. It had already been asked, why should Rutland send as many Members as Lancashire? The principle, if once adopted, might be followed out till all England was divided by the rule of population, and parcelled out into departments, like France at the Revolution. He trusted that the House would consider well before establishing a precedent fraught with so much danger to some of the dearest interests of the country.—Petition to be printed.

Mr. *Mackinnon* presented a Petition, numerously signed, agreed to at a large and highly respectable meeting of the inhabitants of the Town and Borough of Ipswich in favour of Reform. He should do great injustice to the petitioners, as well as to his feelings of respect for them, if he did not express his sincere regret at not being able to offer his full concurrence in the prayer of the petition, because his opinions were not in unison with some of the provisions of the measure which the petition supported. He was, nevertheless, unfriendly to close boroughs, with few constituents; and favourable to the extension of the elective franchise to the large unrepresented manufacturing towns, as well as to the respectable householders of open boroughs. He had also to state, that he had received a petition, agreed to at a great court by the resident freemen of the borough of Ipswich, praying that they and their sons and apprentices might not be deprived of their elective franchise, and in the prayer of that petition he cordially and entirely concurred.

Mr. *Lennard* supported the prayer of this petition. He begged to say, that the petition was a strong testimony in favour of the measure of Reform which had been introduced by the Government, as it tended to show that it not only united reformers of all descriptions, but was satisfactory to men of different and hitherto of opposite parties. The prayer of the petition was well worthy the attention of the House; and the signatures consisted of the names of many of the most respectable and important of the inhabitants of Ipswich, and of all parties.

Admiral *Sotheron* said, his hon. colleague (Mr. S. Lumley) had to present a petition, signed by 2,500 freeholders of the county of Nottingham, in favour of the Bill. He feared his hon. colleague would not have an opportunity of presenting that petition this evening; and he therefore wished to take that opportunity of stating, that he had listened patiently and anxiously to the Debates on this question, with a desire to support the Bill. He had expressed himself to his constituents as favourable to Reform, and, though he might have some objections to the details, when he came down last night he was fully prepared to support the principle of the Bill, and to vote for the second reading. After hearing the Debate last night, however, he had come to the conscientious conclusion, that he could not vote for the measure. It was very probable that this declaration might sever the connection which had bound him to his constituents for four successive Parliaments, and induced them to send him to that House without any restriction; but he felt himself bound to take the earliest opportunity of honestly coming forward and declaring the change which had taken place in his sentiments, and the determination he had come to on this question.

Mr. *Saville Lumley* said, that the petition to which his hon. colleague had referred, and with the presentation of which he had been intrusted, had been signed by 2,500 most respectable persons in Nottinghamshire, and he regretted very much that his hon. colleague had felt it necessary on this occasion to express his dissent from the prayer of that petition.

Lord *J. Russell* had no doubt but the gallant Admiral intended to act in perfect fairness on an occasion so important as that to which he had alluded. But the gallant Admiral had been surprised into a course of conduct which was neither fair nor impartial. Having come down to the House last night with a mind made up to vote for the second reading of the Bill, he had made up his mind, after hearing part of the Debate, to vote against it, and had not waited to hear the whole of the argument. The concluding speech of the last night's Debate was full of errors and delusions that could be totally dispelled. The gallant officer had pursued a course which was neither consistent with fairness nor justice.

Sir *Joseph Yorke* contended, that no man could act a more fair or candid part than the gallant Admiral did, in declaring his honest conviction as soon as it was formed. He had a right to say, whatever his original intention was, that he would go no further with the noble Lord when he was resolved to stop.

Lord *Althorp* said, his noble friend did not impute any thing intentionally unfair or unjust to the gallant Admiral. His hon. friend had very naturally regretted that the gallant Admiral should have made up his mind before he had heard the whole of the Debate. The House was aware that the Mover of a bill did not go into the details until after the second reading. Every thing that had been said yet respecting the details had been said by persons adverse to the Bill.

Lord *Encombe* did not see why any objection should be made to the course which his gallant friend had taken. He thought he had acted a manly part, more consistent with his character than waiting for the close of the Debate and then declaring his sentiments against it.

Lord *Morpeth* did not complain of the course taken by the gallant officer, nor disapprove of it, for he hoped that, by the same process, he would soon see reason to change his mind again.

The Petition to lie on the Table.

Lord *John Russell* here rose, to move the Order of the Day for resuming the adjourned Debate on the Reform Bill. Though he was most anxious that all petitions should be received, yet he considered it of more importance to come to a decision on the present stage of the Bill as soon as possible, and, therefore, he hoped the House would concur with him that no further petitions should be received that day.

Sir *C. Wetherell* admitted the importance of coming to a decision, and he only wished to say, if there were petitions in favour of the Bill, there were some against it. There was a petition from the University of Cambridge against the Reform Bill. At the same time, he would not oppose the wish of the noble Lord.

Sir *G. Clerk* said, he also had a petition to present from the Bankers and Merchants of the city of Edinburgh against the Reform Bill. It was most numerously and respectably signed. He would, however, postpone it to another opportunity.

Mr. *Ward* regretted that he must be precluded by the arrangements from presenting the petition of the Bankers and Merchants of London, which they had intrusted to his care.

Mr. *W. Bankes* said, there was a petition in town from the Senate of the University of Cambridge.

Sir *T. Baring* said, he had a petition to present from Hampshire in favour of the Bill, and he thought time should be given to present all the petitions. The Government had appealed to the people, and the people had answered by numberless petitions in favour of the measure.

Mr. *W. Cavendish* observed, that the petition from the Senate of Cambridge was against certain provisions of the Bill.

Lord *Stormont* still wished that the petitions would go forth to the world, as he was persuaded the sense of the English people was against the measure.

Mr. *Calcraft* said, that he thought time ought to be given for receiving the petitions upon this important question. He felt the more anxious that the sentiments of the nation should have an opportunity of being known, as it was his intention to vote for the second reading of the Bill. As such was his intention, he requested that time might be given for the reception of the petitions for, as well as against, the measure, which was the most important that had over been discussed within the walls of Parliament.

Lord *John Russell* said, that as the right hon. Gentleman had put his request in so agreeable a manner, he felt that it would be very ungracious not to comply with it. He should, therefore, withdraw his Motion, in order to allow the petitions then in the House to be regularly presented, in the order in which they stood in the Speaker's paper, until seven o'clock.

IRISH REFORM BILL.] On Mr. Spring Rice presenting a Petition for Reform from Limerick, and from an individual,

Mr. *North* begged leave to ask the noble Lord opposite (Lord Althorp) when the Reform Bill for Ireland would be ready to be laid on the Table. He thought it very strange that it had not been before brought forward, so that the Irish Members might be made aware of its provisions.

Lord *Althorp* said, that he believed the Bill was now quite prepared, and ready to be submitted to the House. It was delayed in consequence of the length of the Bills for England and Scotland, but he could not see what connection the Bill for Ireland could have with the present discussion.

Mr. *G. Dawson* was surprised at the answer given by the noble Lord to the hon. member for Drogheda. Why was it that the Gentlemen of Ireland were to be kept in total ignorance of the portion of this Bill (for it must be considered as a portion of it) which related to Ireland? Were they not to be consulted upon the matter? and, if they were, why was the information requisite to enable them to form a judgment upon it withheld? He had no doubt, if the Bill for Ireland were printed, a very different impression would be made upon the people of that country from that which at present prevailed. A great portion of them regarded the Reform measure with the greatest alarm, and they looked forward with great expectation for that part of it which more immediately related to themselves. They, therefore, were, as they had a right to be, exceedingly offended, and highly indignant, at the whole tenor of the proceedings of the Ministers.

Mr. *O'Connell* begged to assure the House that the people of Ireland were neither offended nor indignant at the measure—but, on the contrary, they were exceedingly delighted with it. The very spirit of the wise and liberal measure of the Government would, he had no doubt, if extended to Ireland in the Bill about to be introduced, give very general satisfaction. The right hon. Gentleman might insinuate that he was not perfectly acquainted with the whole of Ireland, but he, at all events, knew three provinces out of the four, and such was the prevailing sentiment in those. In the North, also, he believed, from letters he had seen, that the principle of Reform was fast becoming popular, and public meetings were about to be holden; so that, should the present measure remain a few weeks longer, he should have, he believed, not less than 500 petitions from Ireland to present in its favour.

Mr. *G. Moore* denied, that the measure had given satisfaction in Ireland: on the contrary, it had created there the greatest horror and dismay in all classes of society, except, indeed in that class of which the hon. member for Waterford might be considered as the peculiar representative. The system of intimidation adopted in that country, was the principal reason why so few petitions were presented against the Bill.

Mr. *Owen O'Connor* had a great many opportunities of knowing the sentiments of the people of Ireland and he could assure the House, that the measure had there given general satisfaction, not disgust.

Colonel *Trench* wished to know whether the Bill which the Irish people were said to approve so much of was the Bill the provisions of which had been explained by the noble Lord, or the Bill which the hon. member for Waterford had explained in his speech. He believed that the Irish would not support the Government Bill, but a Bill such as that the member for Waterford had described, and that, when they knew the provisions of the Government measure, they could not be favourably disposed towards it. At any rate, it was time that Bill was laid on the Table.

Mr. *Brownlow* wished also that the Bill should be laid on the Table, and printed and circulated through Ireland, and he was sure that it would be acceptable to the people of that country. The hon. member for Dublin had said, that the people of Ireland were not favourable to the measure, except those who were especially represented by the hon. member for Waterford; whom that hon. Member especially represented he did not know; but would the hon. member for Dublin say that it was all the inhabitants of the North of Ireland. The people of that part of Ireland were all in favour of Reform. They had been reformers for a long time; they were the Protestants of Ireland, and would the hon. Member say, that they were especially represented by the hon. member for Waterford? He knew that the Protestants of the North of Ireland, and he was authorised to state it, did highly approve of the measure of his Majesty's Ministers.

Sir *Henry Hardinge* thought, at least the Bill should be immediately laid on the Table, and he trusted that the right hon. Secretary for Ireland would pledge himself whatever might be the result of the Debate that evening, to lay it on the Table in the course of the evening

Sir *John Newport* knew that, at least in one part of Ireland, the provisions of the Bill for Ireland had been rightly appreciated, for he had on Saturday presented a petition from the Corporation of Waterford in support of the measure of his Majesty's Ministers. That Corporation prayed that the Bill—the whole Bill—might pass into a law.

Sir *George Clerk* complained, that the measure should be so well known in Ireland as to be commented on, while the Members of that House were kept in ignorance of its contents. It had been made known to the people, but not to their Representatives. Even the Irish Members were not acquainted with it. When the Irish people were fully acquainted with it, they might treat it as the Scotch treated the Bill that was to apply to that country, which, when it was known, excited their dissatisfaction. The people of Ross-shire, who were the very first to petition Parliament for Reform, since they had seen the Bill had entirely changed their opinion, because that Bill sacrificed the landed interest. They had written to the Lord Advocate to tell him that his Bill, by giving votes to the householders, would entirely destroy, even in that remote country, the influence of the landed gentlemen, and they meant to call a meeting to petition against the plan of his Majesty's Ministers.

Mr. *Stanley* expressed his surprise to hear the observations of the hon. Baronet. The hon. Baronet first complained that the Members of the House did not know, and could not guess at the provisions of the Irish Bill; and then, with extraordinary consistency, asserted that the Irish people would be sure to be displeased with it when they knew it. The Irish people placed, he was happy to say, a just confidence in his Majesty's Ministers; and the hon. and right hon. Gentlemen in opposition, complained of them for bestowing that confidence. A complaint was made that the Bill for Ireland had not been brought in; he had intended to do that, but did not think it very necessary, while the House was engaged with the discussion of the main question. His noble friend had brought forward the main question, and explained his plan of Reform. The broad line of principle for Ireland and England, and Scotland had been laid down by his noble friend, and he did not see the necessity of bringing forward the Irish Bill till the principle was disposed of. That Bill, though important, was of minor consideration, compared to the main object, and he saw many good reasons why that should not be encumbered with a discussion on the details of the Irish measure. When that was disposed of, the House might argue the details of the Irish Bill. He must express his surprise, to hear the Members of the Opposition say, that they were ignorant of the principles, and ignorant of the object of that Bill, when his noble friend had distinctly explained that it would be to destroy the rotten boroughs; to throw open, but not disfranchise, all the other boroughs, and generally to extend the elective franchise. The right hon. and gallant officer required him to pledge himself to lay the Irish Bill on the Table, and state the details of the Irish measure, whatever might be the fate of the main question. To do that would, he thought, be treating the House with great disrespect; and it would, in fact, be as absurd to bring the Irish Bill forward after the great question was disposed of, should it be disposed of as the hon. Gentlemen opposite wished—as it would be to discuss the Evesham bill when the great question was disposed of as they did not wish. He should be ready to bring forward that Bill when the House —as he trusted it would—had concurred with the whole of the people of England, Scotland, and Ireland, in giving its assent to the great principle of reforming the representation. When that was done, he should be ready to meet the hon. and right hon. Gentlemen opposite on the details of the Irish measure.

Sir *George Murray* said, that it did appear to him extraordinary that the Bill for Ireland was not laid on the Table if it were ready. He concurred in the observations of his hon. friend (Sir George Clerk), and thought it very likely, that when the Bill was known in Ireland, it would excite as much dislike to its details as the Scotch Bill had excited in Scotland. He should have thought it very unfair to Scotland if the Bill relating to that country had not been laid on the Table.

Sir Henry Hardinge and several other Members rose at the same time to address the House, but Sir Henry was met with loud cries of "Spoke, spoke," and he sat down, allowing us only to hear the words —"Not to lay the Bill on the Table is very unfair."

Mr. *Dominick Brown* was satisfied that the great majority of the people of Ireland approved of the measure of his Majesty's Ministers. It was more than the people of Ireland expected; it was more than he expected; and he was delighted when he heard the details of the noble measure. He was sure that the more it was known in Ireland, the more it would be liked.

Colonel *Tyrrell* thought that the Irish Members, who were so sure of the approbation of the Irish people for a measure which was not yet known, must not only see more than other people, but even foresee. He found a good reason why the Irish Bill should be known, in the effect of the last speech which was made last night and which had so successively anatomised the English Bill. If the Irish Bill should be so anatomised, the result would probably be the same, though it would most likely be a *post mortem* anatomy. The Bill was hurried forward with a degree of precipitancy such as no Government had ever before used. The noble Lord's purge was really a most drastic one, and if it went so rapidly through the English Members, what would be its effect on the Irish he could not imagine.

Lord *Francis Leveson Gower* must also express his astonishment that the Bill was not laid before the House. He could not separate the Irish measure from the English measure; and neither could it be properly considered and debated isolated from the other. In fact, the whole measure was the most extensive, the most sweeping, he might call it the most imperial measure, which had been brought forward since the Revolution of 1688. He believed, and he should continue to entertain that opinion, though he was sorry to think any thing discreditable to the Government, but till he saw good reason to alter his opinion, he should continue to believe that the Government never anticipated that the Bill would be allowed to be read a first time, and, therefore, was not prepared for the consequences of that event.

Sir *Charles Wetherell* also complained that the Irish Bill was not before the House, and expressed his opinion that the Irish who approved of it must have great prescience. Of course, as the right hon. Secretary for Ireland said he had the Bill ready, he could not doubt his word, but if the right hon. Gentleman had not asserted that, he should have been disposed to believe that the Irish Bill was yet as green as a shamrock—that it was not yet drawn—and lay in some of the unopened drawers of the scrutoire at Derrinane, to be brought forward when the hon. member for Waterford pleased. He could not help adverting to the manner in which that hon. Member had been applauded; and adverting to that, he did not hesitate to say, that these were signs he did not assert of agreement, but of diplomatic approximation of amicable tendencies between the hon. member for Waterford and the right hon. Gentlemen opposite. He said tendencies, though he knew that word was not liked; but he certainly saw tendencies of approximation between persons who, he did not think could approximate, if the Government acted a fair and independent part. He could not persuade himself when he heard certain cheers from the other side of the House, that they were given to the hon. member for Waterford, and that the hon. Member was the same person who had been so lately prosecuted by the Government.

The *Attorney General* was surprised to hear his hon. and learned friend assert that the Irish Bill was yet in the drawers of some scrutoire at Derrinane, because the Gentlemen on that side of the House had cheered the hon. member for Waterford. Last night his hon. friend (Sir E. Sugden) in a speech, in which he had entered into a long discussion on the details of a Bill on its second reading, and this night again his hon. and learned friend had implied that the Government had compromised with the hon. member for Waterford. He did not rise to repel that charge on the part of that Government, but to ask his hon. and learned friend if it was fair to infer, because Ministers approved of what fell from an individual Member on a political subject, that there must be some approximations and amicable negotiations between him and them. There must, forsooth, be negotiations, and this must be openly stated in the House of Commons, because the Ministers, when a Gentleman of great talents and eloquence had made an able speech, had done him justice by their approbation. When the papers, connected with this subject, were laid on the Table, it would be seen that no such negotiation had ever been entered into by his Majesty's Government, and that there was no ground whatever for the imputation which was made in a manner as irregular as it was unjust. His hon. and learned friend spoke of approximations and amicable tendencies, but had certainly lost sight of his usual candour in making that inference. There were, indeed, approximations among Gentlemen on the other side, though how amicable they were he could not say; but there were such approximations and tendencies on Friday night on the question of the Timber Duties—that question to which the late Government stood pledged, and pledged to carry into effect that alteration which, on friday night, all the adherents of the late Ministers and all their new friends opposed. From those negotiations and amicable approximations, it happened that on Friday night, the Ministers were left in a minority. If Gentlemen exulted in that minority, if they were proud of the approximation and amicable negotiations which led to it, he for one, did not envy them their success, nor wish to imitate the means by which it was obtained. He was reminded by the whole of the present debates, of the debates on the Catholic Question, the decision on which was to leave no second Catholic Question behind it; but which marked out for exclusion, and actually excluded, the single man who, of all others, had contributed to the success of that great and healing measure. He had no wish to undertake the defence of the hon. and learned member for Waterford, who was very well able to defend himself, but he must contend, that it was unfair that the motives of a public officer should be impugned, because he felt it necessary to cheer what fell from an hon. Member, who was in the situation of defendant in a prosecution instituted by Government. It was true that a public officer ought to be fairly watched, but not so closely as to extend to even the cheers which he might give in his place in the House, to the expression of sentiments which he might approve without reference to the quarter from which they came. But, by the way the prosecution was not instituted by him, (the Attorney General)—it was instituted by the Attorney General for Ireland.

Mr. *Goulburn* wished not to prolong this discussion, though the speech of the hon. and learned Gentleman was very tempting—for he had no reason to wish the postponement of the decision of the great question; he would therefore only say, that his Majesty's late Government was not pledged to make the alteration in the Timber Duties. The statement that it was, was not correct, and he was sure the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Poulet Thomson) would bear him out in his assertion.

Mr. *Poulett Thomson* rose to answer the appeal which the right hon. Gentleman had made to him, and said he should be most willing to confirm the statement of the right hon. Gentleman, but he confessed that he was not able to do so by any information he possessed. Although he was not prepared to say, that he possessed any information which convinced him that his Majesty's late Government was prepared to submit any measure for the alteration of the Timber Duties, yet the information he possessed must greatly deceive him—he must be greatly mistaken—if it was not the intention of the right hon. Gentleman, the member for Harwich to submit to his colleagues a measure for the alteration of the Timber Duties. The right hon. Gentleman opposite asked ["*Question, question!*"]—he appealed to the House—he had been publicly appealed to—and was bound to answer. The right hon. Gentleman asked him a question, and he could only say, that he believed that it was in the contemplation of his Majesty's late Government to alter the Timber Duties, though that was coupled with another measure to give relief to the shipowners. At that time he enjoyed a portion of the confidence of that body, and he was one of a deputation which had waited on the right hon. Gentleman on the subject; and though they received no confirmation of their hope of obtaining relief they received an intimation that it was most likely something would be done with those duties—the proposed alteration in which the right hon. Gentleman voted against the other night.

Mr. *Herries* felt it necessary to state, that the information of the right hon. Gentleman was totally erroneous. He had never contemplated for one moment the view mentioned by the right hon. Gentleman—he had never contemplated any measure which would have the effect of destroying the whole shipping, amounting to 200,000 tons, engaged in the Canada trade. He had never contemplated for one moment such an alteration of the Timber Duties as would deprive the British shipowner and the Canada proprietor of the preponderance they now enjoy. He could appeal to his right hon. friend who sat near him (Mr. Courtenay, we believe) for his intention. Had the right hon. Gentleman any Report?—Could he produce any document?—Had he any document to prove his statement, or did he rely on the information supplied by some subordinate person, which was not correct? He claimed distinctly to be believed, and he called on the House to put faith in his assertion, that he never had contemplated such an alteration as would occasion the inconveniences admitted on a former evening by the noble Lord.

Petition laid on the Table.

Lord Althorp moved the Order of the Day for resuming the adjourned Debate.

Mr. *O'Connell* rose; but was met by loud calls of "Order!" and "Question!" He had a right, he said, to oppose the Motion if he pleased, and a right, therefore, to speak on it. He had been several times alluded to and made a topic of remark in the House, and he thought the House would not behave with its usual courtesy if it did not allow him to say a few words. He had heard the ex-Solicitor-general and the ex-Attorney-general, last night and that night, throw out insinuations in relation to him and the Government. Both those Gentlemen belonged to the same profession as he did, but he was glad that they did not belong to the same Bar, for it was a rule of that Bar that no member of it should ever voluntarily engage in a criminal prosecution; but those two learned Gentlemen seemed to volunteer to prosecute him. That was not creditable conduct. The hon. and learned ex-Solicitor-general had sneered at the cheers which had come from the opposite side of the House at some remarks that had been made by him (Mr. O'Connell), and the sarcastic allusion had been taken up and echoed by the hon. and learned member for Boroughbridge, with a strength of lungs that might have carried the echo to the borough for which he sat. He could not account for the sarcastic allusion. He had been accused, too, by the ex-Solicitor-general, of arrogance, in a tone which he would not call arrogant, but which, not to be arrogant, was the most like arrogance of anything he had ever heard. He had been accused of looking for the Repeal of the Union through the means of Reform, but he had looked at the Repeal of the Union only as a means of obtaining good government; and if he obtained that by other means, was he not bound to support those means? He had accordingly supported the measure of Reform without looking at its origin, though, if he had consulted his feelings, if he had looked at what had passed with regard to himself, he should have taken a very different course, and not have supported the principle of the Bill. If under such a view he had chosen to object to the details, and particularly if he had distorted them, then he might have picked a hole in the measure as well as another. If he were a Member remarkable for his extraordinary gesticulation—for a jumble of unmeaning words, enforced by violent thumps on the box on the Table, as if the rumbling noise of that empty box could supply the place of common sense, he should have had those hon. and learned Gentlemen's sympathy and support. If, instead of defending the Reform Bill on those great principles which it inculcated and supported, he had taken up the questions connected with it on paltry, pettyfogging grounds, and dealt with them according to the chicanery of the Equity Courts; if he had declared himself a foe to all improvement, and the friend of every abuse; if he had resisted every innovation—had defended the continuance of every wrong, and maintained the sacredness of every law, however barbarous or ill-adapted to modern times,—if he were one who stood on the shore of improvement, and said to the coming tide of amelioration, "So far thou shalt go, and no farther,"—if he were the defender of every spoliation, supported and cheered by the spoliators,—if he were one of this description, he might have given ground for the sarcastic allusion to the cheers, and then, indeed, he should have been cheered by the hon. and learned Members and their associates; and then, too, he might have hoped to mitigate their hostility, and even to secure their favour. He stood there, however, an independent Member of that House—independent either of the Government, or of the party opposed to them. He had entered into no compromise; he had received no promises of lenity; and he denied that he was influenced in his support of the Bill by any other motives than his conviction of its fitness for the ends it proposed.

Sir *C. Wetherell* begged to tell the hon. member for Waterford, that the papers on which he founded his opinions of that hon. Member's conduct were not called for by him. The hon. member for Waterford had himself called for these papers, and read and commented on them to the House. When thus produced, surely it was competent to any other Member to form an opinion on them different from that of the hon. member for Waterford. It was the hon. member for Waterford, therefore, who had introduced the means of forming an opinion on those diplomatic approximations to which he alluded. The member for Waterford had done him the favour to institute some comparisons between the courses they had separately adopted. Comparisons were odious things, particularly personal comparisons; and he begged to retire from the odium of any comparison of that kind with the hon. member for Waterford. He repeated, that he had not charged the diplomatic approximations to the hon. Member, until he himself produced the evidence of them. He begged now, however, to retire from the speculations connected with them. He retired, too, from any further controversy with respect to the spoliations of which he had been said to complain, and to which the hon. Member had adverted; but if he was disposed to continue them, he thought he could bring to the recollection of the House a man who had dealt in spoliations, and made them beneficial to himself, by handing a begging-box round among his friends. What would be said if they were told that the hon. member for Waterford had himself encouraged spoliation, by raising contributions from his countrymen—by taking twopence from the poor man, and a penny from the ragged man, and a halfpenny from the starving man? He was not disposed to violate the order of the House, but he could not help saying, that observations respecting spoliation came with a very bad grace from those who had in this manner raised contributions from the people.

Mr. *O'Connell* wished to make one observation, not on the subject of spoliation, but with respect to the personal charge against himself. He neither was now, nor had ever been at any time, a party to the applications for contributions which the hon. Member referred to. He repeated, he had not been a party to them; and he would add, that he had sacrificed larger sums to his country than the hon. and learned Member had ever gained by his profession. He had a right to speak, and he would speak, in spite of this interruption. [*Confusion and cries of "Order."*]

The *Speaker* said, it was extremely desirable that the hon. Member and others should know to what extent they were to be allowed to continue discussions of this description. When the character and conduct of the hon. Member was alluded to in a pointed manner, by other hon. Members, he was sure that the House would never look with too much strictness of order on the course of proceedings which might be adopted; but it was, at the same time, right it should be known, that observations which would go to the extent of increasing the Debate, or throwing out new matter for discussion, could not be allowed.

Mr. *O'Connell* was obliged for this information, and hoped, in the few words he had to say, that the Speaker, if he was out of order, would correct him. He repeated, that he had spent large sums in the service of his country, and abandoned for it a profession which every one connected with the Bar knew to be worth 7,000*l.* a year. For twenty-five years he had laid out a sum of 2,000*l.* a year—out of his own pocket—to promote the necessary agitation in Ireland in support of the cause of Catholic Emancipation, and if his countrymen—his poor but generous countrymen—were anxious to make him a remuneration for his losses and his sacrifices, he thought that every reflecting mind would feel that the act placed them high among the nations which boasted of civilization.

Sir *R. Peel* did not rise to prolong the discussion, but, on the contrary, to suggest to the House, whether it would not be advisable to put an end to it, so that they might proceed to the discussion of the important question fixed for that evening, with as slight a degree of excitement as was consistent with the nature of the question.

PARLIAMENTARY REFORM BILL—SECOND READING—ADJOURNED DEBATE.] On the Motion of Lord John Russell, the Order of the Day for the resumption of the Adjourned Debate on the Reform Bill was then read, and the question of the Second Reading, and the Amendment being put,

Lord Viscount *Mahon* could not but think, that the remarks just made by the hon. member for Waterford were a fair sample of the misrepresentation with which the opponents of the present measure had been treated. When honestly expressing their fears and objections, they were told by that hon. Member, they were upholders of everything wicked and corrupt—enemies of England—despoilers of the people; and thus, when they brought forward arguments, they were answered by hard words. As little could he concur in the remark made by the Attorney General, that at present they ought only to discuss the principle of the Bill, and to reserve the discussion on the details for the Committee. That would be very convenient for Ministers, and he was not surprised at their expressing such an opinion, after the able and masterly manner in which the Bill had been taken to pieces and exposed last night by the hon. member for Weymouth (Sir Edward Sugden). In a measure so sweeping and general as that, the details were the principle. It was not a mere partial amendment, but a total new-modelling of the Representative system, when, instead of the old-fashioned plan of constituents choosing their Representatives, the Representatives were called upon to chooe their constituents. He wished also to notice, in addition to these unfair accusations, another, which the member for Westminster brought forward last night against the opponents of this measure. The hon. Baronet said, that he was quite astonished at the "gross and shameless effrontery," of acknowledging the existence of corrupt influence in the elections to this House. He said, that when he first entered Parliament, this influence could only be alluded to in cautious and distant terms—it was resented as an imputation by those to whom it applied; but now, forsooth, it was openly defended! In this charge he was seconded by another Baronet, the right hon. member for Cumberland (Sir James Graham), who was shocked—perfectly shocked—at hearing parliamentary interests, the Fitzwilliam interest, or the Newcastle interest, openly mentioned in that House. But what would have been thought or said, if the opposite course had been pursued?—if the opponents of the Bill had said to his Majesty's Government,—"You charge us with corruption, but we deny that any such exists—it is unconstitutional to entertain any such idea—prove it if you can—prove it at that bar—but do not presume to bring forward the charge without full and decisive evidence." If they had said this, then, they would have stopped the Bill, or, at least, the arguments in favour of the Bill, *in limine.* But no, they adopted the more open and manly course of admitting that which was known by moral conviction, though not by any legal proof, and of bringing the question at once to the issue, whether such influence, within certain limits, and under certain circumstances, was, or was not, useful and advantageous to the people. Such was their fair and candid conduct, and such were the acknowledgments they had received for it! Extraordinary pains had been taken to press illustrious names into the service of this Bill. The hon. member for Milborne Port, who spoke last night (Mr. Shiel), gave the House a long and splendid muster-roll of the great Statesmen who had all supported the cause of Reform, and he added, that if we went to Westminster-Abbey, we should find that the Reformers had a majority of sepulchres.

But did not the hon. Member see, or would he not acknowledge, the fallacy that lurked in this word Reform—a word that comprehended every shade of sentiment, every colour of opinion,—every one of the thousand schemes of amendment, from Universal Suffrage and the Ballot, to the mere extension of suffrage to two or three large manufacturing towns?—When, therefore, the hon. Member told the House that all these great men were favourable to Reform, he ought to have added, that their plans were not only different, but opposite and conflicting, and that they differed as widely from each other as they all did from the last new plan proposed by his Majesty's Ministers. But it had been said, that to this last and admirable scheme, all opinions would have come round, and that even Mr. Pitt and Mr. Canning, had they been alive, would, in all probability, have supported it. This assertion had been made not once, but several times in the course of the Debate; but as a profound admirer of those two great men, professing, however humbly, the same political principles—and being closely connected in kindred with one of them, he would venture to rescue their memory from a disgraceful, and what was more an undeserved imputation. It was perfectly true that Mr. Pitt was, in early life, a friend to Parliamentary Reform, and even brought forward a motion for that object—though it altogether differed from the present plan. But what event altered all his views upon the subject of Reform, and made him for the rest of his life its steady and determined opponent? The revolution in France, the ascendency of the populace of Paris. And what was the present situation of the world? Another revolution had just broken out in France,—its populace was again supreme. And was the House then to be gravely told, that, on the same mind, the same event would have produced diametrically opposite effects; and, as the first French revolution made Mr. Pitt, from the friend, become the adversary of Reform, so would the second French revolution have re-converted him? Ought such unfair use to be made of the name and authority of that illustrious Statesman, whose life would fill one of the brightest pages in the history of this country—whose merit exceeded praise—a Statesman

"Who broke no promise, served no private end,
Who gained no title, and who lost no friend?"

A noble Lord opposite (Lord Palmerston) had pretended to discover the opinions of Mr. Canning to be favourable to Reform, from an expression which he found in a speech of his delivered on the Silk Trade; but he thought it was as reasonable to look for the opinions of Mr. Canning, with respect to Reform, in the Debate on the Silk Trade, as it would be to seek for the opinions of the noble Lord on the foreign policy of the country in his speech on the question of Reform. Mr. Canning's sentiments were very different from those the noble Lord imputed to him. In April, 1826, on a proposal by Mr. Abercrombie, to extend the elective franchise in one or more cities of Scotland, Mr. Canning said, and he knew, for he was present at the Debate, that the words had been accurately reported, "I have been accused, and justly, of pertinacity in my opposition to Parliamentary Reform. My opposition to that measure is settled and unalterable, it does not depend on any time, or any circumstances, or any transient considerations whatever."* Such were the sentiments of Mr. Canning. Deeply as the loss of that most eminent statesman was to be deplored, at this time it was more deeply to be deplored than ever. The Highlanders had once a famous general, Lord Dundee, killed at a battle near Dunkeld, and Sir Walter Scott said, that so great was their admiration of his military merit, that for above a century after his death they were apt to exclaim, in any doubtful engagement, "Oh for one hour of Dundee!" So, when he saw our ancient Constitution thus beset, and threatened, and endangered by the very men who ought to have cherished and upheld it, he was tempted to exclaim —"Oh for one hour of Canning!" How would his keen eye have detected, his eloquent tongue have exposed, the falsehoods and fallacies sought to be palmed upon the House in this discussion! How would his former friends and associates have once more felt and acknowledged the mastery of his genius, and shrunk back to their allegiance! He was convinced, notwithstanding all that had been said of the corruption and meanness of the House of Commons, that the Reform Bill, if carried, though it might increase the quantity of talent in that House, would diminish its stock of honesty. The right hon. Baronet, the member for Cumberland (Sir J. Graham), whom he saw on the opposite bench, had been frequently asked, in the course of the Debates, what his constituents would say to this Bill? He would suppose the Bill to be passed, and the right hon. Baronet returned to claim their suffrages. But they would reject him. The right hon. Baronet might then have recourse to some populous town. Acting under an opinion, sedulously fostered by the friends of the measure, that Reform was necessarily a diminution of taxation, and a reduction of the public burthens, the inhabitants of such a place would probably begin by asking him, if he had cut down the Navy Estimates?—No, he would probably answer, the public service required them to be kept up. Why, then, they would probably say, have you reduced the Army? Have you lowered Taxation? Have you diminished the Civil List?—The answer would be No; but what would be the result? Some cunning lawyer's clerk—some of those who are on the watch to take advantage of the projected changes—would probably instantly start up and say, "Oh, you see the First Lord of the Admiralty has no sympathy with your sufferings. He is not the man of the people. He is a Baronet, an aristocrat, and that is enough. Elect me, and you shall have no Taxes, no Civil List, no King, no Nobles, no Rent, no Tithes. You shall send me your orders to town by the morning's post, and they shall be executed in the evening in Parliament." This would be the language of the class, and the result would be, that the attorney's clerk would be chosen the Representative of such a place, and the right hon. Baronet, already ejected from Cumberland, would go to the wall. And then observe the conduct of the successful candidate. He would come to that House without any fixed principles of action—without any stake in the country—without any means of livelihood, perhaps, but his patient industry, and he would be debarred from the exercise of that industry by his attendance on his parliamentary duties. What, then, must he do? Why, he must either redeem his pledges by entering into a most unjust and most mischievous opposition, or else break them, and sell himself to any Ministry which thought it worth while to buy him,—either bluster forth a noisy agitator, or dwindle down into a venal voter. The hon. member for Callington, in an able speech, which every one recollected, had pointed out the effect which the Bill would be likely to have on the electors. He would take leave to point out the effects he thought it was likely to have on the elected. The hon. member for Callington alluded to the useful power which Gatton and Sarum exercised in counterpoising the effect of the more popular Representation, and pointed out, very happily, the blending of the several interests in forming a perfect whole. Hon. Members, it was well known, got into that House in a great variety of ways—some for counties, some for cities, and some for close boroughs. The hon. Baronet who moved the Amendment last night, was the member for the county of Cornwall, and held, in that capacity, a high place in the House. He was Member for a borough, with a comparatively small number of voters. He could not pretend at any time to enter into competition with the hon. member for Cornwall, but it was the more necessary for him, as the Representative of a borough, to make unceasing exertions to retain his position in the eyes of the people, and to counteract by his industry the disadvantages of his station. This difference in the nature of the Representation formed, therefore, as it were, a continual stimulant to honourable exertion in that House, in the same manner as the differences of rank were said to operate in the House of Peers—but with this great difference, that in the one case the favours derived from honourable exertion were conferred by the King, on the other they were the gift of the people. These differences of the Representative system, as at present constituted, afforded, moreover, a useful equipoise in the management of separate interests. That, however, would not be the case when the Members became the direct Representatives of those interests. The County Members would be most interested in agricultural subjects, and in maintaining the Corn-laws. The member for Newcastle would have his petitions against the duty on coals, and would not give a very candid opinion on that subject; the member for Kidderminster would be zealous in his prayer to keep up the duty on the importation of Turkey carpets—and the Member connected with Brighton would probably support a petition against the extension of medicated vapour baths: all interests would be active, and every interest having its peculiar Representative, there would be much contention. How useful, then, was it to have a body of independent men, not connected with any populous town or any county, to interpose between these rivals, and calm their disputes. That was, he contended, the great practical advantage of the Constitution. They were told, however, that the system of close boroughs was contrary to the theory of the Constitution. Why should they care for theory? It was not the theory, but the practical effect of the system that they ought to look at. They did not regard the symmetry of the building, but the comfort of those who were to live in it—not the form but the use. They wished for practical advantage, and not that restless searching after theoretical perfection, which in the neighbouring kingdom of France had preceded its first disastrous Revolution,—a restlessness which was but too evident in the works of those who wrote for the Encyclopædia. It was said, however, that the present state of the Representation was a monstrous anomaly in the Constitution, which could not be suffered longer to disgrace it. Why, were there no anomalies in the Constitution except the close boroughs? It was a part of the Constitution that the King, whatever might be the extent of his insanity, could never be pronounced a lunatic; that whatever were his years, he could never be a minor; and that although he might, like James 2nd endeavour to destroy the Constitution, and usurp the powers of the other branches of the Legislature, still he could do no wrong. But speaking of anomalies, what could be more absurd than hereditary legislators? While other men, probably possessed of the most transcendent talents, and who had laboured through half a life to make themselves acquainted with the laws of their country, were debarred from exhibiting their knowledge for the benefit of their fellow-creatures, he, from being born the son of a Peer, and writing the four letters L, O, R, D, before his name, was destined to attain the distinction of a Legislator, without labour or exertion. Then what could be more monstrous than the Law of Primogeniture, which gives to the eldest son, perhaps one of the most worthless brutes on earth, all the lands and properties of his parents, to the exclusion of his more deserving, but younger relatives. These were all monstrous anomalies, as monstrous as any said to be found in the Representative system; but yet they were leading principles of the Constitution. Referring to the arguments which had been adduced in favour of the present system, in consequence of the facilities it afforded for the admission of men of talent to that House, he believed he had thirty or forty arguments of that kind at once within his glance. It had, however, been urged against them, and against all who sat in that House for close boroughs, that they were precluded from voting on the question of Reform, and that, when it was agitated they should get up and walk out of that House. If, however, all the hon. Members placed in that situation had complied with such a demand, they could not at that moment have been discussing the terms of a Bill introduced by the able *exposé* of the noble Lord, the member for Tavistock. He saw many persons closely connected with the Government who were placed in the same situation. There was, for instance, the right hon. Member, the Secretary for Ireland, whose speech on the question of Reform he liked least, because he feared it most, and was but too sensible of the effect it would produce. When, however, that right hon. Gentleman was defeated at Preston, what would have been his fate as a Minister if he had not found a refuge in a close borough? and yet, having derived from it all the advantage which it would afford, he, like an ungrateful and undutiful child, turned round and denounced close boroughs as nuisances which were to be abated. One word with respect to intimidation, and he had done. It was a favourite expression of the supporters of the present system, although much ridiculed by their opponents, that it worked well whatever might be its defects. Now he must say, that the intimidation got up by the Government with respect to the question of Reform, whatever objections it might be liable to, had also worked well. He had conversed with a great number of persons on the subject, and he really must say, that he believed there was no greater number of persons inclined to Reform at that moment than there had been twelve months before; but, although he was satisfied that there were not many more persons convinced by the arguments of the Government and their supporters, he was sure that a great many had been terrified into advocating its necessity. Mr. Macauley had told them, they said, that there would be a massacre unless the Reform Bill passed; and Mr. Macauley wrote in the Edinburgh Review, and must be right. He believed that if the arguments brought forward by the supporters of the Bill were divested of the appeals to the determination of the people to have Reform, of the assertions that they would and must have it, and that, if it was refused they were, prepared to cut the throats of their enemies to obtain it; if these arguments were taken away, he believed that not fifty Members of that House would be found to vote for it. He would ask, however, who it was made the people clamorous for Reform? The King's Ministers. Who was it that, by their agitation and their complaints, and their promises, and their representations, had brought the House to that melancholy condition, that it could neither pause with safety nor proceed without ruin? If his Majesty's Ministers had used but half the power and industry to tranquillize that they had exerted to bewilder and to mislead, they would not at that moment have been placed in such a painful and dangerous situation. He denied that there was on that side of the House a settled opposition to Reform. Every Member who addressed them had expressed himself in favour of a change which might repair, without destroying, the system of Representation; and it was as rational to denounce them as opposed to Reform, because they were adverse to the present Bill, as it would be to stigmatize the Ministers as determined to deny all retrenchment, because they rejected the extravagant propositions of the hon. member for Middlesex. It only remained for him to say, that the Members of that House were not sent there to follow the course which they might think best calculated to ensure their own return, nor to gratify the populace at the expense of the people. They were bound, on the contrary, to prefer the interests of their constituents to their prejudices; and if they did so, he had no fear for the result. If, unhappily, they should act otherwise, and the wishes of the Government prevailed, then he would say, he neither envied them their triumph, nor the means by which that triumph was won.

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* Hansard's Parliamentary Debates, Vol. xv. New Series, p. 182.

Sir *J. Shelley* said, he had had the honour of a seat in that House for a great many years. He was not sent in by a close borough; but he was the representative of a very numerous population, his electors amounting from 800 to 1,000 voters, whom he had served in six Parliaments. He considered it unfortunate for himself that the majority of his constituents were in favour of the measure before the House. He thought it his duty honestly to state that fact, because, at a Reform meeting which took place last Friday, he was the only person present who raised his voice against the measure. Having stated that, it now became him, in duty to his constituents and himself, to make a few remarks upon the Bill. He was friendly to Reform, and had always supported the noble Lord (Lord John Russell) in his propositions, until he made the present excessive jump. He was sorry that the propositions for transferring the elective franchise from East Retford and other boroughs to populous towns, had not been carried; because, in that case, we might not have heard of the present Bill. He looked upon the Bill as unjust, fallacious, and revolutionary. It was unjust, because it disfranchised 106 boroughs; sixty completely, and forty-six losing half of their Representation. It also disfranchised the lower order, the poor class of voters. He wondered that the hon. member for Preston, whom he was happy to see in that House, for he would rather have him there than using his influence out of doors, could support a Bill which disfranchised the poorer class of voters. He said, that he should be very brief in his observations, as so many days had already been consumed in discussing the question. He considered the Bill to be fallacious, because he had heard it said, that it was supposed to be a boon to the landed interest. His opinion was, that if it was a boon to any body, (which he denied) it was a boon to the manufacturing interest; because he maintained, that all towns, not having Representatives, would in reality return the Members for the counties; because the voters in the towns would outvote the agricultural voters. Therefore the Bill, in his mind, was fallacious. He also believed it to be revolutionary, and if it passed, the other two branches of the Legislature would lose their influence in the State; and the Members returned to this House would completely govern the country. No Administration, he believed, could, after the passing of that Bill, carry on the Government for six months. That was his opinion, and he believed that the Bill would ultimately tend to a revolution of the Constitution. Having represented his constituents for six Parliaments, he certainly felt regret in differing from them with respect to the Bill; yet feeling as he did, he could not give his sanction to the measure. He regretted that he should not have the honour of addressing them in a reformed Parliament, yet he was consoled by the reflection that he had acted an independent and honest part.

Mr. *W. Cavendish* trusted the House would indulge him while he made a few brief observations on the important question under consideration. Although he knew that he differed in opinion respecting it from a very considerable portion of his constituents, he must most conscientiously declare, that the whole of the measure which had been introduced by his Majesty's Government had his unqualified support. As to the petition, however, from the University of Cambridge, which had that night been mentioned, although there were undoubtedly many members of the Senate who were adverse to the Bill, he also knew, from communications which he had with them, that there were many who, so far from being hostile to the whole measure, did not object to the disfranchising of the boroughs, although they thought that the proposed qualification of voters was too low. No one was more sensible than he was, that in many respects this country was fortunate beyond the ordinary lot of nations; but he was quite at a loss to see how that could depend on the existing borough system. That there were great evils arising from that system no one could doubt; or that it was the duty of the Legislature to endeavour to remedy them. There was one consideration of paramount importance. Without the confidence of the country, it was certain that no Government could go on. There could be no stability unless the great majority of the people supported the Government. Formerly, no one within or without those walls dared to say, that that House was not the genuine representative of the people. But was that the case at present? So long as the House of Commons was constituted as it was at that moment, so long would the dissatisfaction of the public with it continue to increase. That dissatisfaction might be smothered for a moment, but whenever any circumstance occurred to call it forth, it would burst out with redoubled violence. As for those who said that this measure was only a stepping-stone for further concession, he could not see any weight in their arguments; the tendency of which was, in fact, to throw obstacles in the way of all improvement. He was surprised at the clamour of revolution which had been raised against the Bill. It was his decided conviction, that if revolution was to be apprehended in this country, it was not from this Bill, but from the continuance of a system which was completely at variance with the general interests. Nor could he indulge the melancholy foreboding, that the Bill was calculated to promote the downfall of the aristocracy. On the contrary, he believed that the aristocracy would be in no way endangered by it. It was true, that it would deprive the aristocracy of a portion of their immediate power; but it would induce them to rely, not on their boroughs, but on that which always ought to be the sources of their legitimate influence, their own talents, and their means of conferring happiness on the people

Mr. *Ormsby Gore* said, that he felt it his duty to submit a few observations to the House upon this momentous question. The hon. and learned Member who addressed the House last night with so much eloquence, brought forward from the tombs of departed greatness a phalanx of men of talent, whom he described to be the advocates of Reform. In reply to the hon. Member who had just sat down, he would take the liberty of quoting some of the words of one of those individuals who had been mentioned as the staunch advocates of Reform. He would call from the vasty deep the spirit of the greatest constitutional writer which this country ever knew. He would call into St. Stephen's Chapel the spirit of Sir William Blackstone; the reforming Sir William Blackstone; but, as he could not speak for himself, he would quote his words; Sir William Blackstone said, "Were we now to frame a new polity with respect to the qualifications of voters, reasons might be perhaps suggested why copyholders, even holding at the nominal will of the Lord, and the owners of beneficial leases for a term of years, should be admitted to this privilege as well as freeholders, and why the value of freeholds themselves should be greatly advanced above what is now required by law to entitle the proprietor to give his vote in county elections." He thought that the proposal of giving the right of suffrage to copyholders was the least objectionable part of the plan submitted by the Government: but what did Blackstone say to that point? why, approving of the idea of giving the right of voting to copyholders, he added as an objection, "But this would be removing foundations, at least pulling down the superstructure, and erecting another in its stead." What, then, would Sir William Blackstone say if he could rise from his grave, and hear a proposal gravely made for ousting sixty-three Members from this House? How would he be startled to hear that all the charters of corporations, which had been granted to our ancestors, were to be destroyed, and a new system established? Yet it is said this is not revolution, but only restoration. His hon. friend, the member for Cornwall, last night observed, that the admission of an inherent right to vote on the part of the people must lead to Universal Suffrage. He would make one observation on this point, not on his own part, but on that of an Act of Parliament. The preamble of the Statute of Henry 6th, by which the right of voting for Knights of the Shire was limited to 40*s.* freeholders was this. "Whereas the elections of Knights of the shire to come to the parliaments of our Lord the King, in many counties of the realm of England, have now of late been made, by very great, outrageous, and excessive number of people, dwelling within the same counties of the realm of England, of the which most part was of people of small substance and of no value, whereof every one of them pretended a voice equivalent as to such elections to be made with the most worthy Knights and Esquires dwelling within same counties; whereby manslaughter, riots, batteries and divisions among the gentlemen and other people of the same counties, shall very likely rise, and be, unless convenient and due remedy be provided in this behalf." That Statute was accordingly passed, to make a distinction between those who had a stake in the country, and were capable of forming a correct judgment respecting persons qualified to be Members of Parliament, and the mere villeins. Previous to the passing of this Statute, the suffrage was next to universal. The qualification fixed by this Statute was not an inconsiderable one. Forty shillings in the time of Henry 6th was equal to twelve pounds in the reign of Queen Anne, and to more than twenty pounds at the present moment. He would now advert, but very briefly, to the justice and impartiality with which the details of the Bill before the House had been brought up. He would not occupy much of the time of the House upon this subject, which had been ably handled by the hon. and learned Gentleman, whose splendid speech concluded the Debate of last night, as well as by the hon. member for Corfe Castle. One most curious circumstance, however, had not been adverted to. The House had been told, that the framers of the Bill had been guided by the population returns of 1821. Was it to be taken as a proof of the impartiality with which Ministers had framed the details of the measure, that a district of country, containing a male population amounting to 340,000, was to send to Parliament the same number of Representatives as a county whose male population amounted to 104,000? By the Bill before the House, the county of Wilts was to have twenty-five Representatives, whilst the whole Principality of Wales, which contained 340,000 inhabitants, was to have no greater number. He would mention another instance of partiality: the county of Glamorgan, which contained 54,750 inhabitants, was to send one Member to Parliament, whilst Northumberland, with a population of 61,622, was to return four Members. Was that impartiality? Was it justice? Why was Wales thus treated? Was that country thrown into the back ground because she had always displayed the most conspicuous loyalty? Was it because she had never required the presence of vast bodies of troops to maintain tranquillity? Was it because she had never in any one instance called for any expenditure except what was absolutely necessary to carry the laws into effect? This was very nearly the first time that he had heard Wales spoken of in that House; yet Wales was a considerable part of his Majesty's dominions—loyal, opulent, and constitutional, in the strictest sense of the word. Yet in Wales alone had there been one place marked out for peculiar vengeance by the Bill before the House. He alluded to the town of Criccieth, which was a sort of tributary to the borough of Carnavon. That was the only town in England and Wales selected for disfranchisement; but for what reason he could not comprehend. Was it because it possessed the most ancient charter in his Majesty's dominions—granted by Edward the 1st and confirmed by three successive monarchs? Was it because it was remarkable for its strict loyalty at the time of the unfortunate Charles? He would not for a moment suppose anything half so derogatory from the character of the noble and chivalrous Marquis who was connected with the borough, as to suppose that he had approved of the selection of this single borough as a sacrifice to vengeance. The borough which it was proposed to disfranchise contained 120 houses and 121 families. The course which was proposed to be pursued with respect to this borough was another proof of the impartiality and justice of Ministers. He had not expressed his sentiments previously to the Bill being laid upon the Table, because he considered it of importance that every Member should have it as soon as possible before his eyes. He would not have it supposed that he was a decided enemy to Reform. No such thing. No man would endeavour more strenuously to promote Reform than the humble individual who was then addressing the House. But he remembered the saying of Lord Burleigh—"England can never be ruined but by her Parliament." When he saw such a sweeping plan of Reform as that now proposed, he prayed to God that this prophecy might not be fulfilled in our days. He looked upon the present time as the very worst in which the question of Reform could have been brought forward. We saw the spirit of innovation stalking abroad through the whole of the continent of Europe. France was struggling from one revolution to another, never at peace, but always a prey to anarchy. Speaking of the state of France, previous to the first revolution, Burke said, that the government showed a greater disposition to attend to the suggestions of the people than at any former period of her history. It was the listening to projectors which caused the ruin of that government. He would now conclude with a quotation from Lord Bacon, a writer who had been frequently referred to in the course of the Debate, but never, he observed, from the other side of the House. Lord Bacon said, "*Omnis subita immutatio periculosa est;* and though it be for the better, yet it is not without a fearful apprehension."

Captain *Polhill* said, that he should give his vote for the second reading of the Bill, although he must at the same time admit, that it did not go far enough to satisfy his views. He wished the franchise to be *5l.* instead of *10l.*

Mr. *W. Ward* said, it fell to his lot to be bound in duty to express himself most unfavourably to the Bill of Parliamentary Reform, while he had an opportunity of knowing that a large portion of his constituents entertained a very different feeling towards that measure. He should not be acting fairly towards his Majesty's Government if he withheld that fact from the House, but he should also be acting most unfairly towards that portion of his constituents who were opposed to the Bill, if he did not take an opportunity of stating the grounds of their opposition. He had been intrusted with a petition to that House, which was signed by 600 merchants, bankers, and others of the City of London, against the Bill brought in by the noble Paymaster; and as he had in vain attempted to present that petition, he trusted he should then be allowed to advert to it. That petition bore the signatures of men who were independent, qualified to judge, and had much at stake in the country. It interested those petitioners much to know upon what tenure property was to be held, and in how far it was to be considered as secure. They wished to know what provision was to be made for the protection of property. They wished to have explained what were the elements of which the new House of Commons was to be formed, and to know why they were to be taken out of the hands of an experienced House of Commons for the purpose of making an experiment. They complained that they were entirely unacquainted with the merits of the new scheme. It had been his fortune that evening to hear a gallant Admiral, the member for Nottinghamshire, with the deepest feeling declare, that he was compelled by duty to vote in opposition to those with whom he had usually acted. It had pleased the House to receive the sentiments of that gallant officer with favour, and he trusted the same indulgence would be extended to him while he briefly gave some of his reasons for opposing the Bill. Whatever intimidation might be attempted or threatened, it should have no effect upon him. He had one duty to perform, and that was simply this; to exercise his own reason honestly and fully, and to endeavour to decide in his own mind whether the people of England were likely to enjoy a larger share of prosperity, of liberty, and of happiness, under the promised Constitution, than they had done—he thanked God, under that which still existed. He had in the first place to look at the Bill upon the score of improvement; and unless it could be shown that under the proposed Parliament greater facilities would be afforded for the forwarding of the interests of the country than at present existed, all arguments in favour of the measure must be useless. Would the proposed Bill effect any improvement in that point of view? He did not believe it would. He had passed the earlier years of his life principally in two close boroughs, and among the representatives of those boroughs, had been, during his remembrance, Mr. Fox, Mr. Pitt, Mr. Canning, Mr. Perceval, the noble Lord at present at the head of Foreign Affairs, and the Duke of Wellington. Such had been the representatives of those close boroughs, and he very much doubted if by a reformed system, more able Members would be given to that House: indeed, the country would be fortunate if as good were returned. Again, when he first entered that House he naturally looked on both sides to see who were the most influential Members. On the Ministerial side he saw Mr. Canning, the right hon. Baronet lately at the head of the Home Department, and Mr. Huskisson, all of whom had been Members for close boroughs. On the Opposition side of the House he found the most influential Members to be, the present Lord High Chancellor (then Mr. Brougham), Mr. Tierney, and the right hon. Baronet, the member for Knaresborough, all of whom were at that time Members for close boroughs. Such was the case, and fortunate would it be if large and populous places always found and returned men of such abilities. Such being the result of an investigation as to the Members who sat for close boroughs, he next turned his attention to those who sat for populous places. He was then going to speak of a transaction in which the hon. Baronet, the member for Westminster, was personally concerned, but he did not think it necessary to make any apology for so doing, as the hon. Baronet himself had made a similar statement, and he could not intend the slightest disrespect to the hon. Baronet. In his experience but three Members had been called to account by that House in consequence of their conduct. It mattered not whether that conduct had been right or wrong—into that question he did not go; he merely stated a fact; and those Members were, the hon. Baronet the member for Southwark, the hon. Baronet the member for Westminster, and Lord Cochrane, and all three Members were the representatives of populous places. Thus he had found upon examination, that during his time, on the one hand, the only Members who had been called to account for their conduct by the House were the representatives of populous places; while on the other hand, the most influential Members on both sides of the House had sat for close boroughs. But it had been said that however worthy the Members for close boroughs might be, still they were not the representatives of the people. Allow him to ask what was meant by the term representative? Was the physical force of the country to be represented, or was the good sense of the country to be represented, or were the passions of the people to be represented? On the good sense of the country he had great reliance—on the passions none. And if there was a moment when the passions of the people were more liable to excitement than another, that moment was the period of an election. If upon such an occasion the passions were moved in behalf of a particular candidate, whatever might be the character of his pretensions, up he went to the top of the poll. A person so returned was not at liberty to exercise his own judgment. He was necessarily but the echo of the passions of those who had sent him there. But let it not be supposed that he wished to shut out the feeling of the country from that House. He had no such desire, but he contended that the present system did not exclude it. The difficulty was, to admit those feelings in their due proportion. Philosophers, aware of the different operation of heat and cold in expanding or contracting different metals, in the construction of nice machines calculated and availed themselves of the counteracting qualities of those metals. But no philosopher had yet told the world what infusion of the feelings of the people was calculated to have the most beneficial effect on the proceedings of that House. He must be permitted, therefore, to doubt the policy of the extensive measure introduced by his Majesty's Ministers, and introduced, too, at a period totally unsuited to such a proposition. If such a change were to be made at all, it ought to be made at a moment the most free from internal and external commotion. At the present period, although he had no apprehension from home feelings, he was not without fear of the re-action from abroad. Much had been said of the wishes and expectations of the country, but he feared and believed, that the present excitement was only a reaction of what had taken place abroad. He contended, therefore, that the present was not a fitting time for the entertainment of such a measure. He objected to the Bill, therefore, upon these grounds, but the strongest reason he had for giving his decided negative to it, was the fact, that that which the people principally desired had in a great degree been already enforced. The people required relief from taxation, and retrenchment. Since the commencement of the peace, 31,000,000*l.* of taxes had been repealed. The country was often reminded of the remaining 50,000,000*l.* of taxes but it had never been sufficiently made acquainted with the fact that 31,000,000*l.* had been removed. As to patronage and retrenchment, it was right the people should attend to the expenditure of their money; but while so much was said about sinecures and pensions, it ought not to be forgotten that during the last nine years, 4,000 places or pensions had been abolished, fifty-eight of which had salaries attached to them of from 1,000*l.* to 3,000*l.* a-year. Of these facts the public had not been sufficiently told. He could not admit, then, that Parliament had not done its duty. On the contrary, he contended that it was impossible for it to have been more assiduous or more beneficially employed than it had been. Through the Parliament, returns had been made to that House which brought the whole of the affairs of the country under review. The accounts of the country were open to the people; in fact, there was a balance-sheet, and every one who chose could know how the least sum was disposed of. This the present Parliament had done, and what more a Reformed House would effect he did not know. They were told, that the House was most corrupt, that the seats in it were used for private gain and advantage, and yet, in the face of that declaration offers were made by individuals to give up their interests in some of the close boroughs solely for the public good. Could it be believed that any such offers would have been made if the gross corruption which was said to exist really did exist? If the seats for close boroughs were the objects of sale and gain to the individuals who possessed the power of nomination, was it to be credited that they would voluntarily sacrifice their property to give success to the Bill before the House? He denied that the close boroughs were what the supporters of the Bill represented them to be. They provided for the representation of the talent and superior ability of the country. That this was the fact it was impossible to contradict. Let the House look at the Universities. If in Oxford or Cambridge a man distinguished himself, within five years of such distinction he was to be found seated in that House. Again, with respect to the Army and the Navy, the most distinguished officers in those services, if they became Members of that House, generally were returned for close boroughs; and he could never be brought to believe that a gallant and upright officer became a bad and selfish legislator merely because he sat for a close borough. Such being the view he took of the subject, it could not be expected that he should be enamoured of the proposed change; on the contrary, he looked at it with great distrust and aversion. In thus speaking, he had delivered his real and unbiassed sentiments. He had thought for himself, and he had endeavoured to think rightly. With the close boroughs, or any one of them, he had, directly or indirectly, no connection whatever. Nor did he know any one individual who could serve him at an election who drew one shilling from the public purse. There was not an individual in the Parliament who could promote his interests; he was beyond the sway of any corrupt influence. He expressed his sincere—his honest and conscientious opinion—and would give his vote for the unalloyed purpose, which must be uppermost in the heart of every honest Englishman—the maintenance of the Constitution and the welfare of the country.

Mr. *Wyse* said, that notwithstanding the extreme difficulty in producing anything new at that late period of the discussion; yet, certainly, the hon. member for Carnarvon enjoyed the honour of being the first who had explained to the House what revolution really was; from others they had the shadow, but from him the reality. Like his fellow-countryman, Glendower, he had called up "spirits from the vasty deep;" but did they come when they were called? The hon. Member had quoted Blackstone in favour of his abhorrence of innovation; but if he had read Blackstone longer and more truly, he would have found in very many places, passages in favour of Reform. It had been said, too, that Locke was opposed to Reform; yet, in his work upon Government, he observes, in his chapter concerning the subordination of the powers of the commonwealth:—" For it being the interest, as well as the intention, of the people to have a fair and equal Representation, whoever brings it nearest to that, is an undoubted friend to, and establisher of the government, and cannot miss the consent and approbation of the community."—What, then, did hon. Members mean by revolution? It was the goodness or badness of revolution which was to be regarded. The question was—whether it was useful or not. If they meant by revolution, a turbulent struggle for the alteration of all existing institutions; if they meant a struggle carried on by a faction against the will and feeling of the majority—a struggle to be consummated by brute force—a struggle promoted by selfish and sordid men, who were striving for their own individual advantage and happiness, and not for the comfort and benefit of the people at large—if this was what they meant by revolution, he repelled such a revolution; but if by revolution they meant a change which was incidental to all good Constitutions—the very susceptibility of alteration being provided for in a good Constitution, lest it alone should be stationary while time was moving all things around it; if by revolution they meant the removal of diseased parts, the lopping-off of excrescences which affected the soundness, and destroyed the fair proportions of the whole, and which might be cut away without the creation of deformity, or without affecting, in the least, the vital principle; he hailed that revolution, and welcomed it as the promise of a brighter day for us and our posterity. He contended that there was nothing dangerous or unusual in a change in the Constitution such as that proposed by his Majesty's Ministers. The principle that the laws of England should not be changed, was proclaimed, but had never been acted upon. Our whole history was nothing but the record of change—of revolution corrected by revolution—of amendment requiring amendment, so that our Constitution was a series of Constitutions, one flowing into the other from the foundation of the monarchy to the present time. And fortunate that it had been so!—fortunate that it had that pliancy of construction which takes the pressure of existing interests, which imbibes the character of existing habits; had it been of that obdurate, iron temper, which the opponents of Reform would imply, long since it would have been not bent, but broken, under the collision and shock of parties who could not compromise with it; a succession of anarchies and despotisms would have been our whole political history, until we at last had sunk into a despairing apathy to every change, and resigned ourselves to chance for our existence. It was a mistake to suppose that Constitutions made habits and notions; in fact, it was notions and habits, on the contrary, which made, and framed Constitutions to their own purposes and ends. Look a little at our own annals. The exorbitant power of the Crown roused the rude resistance of the vassal Barons, and they succeeded—the revolution of Magna Charta was founded—the Sovereign, in his turn, sought to oppose a barrier to the new power; he summoned, not the commonalty of the realm, but his own tenants *in capite*, not to legislate, but to tax themselves. Similar revolutions were established, by similar circumstances, at the same time, in Spain, Portugal, Sicily, &c. The domanial representatives sat down with the other two branches, the military and ecclesiastical, and were more than the representatives of the Crown. In England commerce assisted; the coast-towns were the first free. Alfred gave to merchants the honours of Thanes—the merchants of London, like those of Venice, were styled, in contemporary history, *quasi optimates terræ*. Here was a great change of manners, and a new Constitution followed it. But the people were not much raised—they were an instrument only, during a long period, to resist and crush the Barons:—the Barons were at length crushed, and the Monarch reigned supreme. That was the age of prerogative; it grew under the Tudors, and attained its bad pre-eminence under the Stuarts. But the people had grown with it silently, but surely;—they bided their time, and it came. Then it was, that the partisans of prerogative in that hour, as the partisans of oligarchy in this—the Staffords of that day, as of this,—spoke of the ancient Constitution, the immutable Constitution; but that Constitution, ancient and immutable as it seemed to be, crumbled at the very first onset before the irresistible power of human passions and living man. Cromwell was said to have done this, and Pym and Hampden; but a stronger than Cromwell, or than many Cromwells, did it—it was England—the

English people—through him; the mind and spirit of Englishmen, meditating on their accumulated wrongs, measuring wisely their strength—resolving boldly, and fearlessly executing, when the season came for deeds. It was the working of a new character, of new passions in the nation, expanding beyond the limits of their actual institutions, and meeting resistance, bursting, and shattering them in their way. This was the revolution of the people, but they were too long resisted not to exceed discretion in the hour of victory. As usual they were punished with that worst of penalties, a Restoration. But the seeds of 1641 had not perished; no; they grew up and flourished into the flower and fruit of 1688. William 3rd pursued another policy: he saw men had changed,—he changed the Constitution imperceptibly with them. The reign of influence began, the Treasury was substituted for the Tower, men were not imprisoned, but bribed. Under the two first Georges this revolution, soporific and stealing, but not less sure, reached its climax. In the first Parliament of George 1st about 200 Members held among them 400 places; in the first Parliament of George 2nd, 200 had 350 places. This influence, first in the hands of the Crown, soon fell into the hands of the oligarchy—the last fatal revolution—under which the country still groaned. Let, then, the Gentlemen who taunted the Reformers with this word, blot an entire history, or admit what all beheld. Not a less degree of change had occurred between William and the present day, than between the Tudors and William. A revolution already existed in the national mind. Steam and the Press had revolutionized the nation. Immense riches, immense knowledge, the spirit of inquiry, the spirit of adventure,—immediate and close communication, almost annihilating time and space, commingling all classes and all countries, in one great family,—and almost realizing a community of moral and material goods,—had made us a generation very different indeed in every respect from that of our fathers. Constitutions, which were only the expression and instrument of these changes, must alter with them. The revolution was in the mind of the community. It did not depend upon Parliament any longer, whether it should have its way: all the Legislature could do was to guide it; cut the channel; conduct the electricity—leave neither to their irregular forces. This it might do, and produce blessings; delay might convert them into a curse. These were matters of stern, undeniable fact. The petitions on that Table, crowding in day after day—the unusual time set apart for their discussion—the unanimous excitation of the public mind stirred to its deepest depths, from one extremity of the land to another, bore evidence for them. What, then, did the opponents of the measure do?—explain them away by attributing them to base motives, and indirect intrigue. His Majesty's Ministers were set up as the stage-managers of this political drama. They were taxed with the troubling of these waters; but was the Reform Question new?—was it not as old as Wilkes and the great Earl of Chatham; as old, almost, as the grievances it proposed to redress? It had been in the heart of the people for years and years,—did they wonder that it was on their lips now? It was not Ministers who had made this spirit, but it was this spirit which had made them Ministers. Did not the call find a response in the national heart, would they sit where they were. Another hon. Gentleman ascribed it to the Press, but the Press was only the organ of the bold heart which beats below. A third ascribed it to the Catholic Relief bill. He saw in the great question of 1829 the germs of the still greater question of 1831. It might be so—but not to the granting of that bill did he ascribe it, but rather to its delay. Yes, when the Legislature had taken every pains to gather together the elements of strife, when it had organized discontent—when it had made agitation a passion, a want, a necessity, a habit,—when it had made that habit, also, almost inveterate, by repeated rejection, and continued delay, it then wondered that the results of all this tardy wisdom, and reluctant justice should not be quite the same, on a susceptible people, as if it had granted relief with a large and fearless hand, at a season when it might have been thought to have consulted its generosity, and not its fears. If concessions had produced so little, what would have refusal produced? Not Reformers such as were now met in Ireland, but Revolutionists, in the worst sense. But what, after all, would this prove? Were it doubly true, did it negative or adjourn the necessity of considering this all-important question a single hour? Much of the long Debate had been consumed by private contests between this and that proprietor, for the honour of this or that borough—but the pleading was not Tamworth *versus* Tavistock, but the Commons of England against that House. All they ought to ask was, "Is Reform necessary—is this Bill a proper and safe Reform—is this the time for its application?" Some said there were no abuses; others the abuses are excellencies—essentials to the use and beauty of the British Constitution. That is, the fungus on the British oak, is the sound heart and solid strength of the oak itself. But the debates, and votes of the House, decided otherwise. The House acknowledged the fact; andthen came the question, "is this the Constitution?" Where were they to look for it? In the political mysticism of hon. Gentlemen, or in the old established unrepealed laws of the Constitution itself. What did they say? Again and again the House had heard them during this debate. He would not abuse its patience with the repetition; but this was the theoretic Constitution, the real working Constitution was not the same; the people required idols; for their worship, they had shadows, the substance the House reserved for itself. Now, was that fair, and what, after all, was gained by it? An infusion of aristocracy into the Commons—a better balance against democratic power. But was that the fact? It appeared to him, the true solicitude of the opponents of the measure was not for the aristocracy, but for a power which wielded aristocracy and democracy both—for that power which had found the point without the Constitution, by which it could heave the Constitution from its base,—for that power, the fourth estate of the realm, greater than the other three—for the boroughmongering sovereigns of England, for the oligarchy alone, that all this solicitude and care were displayed. He liked the Bill because it struck at that power, by equalizing and diffusing the franchise, by taking in other classes, waiting till this hour silently, perhaps indignantly, without the Constitution, particularly the middle classes, the guardians on one side of popular, on the other the bulwark of aristocratic, rights.—But above all, it would be useful, essential, not only restorative, but conservative in these portentous times. Hon. Gentlemen seemed panic struck with the revolution, or rather revolutions of France; but there was no analogy between that country and England. The elements of the French revolution did not exist amongst us—our nobles lived with the people—half their year was spent in the country—they were the chiefs of the nation, not the servants of a Court—we had something to look back to—France had nothing. She burst into revolution, with great grievances to redress, and no landmark to guide. It was not the National Convention (as the hon. member for Corfe Castle had observed) which brought those years of blood upon France: it was refusal, until refusal was no longer possible, vacillation in the king,—treachery in the court, blindness in the clergy,—and stupidity, arrogance, and ignorance, combined in the privileged orders. Secession and emigration ensued; war followed—England made it European by her subsidies—to sustain it France found fanaticism was necessary; the Constitution was sacrificed to the State—liberty, virtue, every thing to national existence. If Europe now stood in somewhat analogous circumstances, had not a combination of almost similar causes produced it? The fatal Vienna Congress of 1815 had bequeathed us the revolutions of 1831. It tried to square mind and men like provinces, and to set down the nineteenth century beside the sixteenth. But these were things altogether impossible, and common sense and human nature rebelled, and had re-asserted their rights. To us, also, would the visitation advance in time. No future war could ever more set up a wall between us and the other nations of Europe. We were no longer, physically or morally, insular. Let the House, then, be prepared in due season for its coming,—let it address itself at leisure, and whilst it yet exclusively might, to this first of all concerns, to a free, spirited, and enlightened community;—let it raise up a sound-hearted and satisfied people, in defence of our institutions, by sharing all with them,—by leaving no interest unrepresented,—by giving a personal and positive solicitude about our common liberties to every individual from the highest to the lowest in the land; let there be no grievance for just discontent to feed on—answer the appeals of profligate or selfish ambition with the solid happiness and equal rights of your people; and then, let that visitation come—when and how it might—we could abide its passing without fear or trembling. This was the approved hour for such a change. Let the House, then, take counsel, while it could, of wisdom, and it would not have to take it of necessity, when perhaps it might be too late.

Sir *R. Bateson.*—On this momentous question I feel it absolutely necessary to say a few words, particularly as so few Members connected with Ireland have yet addressed the House upon it. It appears to me, from some observations I have just heard, that Ireland is not to be considered in this question at all ; now I, as an Irishman, as having the whole of my property in that country, and representing an Irish county, feel bound to say, that on this great subject Ireland is of the greatest importance. I think that too much has been said respecting personal motives in the discussion of this question. Indeed, I am surprised that so much has been said upon it, but still as it has been said, although I like not to speak of myself, I feel bound to state, that no one can impute to my conduct on this occasion any other motive than a desire to promote the good of the country. I have no interest in boroughs, or connection with boroughmongers, as they are called. It is perfectly immaterial to me, or my personal interest, whether there be any borough in existence or not; so that in defending them to any extent whatever, I can have no bias to lead my judgment astray. I know that my constituents are greatly divided upon this subject, and that, let me vote which way I will, I must offend many of them ; but still I am determined to do my duty, fearlessly and conscientiously, without dread of appearing before my constituents, though I differ from many of them, to defend the conduct I feel bound to pursue. It is with great reluctance that I have determined to look at this question in the light I have, and it is with great pain that I shall give the vote it is my intention to give. I always have been, and always shall be, what is called a moderate, constitutional Reformer, desirous that those abuses which have crept into the Constitution should be destroyed or removed ; but I think that this Bill goes further than a simple removal of abuses, for it is nothing less than a remodelling of the Constitution. Now, supposing that I admit, for the sake of argument—and it is only for the sake of argument—that this remodelling is necessary, still I would say, that it should not be upon such a crude, ill-digested, unsatisfactory plan as the present. If the Constitution, supposed so long to be the glory of this country, has now become unworthy to govern this House and the public, then I say that a well-considered plan for its change should be adopted. From the manner in which this measure has been constructed—this new re-modelling of the Constitution—I do not think it would give satisfaction for twenty years to come. If we must have the Constitution remodelled, let it be in a way which will satisfy the people that nothing has been done but by the most deliberate consideration. The noble Lord, the Paymaster of the Forces, on the night he made his statement of this measure to the House, told us, I believe, that the basis on which he proposed to rest the franchise was property, and not population ; and I agree with him in the goodness of that principle ; and my objection to the Bill is, that it is population and not property that is made the basis of the elective franchise. With regard to Ireland, it has been principally alluded to as exemplifying the danger of giving the franchise according to population, and justly ; for there, from extreme poverty, and from want of employment, the people are most apt to be led astray by demagogues and agitators. If the franchise be granted to a 10*l.* qualification, it is no wonder that the Bill should be popular in Ireland, at least in the towns ; but there cannot be a doubt but it will produce the most injurious consequences. I think it but fair to the House, whilst upon the subject of the popularity of this measure in the towns of Ireland, to state, as I have had no other opportunity of doing so, that I have two petitions to present in favour of Reform, from Londonderry and Coleraine ; the first signed by a great number of respectable inhabitants of the place, with whom I am most sorry to differ, but, as I do so upon principle, I hope to be able to convince them, when we again meet, that I was not wrong in the vote which it is my intention to give. One consequence of this measure would be, to reduce the number of the constituency of the country, and to throw a larger portion of power into the towns. It will add weight to the aristocracy, whilst it takes away all influence from the mercantile, manufacturing, and shipping interests. Now, according to my notions of Reform, it is to those very interests that direct representatives should be given. Belfast, for instance, should send two Members to represent its interests as a great commercial town. Other towns are similarly circumstanced, and I say, that to these, the merchants, the shop-keepers, the men who have something to lose by a revolution, I should like to see the franchise given. To such men no candidate would dare to offer a bribe, or, if he did, it would not be accepted; but put the franchise in a lower scale, and bribery and immorality of every sort are sure to follow. I think the example we have had given us in some of the great and populous towns of this country of the effects of corruption, are enough to deter any man from wishing to see an extension of a system which would spread such consequences. With regard to Ireland, there are many subjects which occupy the attention of the people there—many subjects on which they desire a reform—which the people think of more consequence to the country than this very measure. The people of Ireland, Sir, look upon the reform of their Grand Jury laws and the other abuses—the effects of which they more immediately feel—as more likely to lead to practical benefit than any measure of this kind. Now, I must confess that I am a little disappointed that this is the only measure offered to Ireland, after such great expectations had been held out of what was to be done in her favour. I beg to say this without the slightest hostility to the Ministers on the other side of the House, but I cannot forget that on Friday night allusions were made, which implied that the Gentlemen who voted against that measure were actuated by factious motives; but no such motives can be imputed to me, for I resolved that there should not be a possibility of doing so, and did not vote against them, for fear I might have that taunt flung in my face, and accordingly walked out of it. Indeed, so far from being factiously opposed to Ministers, I came into this House prepared to support the plan of Reform, taking it for granted it would be moderate, rational, Reform they intended to bring in; but when I notice the extraordinary circumstance, that the Bill for Ireland is not yet upon the Table, notwithstanding the taunts I may experience, I must say, as an Irish Member, that I do not feel entirely qualified to enter into the subject. I have made many inquiries respecting the Bill, and have found total ignorance to prevail on the subject among those persons who ought to be most conversant with it; but I have never yet been able to get a reasonable answer, nor do I believe that at this moment Ministers are at all acquainted with the different local circumstances of the different towns of Ireland. The local taxation, the local numbers, with every other particular that parties framing such a Bill as the present ought to be acquainted with, I have found them most ignorant upon. My not knowing, therefore, what is to happen, with regard to Ireland, is an additional argument to give my vote against this measure. It was my intention originally to have given my vote for the second reading, and perhaps others may do so for the sake of gaining a popularity which I must call deceptive, for it is with a purpose of frittering away the Bill to nothing in a Committee; but I should have thought myself unworthy of holding a seat in this House if I could have acted in that manner. If I had considered that the Bill could have been so improved in the Committee as to make it a really useful, efficient, and safe plan of Reform, I should have voted for the second reading; trusting to the labours of the Committee, for putting the Bill into proper shape; but when I see so many gross mistakes and blunders—when I see that Ireland is not thought of—it is too much to expect, that the Bill can be made palatable in a Committee—for a Committee is not the place to make a new Bill, and such would be the effect of any efficient alterations in this. I think it better at once to vote against the second reading, trusting as I do that a measure of Reform which will satisfy the country, will, and must be brought forward, by whoever is Minister; for I will say that a Reform of some kind is necessary. I have another remark to make, which I expect will please neither side of the House. I most deeply lament the conduct of the late Government, in not conceding a calm, temperate, and necessary Reform; for if such a measure had been brought forward, the country would never have been in its present state of excitement; but, on the other hand, I would tell the right hon. Gentlemen opposite that I think they have incurred a tremendous responsibility in bringing forward such a measure, without knowing its effects. With regard to the disfranchisement of some of the rotten boroughs, I should have had no objection to it whatever, but I do object to disfranchising at once upwards of sixty boroughs, many of them nothing like rotten boroughs, whose voters may be as honest as those of Yorkshire or Westminster, who have vested rights in their votes, but who are to be disfranchised because there happens to be 1,900 of them instead of 2,000, which the noble Lord assumes that there ought to be. This is an injustice I cannot agree to inflict upon them; but with regard to the nomination boroughs, I should not object to having them annihilated, and the franchise given to the great commercial towns in the three kingdoms. I am also a Reformer as regards the reduction of places and sinecure pensions, that is, unearned pensions, whether they be granted to our own, or to the fair sex; but to this Reform I cannot agree: I have resolved, therefore, to vote against the second reading of the Bill proposing it.

The Earl of *Mountcharles* begged to take that opportunity of redeeming a pledge which he had given to his constituents to act in conformity to public opinion—a pledge not extorted by the fear of a contest, but voluntarily given, on the conscientious consideration that, when the current of public feeling ran so strongly in favour of Reform, it was wholly impossible to turn it aside. Was it not, therefore, better to grant that as a boon which, if they delayed, would be extorted from them? He must indeed be a miserable and contemptible politician who would not willingly and cheerfully sacrifice his private interests when he was conscientiously convinced that the necessities of the public required its surrender. It would ill, indeed, become those who had voted for the disfranchisement of a class of men, (the 40*s*. freeholders) the head and front of whose offending was, that they voted against their landlords, in obedience to what they felt to be the interests of their country—it would ill become those who had supported that measure. when expediency was its best defence, to hesitate at withdrawing the franchise from places where it was so ill bestowed. He was convinced of the necessity of Reform, but he was no friend to revolution. On the contrary, he should do all in his power to check that spirit. With respect to the expression of sentiment in that House, he had the highest respect for talent, but could not avoid looking to the principle on which hon. Members voted. It was with pain he differed in opinion from the right hon. Baronet, the late Secretary for the Home Department, and nothing but a sense of duty could reconcile that difference. His Majesty's Government should have his support. But while he supported this measure, he should still reserve to himself the right to object to any parts of the Bill in the Committee. He voted for the second reading, because he believed that he should do better for the country by supporting than by opposing the measure.

Lord *Castlereagh*.—My noble friend who has just addressed the House says, that as he has given a pledge to his constituents, he shall vote in favour of the measure, his pledge being in favour of some plan of Reform. Now, Sir, I gave no such pledge. I was asked for none, at the same time that I am bound to state to the House, that three petitions were intrusted to me in favour of Parliamentary Reform, from the county which I have the honour of representing, and that I was called upon by the petitioners to support the prayer of them in this House. One of these petitions moreover, emanated from a meeting of the county at large, and was signed by not less than 1,300 of the most respectable inhabitants. Another was from Bainbridge, and a third from Meagher. Now, Sir, I hope it will not appear invidious, if, contrary to these express wishes, I shall act in accordance with the dictates of my conscience, and vote against the measure. And why do I so, Sir? Because, had I no other grounds for dissenting from the request of the petitioners, I should feel myself compelled to do so by a perusal of the several additional demands, besides that for Parliamentary Reform. My hon. friend, the member for Downpatrick, pointedly called my attention to this subject a few days since, when he and I examined those petitions with the permission of the House. I will read the substance of the petitions from Bainbridge and Meagher. The first thing I find them asking for (I particularly refer now to the Bainbridge petition) is for Triennial Parliaments. They next ask for the Vote by Ballot. The next demand is for retrenchment and economy, in which prayer, Sir, allow me to express a wish that they will not be disappointed —the more so, when I recollect that the present Ministry obtained office, and the late were rejected from it, in consequence of their refusal to comply with the wishes of the people on this subject. I next find these Reform petitioners asking for a reduction of taxes; and in this request too, Sir, I trust also the petitioners will not be disappointed; and that his Majesty's Ministers will come forward with a better Budget than their last, unaffected by the failure of their vaunted boast of reduction. The next request of the petitioners is only the modest one, Sir, of a total abolition of Tithes; and, Sir, the next (to come to a conclusion) the abolition of sinecure offices and unmerited pensions. In addition to these modest demands, I find in the Bainbridge petition a supplement to the following effect;—"That we (the petitioners) beg your honourable House to take into your consideration the fact, that the Dean of Dromore is in the receipt of 1,400*l.* a-year for doing nothing." I will not take it upon me to justify any man's taking 1,400*l.* a-year (supposing the allegation to be true), but I must say that such a prayer forms rather a strange appendage to a petition for Reform. I have stated, Sir, these facts in justice to myself, and that my constituents may see that my refusal to support their prayer had some grounds. With respect to the question more immediately before us, I beg it to be understood, that in opposing the plan of Ministers I am not therefore the opponent of a sound and constitutional Reform. I am, Sir, an advocate for a moderate Reform, but as such am the opponent of such a sweeping change as that proposed. Let any Member propose a sound and moderate measure of Reform, such a one as loyal and constitutional men can approve of, and he will find in me a willing supporter. But, Sir, I never can consent to a measure, the inevitable tendency of which would be the destruction, of the established institutions of the country. Though not a philosopher by profession, I am not blind to the signs of the times. I think, Sir, to use homely language, that the journey towards Reform has begun, but the question is, how far we should go? And, in answer to that question, I say again, let us have a fair, moderate Reform—one adapted to the exigencies of the case—one restorative of the Constitution,—but not, I repeat, such a sweeping, unconstitutional, and destructive scheme as that proposed by his Majesty's Ministers. In opposing that scheme, let it not be said that we are therefore the opponents of constitutional Reform. And here I must observe that, the taunt of the hon. member for Shrewsbury, that the opponents of the present Bill are disguised enemies of every species of Reform whatever, is quite unfounded, and I for one, distinctly repudiate such an imputation. It was as the friend of moderate Reform that I approved of the motion of the noble Lord with respect to the borough of Evesham—a motion which, I must say, was strangely put forward as a parallel case to the application of the Bill for Ireland; as if, therefore, we Englishmen would not entertain it. Now, let us see how the Bill applies to Ireland. What is it to do? Why neither more nor less than add from twenty-five to thirty Roman Catholic Representatives to the Irish Representation. I have heard that the hon. and learned member for Waterford will by the Bill be enabled to nominate some twenty of these Members—a power more aristocratic, nay, more autocratic than any imputed to the workings of the present system. This preponderance of Catholic representation is fraught with alarm to the Protestant establishments of that country. I am no alarmist on this score. I voted for the Catholic Relief bill, not only because I thought it was expedient and just, so far as it applied to the Catholics themselves, but from a conscientious conviction that it would tend to the stability of our Protestant institutions. Others, I know, voted for it on the same ground, thinking as I did, and do, that the best security for the existence of any establishment is an equal participation of, and equal protection for, all classes without distinction. But neither they nor I ever meant that Catholic Emancipation should lead to Catholic preponderance. Judge then, Sir, of our apprehensions at the undue influence which this Bill will bestow upon the Catholics of Ireland. What do I see? I see that one man will be enabled under it to nominate from twenty-five to thirty Catholic Members in this House. [*No, no.*] Well, I may exaggerate that particular point, but, anxious as I am that religious distinctions of all kinds should be entirely done away with, I cannot but view the present Bill with alarm, so far as it affects the Protestant interests in Ireland. If the Bill excite dissatisfaction among the Protestants of Ireland, it will eventually create disappointment and discontent among the mass of the Catholics at large. The people of Ireland ask for Reform, not on the grounds which the eloquent advocates of that measure would fain make the House believe, but because they persuade themselves they see in it the panacea for all the evils which afflict that country. They think it will procure them food and employment, and money and clothing, and they think it will compel the residence of the landed proprietors; in fact, Sir, as I have said, they regard it as the panacea for all their ills and sufferings. If I thought that it would confer such incalculable benefits upon Ireland, it should have my earnest support, though on other grounds it might appear objectionable; but it will not, and I therefore cannot support it. The more ignorant clamourers in Ireland for the present Bill will thus derive only disappointment—a disappointment aggravating all the ills under which they now labour, and for which they expected this measure would be the remedy. And, on the other hand, the more intelligent advocates of the measure regard it only as a means towards the attainment of their more extensive ulterior objects. ["*No, no.*"] I say Yes, and I refer for a proof of my assertion, to the speeches of those advocates; for instance, in the town of Belfast, at a public dinner given there (I regret that my noble friend, the Member for that town, is not present to corroborate my statement), I find a gentleman named Emmerson, the son of a clergyman, in alluding to the measure of Reform, held out the democratic, the republican institutions of America, as a glorious example, to be imitated by the people of this country; and he also held out, among the advantages of the Bill, that it would put an end to the aristocratic institutions of the country, and that the—

————" Race
The tenth transmitters of a foolish face,"

would be destroyed by it for ever. This shows, Sir, the ground on which the *soi disant* advocates of Reform hail the present measure. One word with respect to the threat of dissolution. I am one of those, perhaps I am singular, who attach very little importance one way or the other to this threat. The minds of those who have sent us here are made up as to the subject of Reform; and it matters little when it is that we meet them—whether it be a month or a year hence, meet them we must. Thus much I will say of myself, that I know not whether this will be the last vote which it will be in my power to deliver in this House, but if it be the last, it shall be given, at all hazards, against the Bill. It may lead to the loss of my seat, but still I shall give it, from a conscientious sense of duty, against the Bill. I shall meet my constituents with clean hands. I am unconnected with any party within these walls, and I repeat, Sir, my vote shall be the result of my honest and conscientious conviction.

Mr. *Shaw* said, that he could not, on the present occasion, give a mere silent vote. He owed it to those who sent him there, and to himself, to state the grounds on which he would give a firm vote against the Bill. He was ready to vote for a moderate plan of Reform, and was willing to support every measure that would tend to repair those defects in our Constitution which time might have introduced; but he could not consent to a measure which could only end in the destruction of the representative system of this country. The right hon. President of the Board of Control had spoken of the reverence with which they should approach the ark of the Constitution, and said, that it was in that spirit of reverence that Ministers proposed the present Bill, with a view to restore what was wanting in the economy and organization of that House; but the right hon. Gentleman seemed not to be aware, when making this declaration, that the present Bill had been designated as one essentially destructive to the Constitution of the country. He agreed with the right hon. Gentleman, though he concurred with the hon. member for Yorkshire, that, however desirable a pruning-knife might be to lop off the excrescences of time and circumstances, they should not therefore approve of a Bill which was neither more nor less than an axe at the root of the tree of the British Constitution—a Bill which had been rightly described as a flagrant violation of the chartered liberties of British freemen. He did not wonder at the reception which the Bill had received out of doors,—that its appearance should be hailed with open arms, as a step towards far other objects. It was so; but it was in the spirit in which those who besieged a town should hail the surrender of the citadel. They knew that when in possession of the citadel, they could, when it pleased them, command the city; and so with the Reformers out of doors—they hailed the measure as a citadel in the way to the surrender of Annual Parliaments, Vote by Ballot, and

Universal Suffrage, and they knew that the principle of disfranchising a borough, without crime or offence, having been once acted upon, there would be little difficulty in future in the way of disfranchising inconvenient Representatives. He was not surprised that the measure should have been warmly advocated by the hon. and learned member for Waterford, nor did he wonder that the observations of that hon. Member were so warmly cheered by the other advocates of the measure. That hon. and learned Member could scarcely conceal his joy at the prospects of agitation which the measure held out to him. He would not then allude to the compromise which might have been entered into between the hon. and learned Member and the Government, nor would he dwell upon the enthusiasm with which that hon. and learned Gentleman usually persisted in enforcing his political opinions, nor would he speak of the pecuniary sacrifices which that enthusiasm had cost him, nor would he stop to express his regret that that hon. and learned Gentleman should have been led away into the devious paths of agitation from those walks which would have necessarily led him to the highest station in his profession; but he would say, that this Bill must afford that hon. and learned Gentleman consolation for months of anxiety, by the prospects which it held out of gratifying his darling passion for agitation, and by the prospects which it held out of conferring a preponderance of the elective power upon his Catholic brethren. That point had been alluded to by the hon. member for Drogheda, but it had not received that consideration to which it was entitled. He was one of those who wished to see Catholics and Protestants on terms of perfect amity, and to see all political distinctions, founded upon religious opinions, done away with; but still he must say, that the power which the present Bill would confer upon the Catholics in returning Members was fraught with alarm to the Protestant interest in Ireland. It was not in human nature that the Catholics, when in possession of this power, could stop till they had obtained all that their most zealous champions had held out as objects of their just ambition—that the 40*s*. freeholders, for instance, who had been disfranchised, could rest satisfied until they had obtained a restoration of their franchise. He was satisfied that in a large majority of the counties and cities, the Protestant Members would be displaced by Catholics, and he was also satisfied, that the principal part of the Catholic Members would be nominated by the hon. member for Waterford. The Repeal of the Union would, as a matter of course, be a primary object. Lord Oriel had, before the Union, pointed out the effects of that measure, which disfranchised 100 boroughs, returning 200 Protestant Members, and the argument of that noble Lord applied *à fortiori* to the Catholics, who must naturally pant for a domestic Legislature, in which they would be omnipotent. Lord Oriel observed, "Suppose, then, for a moment, that they acquire a power of sitting in Parliament; would it be a strange conjecture that they would soon feel that the Union had accomplished the Reform they wished for, by the destruction of boroughs, and that two hundred seats, all belonging to Protestants (for Protestants only received the compensation), had been annihilated? Possessed, then, of this Reform, and of their power of sitting, it might be natural for them to look to a restoration of the Irish Legislature: their exertions would rise in proportion to their hopes of success, and would require only a revival of the Irish Parliaments to give them the consequence and superiority they long for. They would consider it (that is, the power of sitting in Parliament) a right existing, but withheld from them at the time the Union was discussed, and upon it they would endeavour at a dissolution of the measure—they would call for 300 Members to resume their functions in an Irish Parliament; and the 200 seats, added in the room of 100 Protestant boroughs which we have demolished, would all be filled by popular elections, where numbers, in which their strength consists, would decide. What would not a majority so constituted look to? They would see their own aggrandisement, the maintenance and dignity of their Clergy, and the consequent superiority of their Church, all within their view,—I will look no further into so tremendous a prospect,—the seeds of separation would be sown, and Ireland might be torn from her connexion with Britain, without which she is and must be incapable of enjoying wealth, tranquillity, happiness, or any of the blessings of human life." * These observations were made with reference to Catholic Emancipation, and were unanswerable as long as the 40*s.* freeholders existed. Among them the strength of the Catholics resided, and the present measure, by destroying the Protestant Corporations, would go a great way towards giving the ascendancy to the Catholics. It was to be expected, then, that the Catholics would obtain a majority from Ireland, and he should like to know how Ministers would meet a proposition for a Repeal of the Union, backed by a majority of Irish Members so returned. The noble Lord, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, had, it was true, declared, that his opinion was, that he should prefer the hazard of a civil war to yielding to the mischievous demands for a Repeal of the Union; but that was a dreadful alternative, and his Majesty's Ministers would be answerable to their country, if they took on themselves the awful responsibility of passing a measure which strengthened the means that might ultimately bring the question of the Repeal to that point. The hon. and learned Gentleman, who had last night spoken in that House for the first time, had told them that the measure of Catholic Emancipation had been brought in upon grounds similar to this—that it was conceded to the loud demands of the Irish people, and that this was now to be conceded in like manner to the loud demands of the English people. That hon. and learned Gentleman, who himself added one to the list of those distinguished men who had come into that House through what were called Rotten Boroughs, had mistaken the analogy; for the Catholic Emancipation was a measure that stood on very different grounds from those on which Reform was introduced. He himself stood there as the Representative of a large body of freemen, and he would boldly assert, that the majority which had returned him was a majority of honest and unpurchased votes. By what right was it, he would ask, that these voters were to be disfranchised? Perhaps he might be told that they would not be disfranchised for that those who resided in the city would still have the power of voting; but though not actually, he asserted that they were virtually disfranchised, for the power they now possessed must be merged in the superior power of the 25,000 voters who would be created by this Bill. He was satisfied with thus having raised his feeble voice in an ardent manner against this measure; and having thus discharged his duty, he should not trespass further on the patience of the House.

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* Hansard, Parl. Deb. vol. iv, p. 1003-4.

The *Attorney General* and several other Members rose at once; and, after some little confusion, the hon. and learned Member, having obtained a preference, said, that he was extremely anxious to make some few observations on the Bill in its present stage. He had been prevented from doing so in an early part of the evening by the absence of his hon. and learned friend who had made so able and ingenious a speech last evening, and to whom he wished to offer some few observations in reply. He regretted that his hon. and learned friend was still absent, but he felt that it was his duty to lose no more time in offering his opinions to the House. He was happy to be able to do so at this moment, for it might be great vanity, or it might be the extreme partiality he felt to the task he had undertaken, but he had some expectation of being able to convert an opponent into a friend. The hon. and gallant Admiral, the member for Nottinghamshire, whom he believed he might call his hon. friend, having heard this question debated for seven nights in the former stage of this Bill, and having then made up his mind as to the vote he should give, had been since entirely convinced of the impropriety of his first opinion, and had now withdrawn from the presence of the House. [*no, no.*] He begged pardon, and was happy to be set right; for, as the gallant Admiral had candidly expressed a doubt whether his earlier opinion was correct, there was room to hope, that, after a second re-consideration of the matter, he might discover that his new impression was erroneous. No Gentleman could do more justice to the sentiments of his Constituents than did the hon. and gallant Admiral; for he had truly represented, that a great Meeting had been held in the county of Nottingham, which almost every respectable gentleman had attended, and that the Resolutions then adopted were unanimously in favour of this measure. The hon. and gallant Admiral had not ascribed that unanimity to intimidation or violence; on the contrary, he had declared that every man freely uttered his sentiments, as freely as in that other county meeting in Berkshire, where an hon. Gentleman, standing alone in opposition to this measure, was kindly and cordially received by those who respected his character upon all occasions, and especially the manly candour with which he avowed the difference of his opinion from their own. That single dissentient was listened to with regret, certainly, but with no expression of insult or distrust, rather with symptoms of increased confidence and regard. If such was the feeling of the enlightened persons who assembled at these county meetings, and if there, and in every assembly, except that which he had then the honour of addressing, there was an unanimous sentiment in favour of this measure; if, in every one of these instances, after a calm, a full, and a deliberate discussion, these respectable gentlemen found themselves forming the minority against the Bill, he begged the House to pause a moment, and consider which set of opinions had the best chance of being right. Was the whole people of England mistaken, when, without a shadow of personal interest, they pronounced their unanimous verdict on the permanent interests of the country? or would hon. Members admit the possibility that their judgment might not be quite infallible, and that the tumult of opposition raised against the measure within the House, far from being the offspring of reason, was made up of those interests, habits, connexions, and prejudices, which stifle its free exercise? The speech of his hon. and learned friend opposite delivered last night, had proceeded on the principle of imputation: he had found the key to the introduction of that measure in the interests of the Ministry; in proof of which discovery, he had nothing to do but to repeat the assertion, that there was a strange coincidence—a remarkable set of symptoms and appearances, conspiring to make out the selfishness of their motives in every stage of the business. The natural and simple cause of the introduction of the Bill for Reform —the necessity and the universal wish of the people—was too obvious to satisfy the ingenuity of his learned friend. "I have a shrewd suspicion," said his learned friend, "that the plan has undergone great alterations, since it was adopted by the Cabinet;" but in answer to this suspicion, he was able to state positively, that for five weeks, at least, he had had the instructions to draw this Bill in his hands, and on his honour he could declare, that no alterations had been made, except in particulars not of the least consequence to the Bill, and not such, indeed, as to leave him any recollection of their nature. The instructions he then received were precise, and those he put into the form of the Bill as it now stood. So much for suspicion the first. "But, (said his hon. and learned friend) conceive how irregular—how unprecedented—how improper—how inadmissible! The House has been advised that no alteration should be proposed, lest the safety of the Bill should be endangered." However inadmissible or irregular that advice might be deemed, it certainly was not unprecedented, because, only two years ago, the same advice had been given by the right hon. Baronet upon that great measure—second only in importance to the present—the Catholic Relief bill. The supporters of the bill produced by Government were entreated to abstain from alterations, as its fate would be risked if any were introduced. In spite of such an authority, this second charge was hailed as a more successful attack, and his hon. and learned friend had been encouraged to venture on one still bolder. He now asserted, that the cry for Reform was raised by Ministers, to keep themselves in power, and propagated by their means, for fear they should lose their places. Was it necessary to appeal to the most notorious facts in the history of the country, to remove this ground of charge? Did Ministers raise the storm? Were they the authors of the agitation? When did it commence? Last year? Certainly not. The cry for Reform was raised after the melancholy results of the American war; and could it be pretended that Lord Chatham, in his demand for it, was playing into the hands of the Government of 1831? That illustrious Peer, with his last breath, denounced the fatal influence that perverted the House of Commons, and the same conviction had been the very foundation of the fame of his son. His declared sentiments upon this subject had enabled him to step into power, supported by the confidence of the people, and that power he more than once exerted to destroy the influence which his father had denounced. At a later period, when he availed himself of the corrupt state of Parliament to perpetuate his power, and Mr. Fox pointed to his example as the fulfilment of his prophecy, the noble Lord, now at the head of the Government, had brought forward the question, and had divided with only about forty Members in its favour. He only mentioned these facts to show that the important principle had long been acknowledged, and generally felt, as every hon. Gentleman opposite would acknowledge at a time when his feelings were not excited, or his interests endangered. For many years a strong case, not for inquiry, but for redress, had existed. The corruption of the House of Commons was a matter of notoriety, and the people of England had taken it up, and called for Reform in a voice as far from entreaty on the one hand as it was from intimidation on the other. Any man who could view the subject calmly, with the temper and moderation that became so great a question, must at once acquit the Ministers, who had long excluded themselves from power by demonstrating the necessity for Reform, from every sordid motive in now proposing it. Sincerely believing the evil to be enormous, they proposed an efficient remedy; for, unless it were efficient, it could not be permanent and final. A trifling or partial measure might silence the public voice for the year 1831, but something more, in that case, would be necessary in 1832, and so on from year to year, keeping the country in a fever of suspense and speculation—a state of the public mind of all things to be avoided. An attempt had been made to throw discredit on the Bill, by asserting that it was the result of compromise; as if any great measure could be adopted, by the concurrent opinion of many individuals, without some sacrifice for the sake of unanimity. It had been conceded on the other side, last night, he believed for the first time, that some degree of Reform was necessary. No hint of the kind had been given during the former Debate of seven nights' duration; but now, forsooth, the Bill before the House was to be brought into disrepute because hon. Members had their measures of Reform, a secret to all but themselves, and even to themselves till within the last twenty-four hours, Refom, more moderate, more prudent, and discreet, and by which the interests of all would be duly guarded. But when these hon. Members talked of moderate Reform, he (the Attorney General) wished to know what was meant by the words? Had the scorner of compromise discovered some middle course, by which the nomination boroughs were to be preserved, and the principle of Representation carried into effect? On that scheme they had not yet agreed; the hon. Baronet (the member for Londonderry) professing his readiness to throw them over, while the noble member for the county of Down, while he declared himself a stringent Reformer, was hostile to the commencement of the change. Let the moderate Reformers state their practical views before they condemned the plan. Some of them would perhaps say, that half the number only should be disfranchised—that one Aldborough should be spared, while the other was taken;—others, that each of them, as well as Boroughbridge, Gatton, and Old Sarum, should send one Member, but only one, for the future. Either of these schemes involved the peril of change; but in a case of detected, notorious, and inveterate abuse, the danger of doing nothing ought not to be neglected. It thus became a practical question of degree, and the Bill should be allowed to go into the Committee, in order that the various views of enlightened men might be collected, and a measure concentrated from a combination and comparison of them all. His hon. and learned friend had observed upon the curious coincidence that sixty-two boroughs were to be disfranchised, and the Members of the House diminished to the same extent; and he had followed it up with the suggestion, that Ministers meant, in the end, to give back sixty-two Members to the totally disfranchised boroughs. He (the Attorney General) hoped that the character of those who introduced the Bill would be a security against the suspicion of such trifling with an important question. If it were true, Ministers would hardly forego the support they might obtain by the avowal of such an intention, instead of estranging the borough proprietors, by announcing disfranchisement in the first place, and disgusting the people afterwards, by deserting their own promise. The hon. and learned Gentleman called the plan a selfish one; he (the Attorney General) called it a plan devised for the public good. His learned friend sustained the charge by referring to the provisions of the Bill; he made the same appeal. He inferred honesty of intention from the uncompromising hostility of the class to which he had just alluded, the inevitable consequence of the measure proposed. He inferred honesty of intention from its determined efforts to remove the temptation to bribery; that persons of education and talent might not be prevented from offering themselves as candidates by the fear of expense. Did the Bill profess to do this, and to do it effectually? Why, in the first place, out-voters were not to be conveyed to the poll, and resident voters alone were entitled to vote, a provision little likely to conciliate the favour of the non-resident voters. Another feature of the plan to prevent expense was, shortening the duration of the poll. Was not that a *boná fide* attempt to avoid the expense of elections? There could be no doubt that would be the effect; instead of fifteen days, which afforded time for votes to rise in price, to an extent sometimes hardly capable of calculation, the time was reduced to two days in towns and counties. Then the right of voting was more defined and simplified. Whatever advantages some might ascribe to a variety of rights, a uniformity of franchise was well calculated to put an end to litigation and protracted contests. Registration had the same tendency. These were proofs of the *bona fides*, with which the Bill had been devised, for effecting a public good; and when his hon. and learned friend, from the omission of the word "bribery," insinuated that the authors of the Bill were indifferent to that great evil, the remark was extremely unfair. All the Acts as to bribery were left in operation; not one was to be repealed by this Bill, which laid the axe at the root of corruption, by weakening the motive and destroying the opportunity. No Bill could undergo more serious examination than this had done; and considering that no person was more capable of exposing real defects than his hon. and learned friend, he was surprised, when he looked at his successful speech, to see how little effect it amounted to. He was sorry not to see his hon. and learned friend in his place, when he remarked, that if his hon. and learned friend considered that the object of Ministers in introducing this measure was to keep their places, doubtless imputing to them (as he said) no sordid motive, he (the Attorney General) had an equal right to say—imputing no sordid motive to his hon. and learned friend—that he made that speech for the sake of getting into place again. These assumed motives might detract from the authority of reason on either side, but they did not affect the reasoning. He would endeavour, then, to meet the several arguments adduced. First, it was said, that though the Bill professed not to give double votes, leaseholders had a vote, and the landlords had a vote for the county, for the same property. If this were really absurd, it could be easily altered in the Committee; an answer that would apply to many other criticisms, the only question at that time being, as to the principle of the measure. Another objection was, that the county of York was to be divided into three Ridings, each with two Members; and his hon. and learned friend exclaimed, "Oh, what have you done? Why, this is Cromwell's plan!" The Attorney General asked how long we were to be frightened by mere words, from doing what was right, contending, that if it were Cromwell's plan, it was the plan of one of the most sensible men that ever lived—a great reformer of gross abuses—the best reformer of Chancery from that time to the present; a man, whose opinion on a matter in which he had no personal interest was of the highest value. If it were true that one Riding had a population of 700,000,—more than the other two Ridings united—his answer to the objection was, that Ministers did not pretend by this Bill to equalise counties. But the least populous of the Ridings would produce a more numerous constituency, than the most populous county in Cromwell's time. The difficulty of drawing an Act of Parliament, to effect Reform of any kind, must be well known to his hon. and learned friend, and could certainly not be denied by another hon. and learned friend he saw opposite (Sir James Scarlett), who brought in a bill last year for the much lesser object of reforming the Welsh Judicature. He found on the Journals, that the best assistance was allotted to him for the performance of his task, his associates being the then Solicitor-general and Mr. Secretary Peel. Their joint labours produced a bill, which, after frequent revisions, had become the law: but a law so imperfect and faulty, that other laws had been since found necessary to cure its defects, and, at this moment, an *ex post facto* law was suggested as a less evil than that some of its provisions should still be in operation. Some little indulgence might, therefore, be claimed for the first draft of a Bill, which aspired at little other merit, than that of being brief and intelligible, and might easily be corrected in the Committee. The point to which he next alluded was that regarding the powers which it was proposed to give to the Committee of the Privy Council. Undoubtedly those powers were very large; but when they proposed to do what this Bill was intended to carry into effect, and when one of the leading principles of the Bill—one of its great and most important features—was, that a parcel of corrupt boroughs were to be disfranchised, and that additional Members were to be given to a certain number of counties,—those counties to be divided into districts,—he would ask, could a better mode be devised for effecting the object than by appointing a Committee of the Privy Council, persons of weight, and station, and character in the State, upon whose decision the imputation of partiality could not be cast? The principle itself was not a new one, nor was an Act of Parliament required to enable his Majesty to put such a principle in operation. It was the ancient and well-understood right of the Crown, to cease sending writs to certain places or boroughs. This vested right is in the Crown: what would become of that vested right in borough nomination, of which so much was said, if it were thwarted by the King's declining to exercise his prerogative of sending a writ to Old Sarum for the election of Members? The King could take away the right which he gave. He did not say that the King could take away charters from Corporations, but he could take away from decayed boroughs the right of sending Members to Parliament. [" *No, no!*" *from Mr. Sadler.*] He would assert that such was the fact, notwithstanding the contradiction of the hon. member for Newark. The Act of Union certainly prescribed the number of Members for that House, but it did not prescribe the places from which they were to be sent. He was of opinion, that the interposition of the Privy Council, therefore, far from creating a new power, was only a new check for the more secure accomplishment of what was fit and just to be done. His hon. and learned friend no doubt also fancied that he had made a successful hit on the point of the rent of houses conferring the right to vote. Poor-rates formed an uncertain criterion, but they might come in aid; the hoped-for repeal of the Inhabited House Duty (with the rest of the Assessed Taxes) would deprive the proper officers of that means of judging; but the production of a receipt of the payment of rent, where there was no collusion between the landlord and tenant, would afford evidence to establish the value of the tenement. When the house was in the hands of the owner himself, there was no rent to furnish this criterion of value; but the inquiry was to be made at a calm season, when the judgment was not perverted by the violence and corruption, which may influence every decision during the heat of an election. In another part of the plan, his learned friend had detected a boon given to the landlords,—that here was a bribe offered to the Gentlemen of the House of Commons, to induce them to consent to this measure. No great compliment to the Gentlemen whom he was addressing. It appeared to him (the Attorney General) that while a man's real *bonâ fide* substance was to give him his title to vote, the proof of the payment of rent and taxes was the simplest method of arriving at that fact. He plainly perceived that the House felt this common-sense explanation to be completely satisfactory; but no single point of the speech he was discussing had been more successful than his learned friend's banter on the boon to parish officers, and the bribe to landlords—proving only, that when the audience is well-disposed, a little wit sometimes goes a great way. It was the same with argument addressed to those who came resolved to be convinced. The proposed mode of registration in the counties seemed to him (the Attorney General) a simple and an excellent one. The Register in counties was to be made by a Barrister duly qualified, and he rejoiced to add, that none of the 40*s.* freeholders would be disfranchised; thus the lower orders might still, by prudence and industry, become owners of the soil, and part of a numerous and most valuable constituency. To the freeholders, by the Bill, copyholders, and leaseholders were in future to be added; and here he could not but recur to the frightful word "revolutionary," introduced by various hon. Members into the discussion; they denounced the measure as revolutionary and destructive of all the ancient establishments of the country. It was some satisfaction to have obtained a legal definition of the meaning of the term "revolutionary," for an hon. and learned Member (Mr. Ormsby Gore), after having invoked the shade of Blackstone, drew from the mouth of that legal prophet, that though he approved of extending the franchise to freeholders and copyholders, their admission would shake the foundation, or at least remove the superstructure, of the Constitution. This argument showed the value of some of the big words imported into this debate, which could frighten those only who were too prone to be alarmed. The fact was, that in the reign of William 3rd, the word "revolution" was used to signify a restoration of rights and liberties, and he knew no reason why the same meaning should not be assigned to it in the reign of William 4th. Cromwell might be employed as a bugbear, and Jacobinical and Revolutionary applied as nick-names to the present plan of Reform; but the country would not be deceived by such artifices, and the time was gone by when ignorance could be imposed upon by the jargon of party. He apprehended that he had now gone through, and answered, most of the points urged by his hon. and learned friend. [A *Member* across the Table observed, that the right hon. Gentleman had said nothing of the Preston voters.] If Preston were especially affected by the measure, he was ready to give a full consideration to its peculiar claims in the Committee. No wish existed for the disfranchisement of that, or any other well-peopled place. The principle of this Bill was not one of disfranchisement. ["*No, no," from the Opposition benches.*] He would repeat, that the principle of this Bill was not a principle of disfranchisement ["*No!" no," from the Opposition.*] The object of the Bill was, to retain as much as possible all existing rights of voting ["*No, no," from the Opposition*], as far as was consistent with —[*Here the learned Gentleman was interrupted by a loud cry of "No," from some Member on the Opposition benches*]. The hon. Member, continued the learned Gentleman, might say "No," but he would assert, that the object of this Bill was not one of disfranchisement, but that its object was, to keep as much as possible the existing right of voting, as far as that was consistent with the real and effectual Reform of the Representation of the people in that House. He was fully persuaded that nothing better could be brought forward for such an object,—namely, to establish a real, effectual, and pure representation of the people in Parliament, and he should be much surprised, indeed, to find anything better proposed for such a purpose. Before he sat down he could not avoid alluding to some observations which had fallen from a noble Lord opposite (Lord Valletort) last evening, in reference to what had been said by him (the Attorney General) in the discussion which occurred in the early part of that evening upon the question of privilege;—namely, as to whether a certain paragraph had been a false and scandalous libel. He said on that occasion, that he did not think the paragraph in question was a false one; he was of the same opinion still; and he thought now, as he thought then, that there would be the greatest danger of a defeat in sending such a paragraph before a Jury. He at the same time said on that occasion, that he regretted and deprecated the strong and coarse language which had been resorted to; and yet the noble Lord had accused him of justifying and adopting the employment of the term "hired lacquies" towards Members of that House. That many acted under the most disturbing influences, the nature of their motives alone proved. He had, however, avowed his belief, that when hon. Members came into that House, they became public men, and were inspired with a wish to perform their duty faithfully. He was slow to suspect that they would deliberately sacrifice their conscientious conviction to any motive whatever; and he appealed to them, from that excited state of feeling which was now more striking in the House than out of doors, to the calm retirement of their closet. He did not despair of receiving their support, from a sense of what was due to their own character, and to their well-considered interests; gaining from the proposed measure more as members of the community, than they could lose as Members of Parliament. Such had been the persuasion of some of the most distinguished men the country had ever seen, the friends of Reform in the last century, and the consistent advocates of the present Bill. When he looked round, he saw them filling the same place in the same ranks, and fighting the battle of the Constitution. There was his venerable friend, the member for Norfolk: the noble Lord, who now, as then, represented the county of Derby, the hon. and long-trusted members for Middlesex, and Surrey and Berkshire: others he could name, the noble Lord who, from 1797 to the present time, sat in Parliament for Lancashire, his hon. friend, the member for Westminster, who then gave his first vote, and made his first speech, in favour of a cause which he had ever since so honourably and so steadily defended. If all these men must be acquitted of every selfish motive, in voting for Reform in 1797, the noble Lord who then proposed it, himself a county Member, and who now stakes his existence, as first Minister of the Crown, on the fate of the self-same measure, may deserve credit for sincerity and patriotism, for this faithful adherence to his early opinions. Too much stress may sometimes be laid on the merit of consistency, which ought doubtless to give way to altered circumstances, or an honest change of opinion. Yet, surely, consistency is a merit, affording the strongest presumption of honest motives, and some proof of clear and enlightened views. He claimed the full benefit of these presumptions for the noble Lord who now enjoys the happiness, described by the poet, of him—

> ———— "who, when brought
> Among the tasks of real life, has wrought
> Upon the plan that pleased his youthful thought,"

even if his own character, and that of the associates who surrounded him, did not divest his proposal of every thing unconstitutional or dangerous. He would not press too far the argument from their authority, since the hon. member for Marlborough had reminded the House, that it was men of character, rank, and station, who had begun the civil war in the time of Charles 1st. "Did not," said the hon. Member, "such men as Essex, and Warwick, and Northumberland, begin that civil war, ignorant, at the time, of the result to which their measures would lead, and blind to the consequences of their own conduct?" The question would prove too much: in condemning the patriots of 1640, it would involve in the same ruin, all the reformers of our own times, the hon. member for Cornwall, who undertakes to reform Parliament hereafter, as well as the authors of the Ministerial measure. Where was the use of referring them to the arbitrary times of Charles 1st, with his usurping Ministers, his tyrannical Courts, his Star Chamber, his Courts of Wards, by which his subjects had been plundered—to a time when the people were running counter to all his measures, when they suspected the King, hated the Ministry, and detested the whole policy of the Government. Was that a period to be taken as a parallel for the present time? Than which there never could be, he thought, a more propitious juncture. We were at peace, and prospering with a thriving trade, with the country improving, with the currency on a wholesome footing, with everything going on safely and securely throughout society, with one exception [*a laugh from the Opposition benches.*] Hon. Gentlemen might laugh if they pleased at the fact, but what did their constituents think of it? Their constituents unanimously said, that it was high time to put an end to that debasing, and degrading influence, which existed among the higher orders, and produced such demoralizing effects upon the lower; the natural and inevitable result of a system which was founded on corruption, and the natural cause of so much suffering and calamity to the nation. He was astonished to see moral and religious men strenuously contending against Parliamentary Reform, with such cases as Retford, and Grimsby, and Evesham, before their eyes. He was surprised to behold such men endeavouring, under such circumstances, to prevent all species of Reform. He would maintain, that the tendency of their arguments excluded it altogether. What else was the burthen of the seven nights' Debate on the part of the opponents of this measure? What other plan did they hint at? What hope did they hold out to the people? Did the right hon. Baronet admit more than a bare possibility, that he might, perhaps, be induced, as an individual, to give his reluctant assent to some measure of Reform? and what was known of his sentiments on the subject, but his decided preference of Bassetlaw to Birmingham, when an extension of elective rights was in contemplation? Some persons required that the public voice ought to be consulted: well, the public voice had been consulted. Others cried out that it was a robbery of Corporations; but the Corporations had come forward and begged to be so robbed. Others then had said, that the Bill contained clauses contrary to the rights of the City of London; but the City had met the next day, and had voted, not only that the measure was good, but had declared itself ready to sacrifice some of its most valued privileges, for the general advantage expected from the Bill. There was scarcely an exception to the unanimity of the people, whose opinions had been so confidently challenged. The measure was brought forward to remedy the greatest evils, and never was there a time in which it could be brought forward with greater safety. There was perfect happiness in observing the present state of the public mind, compared to what it had been a few weeks before. The Gentlemen opposite, who so often alluded to the measure of Catholic Emancipation carried, as they said, in opposition to the petitions of the people, did not seem to act consistently, when they now opposed a measure in favour of which the people had poured innumerable petitions upon the Table of the House. For his part, he would abstain from using any argument which could be called intimidation. As he would not allow such an influence to be exercised upon himself, he would not attempt to exert it over others. But the language of some of his friends was misconstrued into menaces. When the opponents of the Bill were told that they would not dare to face their constituents, it could never have been supposed to be intimated that they ran any risk of personal ill-treatment; but only that the cause of Reform was making such way throughout the country, and that amongst the most intelligent part of the people; and he would observe, that that part extended very far in the lowest class—that the Gentlemen who opposed the Bill could not expect afterwards the support of their constituents. There was nothing now of violence or faction among the people: the long neglect of real grievances, the provoking disappointment that would arise from palliatives and half-measures, especially if times less prosperous than the present should supervene, would in the end produce those lamentable results, which the experience of mankind has always proved to arise from just and reasonable discontent. In his conscience he believed that the present Bill would allay those feelings of dissatisfaction, by removing their cause; that it was not too late to apply an efficient remedy to a growing and undeniable evil; and that by adapting our institutions to the spirit of the times we live in, by a purer mode of election, and truer state of Representation, we should give the best security that human wisdom ever devised for the permanence and stability of our institutions.

[*Great cheering and loud calls of* " *question.*"] After the noise had subsided,

Sir *James Scarlett* rose and spoke as follows;—* I am well aware of the disadvantage of rising to address you immediately after the speech of my hon. and learned friend (the Attorney General) and how much that disadvantage is increased by the late hour of the night, and the exhausted state of the House, as well as of the subject. Nevertheless, considering it a duty I owe to the House as well as to myself, that my sentiments upon this most important question should not remain unknown, I rise, in the face of these difficulties, to request for a short time the indulgence of the House, which I shall endeavour not to abuse. I am most anxious that it should be fully understood that, long before and ever since I have been a Member of this House, I have been a friend to Reform. Upon various occasions when the question has been brought forward since I have had the honour of a seat in this place, though I have not troubled you with any statement of those sentiments, I have sufficiently declared them by my vote. My opinions upon this subject have never undergone any change. I am still a friend to Reform. I am sensible of certain defects in the present state of the representation of the people; and I am most anxious to remove those defects by such amendments as appear to me useful and necessary to make that Representation more perfect. But it does not follow that I am bound by any vote I have before given, or justified by the opinions I continue to entertain, to adopt the specific measure before the House, if it appears to me to go far beyond what any reasonable man would, upon due reflection, be willing to adopt, who was desirous of improving, but at the same time careful not to subvert the institutions of his country. I agree with my hon. and learned friend who has just sat down, that this great question ought to be debated free from all party feelings and all personal allusions, and I regret that so much of both have been already introduced. I can say for myself, that no individual in this House is more free from personal and party feeling than I am; and that I have bestowed an anxious consideration upon the subject, without any other motive than that of forming a just opinion upon it. Whatever Gentlemen may be pleased to think of this declaration, I trust they will give me credit when I assure them, that I have nothing to hope and nothing to fear from any opinion I may deliver in this House; and that, upon the present occasion, I neither expect to gain a seat nor to keep a seat by the vote I shall give, or by the honest avowal of my opinions. Admitting, then, that a Reform is either necessary, or, at least, would be highly useful, in the Representation of the people, I must still contend that no Reform can be either necessary or useful which is not consistent with the Constitution. There may be defects, and great defects, in the representation, and yet the institution itself is well worth preserving. The House of Commons, formed as it is, has done too much good, and too much good may yet be expected from it, to justify us in parting with it for an untried experiment which, under the name of a Reform, is an entire re-construction of the House, upon principles altogether new and unknown to the Constitution. I complain of no man for differing from me in opinion; but I claim the privilege of exercising my own judgment upon the measure; and I cannot bring myself to believe that the re-construction of this House, upon the plan now proposed, will be advantageous to the country. Wishing, therefore, to retain all the good that we already possess, and thinking it in the highest degree impolitic and unwise to hazard the loss, if I feel serious doubts of the success of this measure, those doubts are with me a sufficient reason for not going the lengths it would carry me. My hon. and learned friend, the Attorney General, seems to think that there is no alternative but this Reform or no Reform; and that those who are favourble to any Reform must vote for the principle of this Bill. I can by no means accede to his view of the subject. It might as well be contended, that if a measure were proposed to reform this House by abridging it of half its Members, and introducing the remainder into one assembly with the House of Peers, it would be incumbent on those who wished for any scheme of Reform to vote, at least, for the second reading of such a bill. The principle of the Bill lies not in the preamble, but in the specific measure; and that specific measure can only be found in the details of the Bill. Before entering upon the specific objections which I have to urge against this measure, I beg to be allowed shortly to advert to the grounds on which it has been generally supported, and upon one or more of which every measure of Reform must stand. The first ground is that of a constitutional right vested in the people to the specific Reform required. The second is a right in the people founded upon some particular theory, with which the Constitution does not exactly square, the inconsistencies between which theory and the fact are assumed to be grievances. The last ground is that of practical expediency. Now, if any constitutional right be possessed by the people to this specific plan of Reform, that right must be found in some written law, or in some known usage or practice. But in what law, or in what practice, at any period of our history is the plan of construction for this House contained in the Bill, to be found? The House will please to recollect that the Constitution of England is not to be found in any one written law or code, but in a collection of laws, usages, and practices. Upon these, such as they are, depend the authority of the King, of the Peers, and of this House. Of what does the House of Commons consist? How was it formed? And upon what do its rights and privileges now depend? It was formed originally of Members returned by the sole authority of the King's writs for certain counties, cities, and boroughs. To these have been added occasionally, by Act of Parliament, other Members, such for example, as those for the county and city of Chester, those for the county and City of Durham, those for the principality of Wales. They have also been increased by various Charters from the Crown, granting to certain corporations the privilege of sending Members, upon which Charters alone their right to return is now founded. The House of Commons, then, was founded upon, and consists of, a certain number of usages, Acts of Parliament, and Charters. Upon these rests its whole constitution and authority. In which of these, then, can be found any recognized right to this, or indeed to any other, specific mode of Reform? But if there be a constitutional right, it can only be found in some of these statutes, charters, and usages. My noble friend, who introduced this measure in a speech distinguished by that elegance and perspicuity which characterize all his performances in this House, was pleased to refer to the Statute of Edward 1st, commonly called the Statute of Westminster the first. My noble friend thought that he had found in that statute, though, passed before the existence of any House of Commons, or of any Representation of the people by election, a constitutional principle sufficient for his purpose, because he found a recital in the preamble of that Statute, that it was made in Parliament by the assent of the King's Council, the Archbishops, Bishops, Abbots, Priors, Earls, Barons, and all the commonalty of the realm, thereto summoned. It must be owned, that this was a tempting passage for my noble friend to cite. But if he will take the trouble to examine the history of a period somewhat earlier than the date of that Statute, he will find that the words commonalty of the realm, as there used, have no such meaning as he ascribes to them, and can justify no such inference as he draws from them. It is well known that Henry 3rd, when he came a minor to the throne, confirmed the great Charter extorted by the Barons from King John. When he came of age, however, he declared that confirmation void by reason of his minority, and violated the Charter in many essential parts. This occasioned much discontent, and many wars between him and his Barons. In the year 1258, he summoned them to meet him at a Parliament at Oxford; they assembled in great numbers, with their vassals in arms, under colour of assisting the King against the incursions of the Welsh, but in reality to drive away certain foreigners who surrounded him, and to compel him to their terms. They accomplished their object; and at this Parliament the Barons elected twelve of their own body, who, together with twelve elected by the King, were to make provisions for the future government of the realm. These twenty-four delegates made a number of regulations, which went by the name of the Oxford Provisions. By one of these, the Barons were to elect twelve, who were to attend three Parliaments, which the King was bound to hold every year, at stated times, and also to attend him upon all other occasions, when there should be need to treat of the business of the realm. I have made an extract from the published copy of the record, which still exists. The original is in the Norman language of the times, and it will be seen what is meant by the commonalty. "Be it remembered, *que le commun elise duze prodes hommes que viendront* as Parlemens, &c." and that *le commun tiendra pur establis*, what the twelve shall do. Now, here the word *commun* does not mean the people, but the Barons; and this will be more clear by looking at the next extract, which contains the names of the *prodes hommes* elected. "Ces sunt les duze que sont eslu *par les baruns,* a treter a tres Parlemens par an avec le conseil de rei pur *tout la commun de la terre* de commun besoigne." Here then the Barons elect; and if *la commun de la terre* means the commons, and not the Barons, they elect for the people. But that is not all; for the men elected consist of twelve Barons: their names are preserved, beginning with the Bishop of London, the Bishop of Winchester, the Earl of Hereford, and nine others of less note.* Now, it appears from the historian of the time, Matthew Paris, that Edward, the son of Henry 3rd, was present at this Parliament, and that he, as well as his father, took an oath to observe the Oxford Provisions. The document in which their oaths were promulgated by the authority of the King is still extant. In the course of two years, however, Henry 3rd appears to have repented of his concession. He obtained from the Pope absolution from his oath;† the war was renewed between him and his Barons; and he had shut himself up in the Tower of London, when Edward, his son, arrived from abroad; and, learning the treachery of his father, he not only disdained to accept of a Papal absolution, which was also offered to him, but renewed his oath to the Barons, and for a time took their part against the King.‡ And although he afterwards joined his father in the civil war which followed, he yet renewed the same oath upon different occasions, and probably did so upon the final pacification, about two years before Henry's death. At that period, Edward was abroad; he returned in the third year of his reign, and held that first Parliament, at which the Statute in question was passed, and to which he probably had summoned, amongst others, the twelve elected Barons. I offer it, therefore, to my noble friend, as a probable conjecture, that if the commonalty of the land was summoned or represented in that Parliament, it was summoned in the persons of these twelve Barons, and represented by them, who were, by the oath of Edward, to be admitted to his council and

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* The other names are, Philip Bassett, John de Baliol, John de Verdun, John de Grey, Roger de Summery, Roger de Montalt, Hugh d'Espenser, Thomas de Gresty, Egidius de Argenten.

† Eo tempore, Rex concepta securitate decreverat a juramento palam resilire, tanquam absolutus a papa ab eo quod fecerat sacramento.

‡ Quum autem venisset Edwardus et de vanis regis consiliis fuisset edoctus, iratus valde, a patris absentavit se conspectibus, adherens in hac parte baronibus, prout juraverat.

Parliament *pur tout la commun de la terre.* There is another chapter in that Statute which has led to some misapprehension. It is declared, that elections shall be free from force or menaces; which my noble friend might, with equal plausibility, contend, afforded a proof that elections of Members of Parliament then had existence. But it appears by a subsequent Statute, of the ninth year of Edward 2nd, as well as by the history of the times, that the elections there referred to, were elections to ecclesiastical dignities. My noble friend also referred to the Statute which passed, I think, in the thirty-fourth year of the reign of Edward 1st, called the Statute *de tallagio non concedendo,* by which the King binds himself to take no tallage but by consent of the freemen of the realm. Nobody knows better than my noble friend, that shortly before that period, in the same King's reign, writs were issued for the return of knights of the shire and burgesses of certain boroughs. But those boroughs were either boroughs in demesne, the property of the King, who had granted them certain immunities, or the property of some great Baron, by whose desire, probably, the writs were addressed to them. Surely nothing can be discovered in the state of the House of Commons at that period, or in the practice of the Constitution, imperfect as it then was, to justify the notion, that by any law or usage, any particular and definite constitutional right existed, upon which the House of Commons ought to be constructed upon the plan now proposed, or, indeed, upon any other plan. With respect to the theoretical right for which some persons contend, it appears to me so perfectly void of all reason and principle, that I shall not waste a word upon it, being satisfied that all attempts to support a measure of Reform upon the fanciful theories of individuals, however ingenious, must be treated in this House with scorn and contempt. The only remaining, and, in my opinion, the only safe ground upon which any such measure can rest, is the ground of expediency. Upon that ground alone, therefore, I venture to propose the objections which, in my judgment, ought to prevail against this Bill. In doing so, I shall not detain the House, at this hour, by entering at large into arguments in support of these objections; but shall content myself with stating my opinions, formed upon the most anxious and mature deliberation, and I am sure most conscientiously formed, against the proposed measure. Then, Sir, what is proposed by this Bill? It proposes, in the first instance, to cut off sixty-two Members from the Representation. From what class of the Representatives are they to be cut off? From that class in which are to be found the representatives of the monied, the commercial, and the manufacturing interests: no county Member is taken away. Now I wish to state my opinion with all openness and candour, and I hope without offence to any class of Gentlemen in this House, when I say, that I verily believe the prosperity and greatness of England to be essentially connected with the manufacturing, the commercial, and the monied interest. It is of the last importance that these interests should be duly cultivated, and they cannot be duly cultivated or sustained unless they are adequately represented in this House. I by no means intend to say that the landed interest ought to be postponed to these. On the contrary, I am ready to admit that it ought in general to preponderate; but it does already preponderate in the Legislature. It has an exclusive Representation in the House of Peers, and it has a decided influence in this House. In my opinion, what this House, and what the people possess of liberty and power, not to be found in our ancient institutions, is to be traced to the cultivation of commerce, and the wealth which followed it. It was not till the discovery of America, and the discovery of the passage to India by the Cape of Good Hope, by which new sources, as well as new channels, were opened to commercial enterprise, that Europe in general began to make rapid advances in wealth and prosperity. This country, in particular, was indebted to the Reformation, and to the dissolution of monasteries, in the reign of Henry 8th, for the means of outstripping the nations of Europe in liberty and wealth. By the dissolution of monasteries, vast masses of real estate, till then locked up in the hands of the Church, began to enrich the Commons, and to be the reward of the wealth flowing from America and India. Accordingly, in the reign of Elizabeth, the House of Commons seems first to have begun to feel its power. Before that time its existence is noted rather as an historical fact than for its influence on public affairs. Since that period, its power and authority have made a progress commensurate with the progress of commerce, manufactures, and wealth; and these, undoubtedly, are to be traced as the great sources of the prosperity and grandeur of this empire. I must, therefore, contend, that if the Bill had gone no further than to cut off sixty-two Members from this class of your Representatives, it would have been well worthy of consideration, whether it was expedient so far to reduce the influence of that important interest. That measure alone would destroy the present equilibrium, and give too decided a preponderancy to the land. But this Bill goes much further. Whilst it takes away sixty Members from the commercial classes, it adds fifty-five to the landed interest. For the future, if this Bill passes, we shall have, instead of ninety-two, no less than one hundred and forty-seven Members to represent the land, with sixty-two less for all other interests; and to make these county Members more exclusively agricultural, it is proposed to exclude from the right of voting for them, all those who have votes for represented towns. Now, supposing this part of the measure to accomplish its obvious intention, what security have we that a House of Commons so constituted will be disposed to maintain that public credit so essential to the safety of the commercial and monied interest? I am well aware, that it is the true interest, as well as the duty of every country, to preserve inviolate the public faith; but I well know that all governments have not been duly sensible of this interest. I cannot be quite satisfied that all the members of his Majesty's present Government are sufficiently alive to it. My right hon. friend, if I may presume to call him so without offence, the First Lord of the Admiralty, declared, in a late Debate, that he differed from his colleagues upon certain points which are discussed in an ingenious pamphlet called "Corn and Currency," which is ascribed to the right hon. Baronet. I was extremely glad to hear of this difference, and hope it may ever continue, whilst my right hon. friend retains an opinion expressed in that work, "that however sacred the faith of a nation, it may sometimes be the duty of him who is placed at the helm, to cut away the mast of public credit in order to save the ship." With a Parliament constructed by this Bill, it is by no means clear that a more open and undisguised attack upon the national creditor than that which was lately proposed, may not be very favourably received. Nor will the Representation given to the large towns, upon so wide a basis as to embrace houses of 10*l.* a year in value, afford any security against this disposition. I much fear the qualification is too low to ensure the return of persons having much interest in the preservation of public credit. With the exception of the qualification, however, I entirely approve of that part of the measure which gives Representatives to great towns. Let me assure my noble friend, that it gives me much more pleasure to speak of those parts of the Bill which I approve than of those which I am forced to condemn. I I trust I shall receive credit for sincerity when I state that I looked forward to the introduction of this measure, with an anxious hope and expectation that I might be able to give it my unqualified approbation. Believe me, Sir, that nothing but a sense of imperious duty has induced me to oppose any part of it. I cordially approve, then, of giving Representatives to the great towns. I have always been of opinion that they ought to be represented specifically in Parliament. It seems to me to be within the regular march of the Constitution that they should have acquired this franchise; and I believe that it would long since have been conferred upon them but for the Act of Union with Scotland, which, by limitting the number of Members of this House, prevented the Crown from exercising that right which it undoubtedly possessed—I say, the right which the Crown undoubtedly possessed: for I agree with my hon. and learned friend, that the Crown did possess the right of conferring this franchise, though I must differ from him altogether, when he lays it down, that the Crown ever had a right to take the franchise away. So strange a proposition must have surely escaped from my learned friend through inadvertence. It is not only inconsistent with all sound principle, but it is directly contrary to the established doctrine and practice of this House upon the very subject in question. At the time when the House of Commons was nothing—when a seat in it was of no importance, and the right of Representation rather a burthen than an object of desire, —it was no uncommon thing for boroughs, to which writs had been addressed, to petition the King that they might be relieved from the burthen of sending and maintaining Members. Their petitions were, in many instances, complied with. In other cases, the Sheriff, of his own authority and discretion, omitted to send precepts to particular boroughs. But as soon as the House of Commons began to assume a higher position in the control of public affairs, and had commenced that progress towards power which terminated in the Commonwealth, it became a common practice for boroughs which had formerly sent Members, but which had been omitted in the Sheriff's list of precepts, to present petitions to this House for the restoration of their franchise. The House referred the petitions to a Committee; and upon the Report of the Committee that the matter of the petition was true, the House, at first, addressed his Majesty to issue a writ to that borough, but afterwards directed the Speaker to issue his warrant to the Clerk of the Crown for that purpose. In this manner, from the later period of Henry 8th to the end of the reign of Charles 1st, there were restored no less, I think, than thirty-six places to the right of sending Members, after a suspension of that right for more or less time: and during the same period, exclusive of the Members for the principality of Wales and Chester, there were created by the charters of the Crown no less than fifty-five new franchises. In the reign of Charles 2nd were added, by Act of Parliament, the county and city of Durham, and, by charter, the town of Newark; which was the last example of such a charter: upon which occasion it was, for the first time, doubted in this House whether the Crown had any right to confer such a franchise. The question was debated in this House, and finally decided in favour of the Crown. It is clear, therefore, that the Crown once had the right of granting; and it is equally clear, that the Crown never had the right of taking away any such franchise. But my hon. and learned friend, labouring under the same mistake, has asked, "Why do you find fault with the Bill for conferring on the Privy Council powers which are already vested in the Crown?" But if any such powers are vested in the Crown, what occasion is there for this Bill? Is it seriously proposed that this House shall delegate to a Committee of the Privy Council, named by the Crown, the power of determining the basis and extent of its own constituency? I must say that, in my opinion, provisions more unparliamentary and more unconstitutional were never laid upon the Table of this House. The House must, indeed, be fallen in its own contempt, and deserve all the reproaches that are cast upon it, if it can submit to such a degradation. I proceed now to the disfranchisement of the boroughs. I am so decidedly of opinion, that it would be desirable to give Representatives to the great towns, that, provided the measure is effected at all, I should consider the mode of effecting it, either by adding new Members to the House, or by disfranchising some of the smallest boroughs, a question of secondary importance. I am not one of those who contend that the Legislature, in a case of high expediency, has not a right to disfranchise a borough. Indeed, I hardly know what a Legislature, whose object should always be expediency, has not a right to do. At the same time I am certain that I shall have the concurrence of a right hon. and most learned friend of mine, whom I now see in his place (Sir James Mackintosh), when I say that, in considering the question of expediency, the question of justice and of right ought never to be disregarded. Confiscation and the abolition of long-vested interests, and long-enjoyed privileges, upon the ground of expediency, are dangerous lessons for a Legislature to teach. They are sure to operate, in the way of example, to a much greater extent than was first intended, and never end where they begin. But what does this Bill do in the way of disfranchisement? Why, it disfranchises by one blow sixty boroughs entirely, and mutilates forty-seven others, by taking away one Member from each. I own that the violence of the measure appals me. I must be firmly convinced, not only of the soundness of the theory upon which it is done, but of the certain beneficial consequences that are to result from it, before I can give my consent to it. But the Bill suggests no reason for the measure, nor any rule or principle, upon which the boroughs enumerated have been selected for condemnation. On the contrary, there appears upon the face of the Bill an obvious principle by which they might all, or nearly all, be rescued from their fate. That principle is this,—that for the future no place is to be allowed to send Representatives without a constituency of 300 voters. When the number is less, it is to be increased to that amount. Here then is a plain intelligible principle, upon which it is manifest that there is no occasion to disfranchise entirely any borough. If the number of voters be too small in them, the obvious remedy is, to increase the number by the same rule as you propose to increase the numbers of those you allow to remain. No reason, however, is to be found in the Bill for disfranchising any one of these boroughs; and I will defy any man, who had not been informed by the speech of my noble friend at the opening of those Debates, to discover, from reading the Bill, any reason or rule that governs or prescribes the disfranchisement of any borough in the list. We must look, therefore, for the principle to the speech of my noble friend, and there we find that a certain rule has been adopted, by which boroughs, whose population in 1821 did not exceed 2,000 are to be wholly disfranchised; that those of which the population at the same period did not exceed 4,000, are to lose one Member; and, finally, that wherever the population of any town now without Representatives did, in 1821, exceed 10,000, one Member is to be given to that town. Now, without meaning to quarrel with the principle of population as one that ought to have some influence, I beg leave to ask, first, why the rule is to be taken from the population ten years ago instead of the present population? Why are you to legislate for the time past instead of the time present? See to what inconsistency this may lead in the application of your rule. A borough that had 2,005 inhabitants in 1821 will not be disfranchised of both its Members, although at the present time it may not contain nearly so many as 2,000. Again, a borough that contained 1,999 inhabitants at that time will be disfranchised, though it may now contain double that number. The same inconsistency will arise in the application of the other number of 4,000 to boroughs that are to be partially disfranchised. Now, what can be more arbitrary and capricious than such an application of the rule you adopt? But what is the reason of the rule itself? What is there peculiar in the numbers of 2,000 and 4,000 that they should be selected as the guides in this new scheme? I have heard no reason suggested, except that by adopting smaller numbers, too few, and by adopting larger numbers, too many, boroughs would have been disfranchised.* But the question still returns;—too few for what purpose? and too many for what purpose? I see no purpose the line chosen is to answer, except to please its proposers. There is an equal inconsistency in the operation of the rule for giving Representatives to new places. For example, a place that has a population of 4,005 shall keep the two Members, but one that has a population exceeding 10,000, shall have but one, and another that has a population of 9,900 shall have none. It is said, the people are dissatisfied with the present system because it is full of anomalies, because it cannot be defended by reason, and does not stand upon any principle. I cannot tell how the newly-constructed House of Commons will work in practice,—experience alone can show how it will work,—but of this I am very certain, that it will not be constructed upon any one principle or theory which I have ever heard advanced as the ground of Reform, and that it will still be exposed to all the evil, the ridicule, and the reproach, that are charged upon the present, for the want of symmetry, of due proportion, and of a system that can be defended by reason. If these are your objections to the old fabric, surely you should at least avoid the same errors in the construction of the new one. The time will, doubtless, soon come when the people, disappointed in their hopes of advantage from a Reform of Parliament, will examine your new work with more attention than they do at present; they will then find that there has been something arbitrary, capricious, and unjust, in the whole plan of your building; they will say, "You have pulled down the old fabric because some of its apartments were not very convenient, because others were out of symmetry, and because the structure was partly formed of some dirty cement which bound it together, but which you disliked; use, however, had taught us to endure these defects, and the antiquity of the fabric at least led us to contemplate it with respect, but now you have erected a new building, to which custom has not reconciled us, which has no charm of age about it to command reverence,—which is quite as inconvenient as the one you have destroyed,—which defies all the principles of symmetry and proportion,—whose distorted dimensions are not the result of time and accident, but the work of your own design, and which is rendered studiously unsightly by deformities which you have projected by line and rule." The task of the critic is never difficult, but the vulgarest of critics will be master of those rules by which your new work must be condemned. I contend, therefore, that if you make any change in the Representation, upon the ground of its irregularity, you ought at least to model it upon some plain rule, the reason of which may be apparent to mankind, and not upon any arbitrary and capricious fancy, which will render your new system more liable to objections than the old one. Another objection which I have to urge against this measure is, that it aims at placing the Representation of all the towns in England upon an uniform footing, as far as the qualification of the voter is concerned. Indeed, it may be considered that the leaseholder of 50*l.* a year, and the copyholder of 10*l.* a year, will fall into the class of householders at 10*l.* a-year. The object of the Bill, then, is, to produce an uniformity in the qualification. In my opinion, the House of Commons, constituted as it now is, does in effect represent every class, every interest, and every opinion in the nation. Now, it is not certain that the same effect will be produced if you adopt an uniform qualification. I believe that it is to the anomalies that now exist in the qualifications of voters, that may be traced the cause of this Representation of all classes, opinions, and interests. An uniform class of voters must have a tendency to give you a representation of the opinion of the majority of that class, and to exclude that of the minority. Occasions will often arise where this result will be inevitable. I remember that during a considerable period of the war which followed the French Revolution the popularity of that war was so great, that the Members of this House could hardly go far or fast enough for the people in the prosecution of it. I know that this feeling was afterwards changed, but that it existed for a considerable time was notorious. It was equally so that Mr. Fox, and the noble Lord now at the head of his Majesty's Government, finding that the people were deaf to all their warnings, and blind to the fate that impended over them, actually seceded from Parliament for a time, till the eyes of the people should be opened. The eyes of the people, however, were not opened. They continued in their obstinate blindness during the secession. The minority in which Mr. Fox and the noble Lord took so distinguished a lead, was undoubtedly very small. But I beg leave to put it to the House to consider whether that minority would have existed at all, if the right of election had at that time been placed upon an uniform footing, and the Representation confined to householders of 10*l.* a-year and upwards. I am persuaded that, if the elections had then been made by the majority of any one class in the kingdom, very few, if any of the distinguished persons who were the advocates of peace, would have found their way into this House. Now, though I must always respect the opinion of the majority, and am willing to admit that their opinion is generally right at last, yet I am far from thinking that it is generally right in the beginning. On the contrary, upon all subjects in which the passions are apt to interfere with the judgment, the opinion of the minority is most likely to be right in the first instance, and certainly never ought to be excluded from this House. But upon what ground does this Bill disqualify all persons who do not occupy houses of 10*l.* a year? In the next generation every other class of voters is to be extinguished. No other ground can be taken for their disfranchisement but that the communication of the right to householders of 10*l.* a year would, if combined with the other classes of voters, be dangerous to the Constitution. I can very well understand this argument, and acknowledge the force of it; but the Bill is exposed by it to an unanswerable objection;—for if it be true that the continuance of the franchise to pot-wallopers, to small freeholders, to freemen of corporations, and, in some instances, to the inhabitants at large, would be dangerous in combination with the extension of the franchise to so large a class as householders of 10*l.* a-year,—and if this be the reason for abolishing all classes but the last in the next generation, how are we to be secured from the dangers that may arise in the next twenty years? My hon. and learned friend, the Attorney General, has indeed asserted that the present is a season of profound tranquillity. I certainly did entertain great doubts upon this point, and I am, therefore, happy to learn from such good authority, that there is no ground to apprehend any disturbance of peace from abroad. But we are all as good judges as my learned friend of what is passing at home. Every Gentleman must form his own judgment from the sources of of information which lie open to him; and, as far as I have been able to ascertain the fact, it appears to me that amongst the lowest class of voters to be introduced in the great towns, there will be found, not any want of intelligence, nor any want of information, but, combined with that intelligence and information which give activity and influence, a restless revolutionary principle which aims not so much at the reformation of monarchical as at the establishment of republican institutions. Amongst this class are to be found the converts to the system which has of late been preached up in high places, of a cheap Government with a President at its head, a Government which disdains every principle that is not mercenary, and despises every object whose value cannot be calculated in pounds, shillings, and pence. I now proceed to the last point on which I propose to trouble the House,—the influence of public opinion. It is said, that whatever may be our judgment of the measure, the Bill must pass as it is, because it is the public will. Sir, that the public is anxious for Reform is true,—that the cause of Reform has made great and rapid progress within the last three months is equally true,—and I cannot doubt the influence of that feeling upon this House; but that the country has fixed its desire exclusively upon the specific plan of Reform propounded in this Bill I must be permitted to doubt. To understand the measure fully requires some time and great attention;—now I have not observed that, at the various meetings which have been held in favour of Reform in counties and smaller districts, any of the speakers have taken the trouble to explain to the audience the particulars of the measure they were called upon to approve. But those who think that the argument of public opinion must be of force to compel this House to adopt a measure against its deliberate judgment are surely not very consistent in their reasoning. You say, that this House ought to be Reformed, because it is so constituted as not to be sufficiently obedient to the will of the people; and yet you expect that this House will even surrender its own existence in obedience to that will; that will of the people is considered as conclusive upon our judgment, and as paramount to all argument and reason. And I must say, that if to increase the influence of public opinion on the conduct of the House of Commons is the thing desired, there never was less occasion for Reform upon that ground than there is at present. There never was a time when public opinion had so great an influence in this House, or when the representatives were more sensitive to the voice of their constituents. There was a time when the debates in this House were kept secret from the people, or were only known at some distant period, when the notes, taken by some curious Member of Parliament, were communicated by himself, or through the agency of others to the press. Every body knows, that when the Debates first began to be published by Dr. Johnson, they were reported very briefly as the Debates of some ancient senate, with fictitious names given to the speakers. I am old enough to remember that, long after the names of the Members were communicated with their speeches in the daily journals, the Members were exempt from all invidious comment. Mr. Woodfall, who was most distinguished for the accuracy of his reports, took especial care to avoid all remarks upon the sentiments and character of the speakers. I am far from disapproving of the practice of publishing the Debates. I think it a practice highly useful to this House, and beneficial to the public. It adds much to the authority of Parliament with the country. But it cannot be denied that it renders individual Members much more sensitive to public opinion. At present no man can rise to deliver his sentiments in this House without exposing himself to the certainty of a comment upon those sentiments, by some public journal. It would not be parliamentary to suppose that hon. Members can be influenced in their votes by the fear of any attack or any criticism, but I merely state the fact, that comments are made on the speech, the conduct, the motives, and character of every Member of this House, whose opinions are not in accordance with those entertained by the writers in the newspapers; and I hope I do not violate the respect due to the House, when I add my conviction, that some Members are more guarded in the expression of their opinions by this rod which constantly impends over their heads; and that from this, as well as other causes, public opinion at this time operates with more force upon the House of Commons than it ever did upon any other legislative assembly in the world: so much so, that when that opinion has been explicitly and deliberately expressed in favour of any measure, I admit that the House must follow it. But beware of adopting an important change in your constitution, upon the mere ground of public opinion, which, upon a measure so recently propounded, must be immature and undigested. Beware of shaking that foundation of usage, upon which all your own privileges and authorities rest, and of adopting, upon the rashness of public opinion, an untried theory in place of that institution which, bottomed in long usage, and gradually improved to suit new exigencies, has produced in practice the most splendid and beneficial results. Upon what rests the power of this House to originate all grants of money, to control the administration of the finances, to call the Ministers of the Crown to account, to exercise the important functions of the grand inquest of the nation? Are these privileges to be found in any Act of Legislature? Were they given by any Charter of the Crown to any House of Commons? Were they ever claimed or thought of at those periods to which you are referred for the constitutional rights of the people? No, Sir, they rest upon usage, and usage alone; a foundation which, while treated with reverence, may be solid and secure, because it rests upon the habits, the opinions, and the feelings of mankind; but when abandoned by you to the mockery and scorn of what is called public opinion, must perish with all the institutions which it supports. No reason has been assigned for abridging the Representation of England by seventy Members—no reason has been assigned for cutting off so many as 167 Members from the boroughs; and if all this must be yielded to the mere expression of public opinion by this House of Commons, at what concession will a reformed House of Commons, constructed to reflect the exact image of public opinion the mere delegates to express it,—at what concession will such a House stop, which is demanded by the will of the people? Can they refuse to abolish the law of primogeniture? Can they refuse to put an end to hereditary peerage, to gratify the wishes of the people? It is with some difficulty that you now refuse to entertain propositions of this character, that are occasionally urged upon you. How then will a House of Commons, formed not to deliberate, but to follow the impulse of petitioners, be able to resist them? Allow me to state a circumstance which occurred last year. There is not, and there never was, any human institution, however sanctioned by age or the experience of its utility, that has not some weak side, some tender part, which, when skilfully exposed may cover it with ridicule. It so happened, that in the discharge of my official duty, I was destined to hear a noble friend of mine, then the ornament of this House, and now the delight of the House of Peers amuse a considerable number of their Lordships assembled in that House, in a speech of some hours, with the happiest ridicule of an hereditary peerage and hereditary Judges. He exposed, with singular felicity, the obvious imperfections of such an institution, and I fear, convinced several of their Lordships of the great superiority of a Peerage procured by purchase and sale at an auction. Nothing in Gulliver's account of the King of the Brobdignags was half so amusing or so successful. Now I entertain no doubt, that if that speech had been circulated through the country in a cheap form, with due aid from the Press, and more especially if backed with the King's authority, many petitions would have found their way to this House from parishes and counties for the abolition of hereditary peerage? I have no doubt, that a few good speeches in this House, in favour of a cheap government, like that of America, accompanied by the proper means to inculate sound doctrines, and to excite the people, would, before long, produce, from different parishes in England, petitions for the destruction of constitutional monarchy, as the great obstacle to cheap government. Supposing you are bound to obey the impulse of the people, what must you do with such petitions? My noble friend (Lord J. Russell) on the other side has introduced to the House on several prior occasions motions for Reform, and I have on those occasions been proud to fight under the noble Lord's banner. But were any of the measures then suggested by him similar to the present? Directly the reverse. My noble friend has hitherto deprecated all measures of a similar character. I cannot, therefore, be reproached with inconsistency because I only adhere to those opinions which it appears that he has abandoned. I have, indeed, witnessed many changes of opinion on the subject of Reform. I well remember that one of the great arguments in favour of it was the alleged influence of the Crown in this House. But Mr. Pitt, once its mighty champion, upon the introduction of some discussion upon this subject after the Union with Ireland, declared his opinion that the addition of 100 Members into the House by the Act of Union presented such an obstacle to the influence of the Crown as rendered any other Reform unnecessary. Now I will venture to ask if Mr. Pitt's opinion, so far as the influence of the Crown is concerned has been falsified by recent events? Does any Gentleman believe, that this influence can now sustain any Ministry against public opinion? For example, did the last administration find the House of Commons too servile and obedient to the will of the Crown? Is the House I have now the honour to address so obedient to the will of the Crown as to give its support to Ministers in opposition to public opinion? Sir, the existing Administration came into office supported by the force of public opinion. If they are not backed by that opinion to the same extent that they once were, their weakness will become manifest in this House. If, indeed, any degree of weakness has yet appeared, sure I am, that it has not arisen from any want of the exercise of such influence as is left to the Crown. Experience has already proved what I feel myself perfectly justified in asserting, that no influence of the Crown in this House can now prevail to counteract the ascertained opinions of the people; and I am satisfied that this House cannot long support any Ministry that does not possess the confidence of the people. Sir, I shall not detain the House longer, except to observe that if any reasonable hope could be afforded that the Bill might be so modified in a Committee as to remove the objectionable parts of it, I should be too happy to support it in the present stage. There are some parts to which I do not object, whilst others fill me with alarm. I cannot question the pure motives or the honest conviction of my noble and hon. friends, who have brought forward the measure, of its advantage to the public; and if I could bring myself to believe that it would be successful in attaining the patriotic object which they have in view, I would cheerfully and gladly support it. But I must own that my forebodings are all the other way. After much and anxious consideration, I have not brought myself to doubt only, and even a doubt would be a sufficient reason for deciding against it, but almost to a conviction, that if this Bill pass, it will begin by destroying this House, and end in destroying the other branches of the Constitution. Let me implore the House to consider how worthy that Constitution is of being preserved. It has existed for many ages the admiration of the world—the foundation, the safety, and the glory of this vast empire. It has protected property and liberty to a degree in which property and liberty were never protected in any other country under Heaven since the history of mankind has been known. Under this Constitution the meanest man in the Kingdom if he possess but talents and industry, may acquire the greatest wealth or rise to the highest dignity. Under this Constitution the lowest man by birth may command your fleets or your armies, or aspire to and attain the honour of the highest place in your legislative councils. These advantages are the distinction and the exclusive fruits of our present Constitution. I cannot bring myself to put them in hazard by consenting to a House of Commons upon a new construction, and therefore I must oppose this measure. [On the hon. and learned Gentleman resuming his seat, the calls for "Question," "Divide," and "Adjourn," were loud and conflicting.]

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* What is the motive for fixing upon precisely sixty for suppression? Some of those appear by the returns to contain many more householders at 10*l.* rent than some of those which are not suppressed.

Sir *T. D. Acland* at length obtained a hearing, and said, that he would not detain the House for more than five minutes. He would not have preferred a request to be heard at that late period of the night, had he not already endeavoured, but in vain, to obtain the attention of the House at an earlier hour. He wished to express the opinions which he entertained on this subject, and he assured them that he would not take more than five minutes to do so. He knew that he had no claim to their attention even for five minutes, especially when nearly three hours had been occupied by two speakers who were well entitled to the most respectful consideration. But when hon. Members rose up one after another to express their opinions, and the opinions of their constituents, he felt that his right to address the House was the same as theirs, and he should now claim the power to exercise it. It was a singular circumstance in this Debate, that not one Member had yet taken a part in it, without expressing his readiness to make some Reform. Such was not the characteristic of the seven nights' Debate; but at present the tone of the House was so changed, that, with one or two exceptions, he could not refer to any Member who had stated that his opinion was still adverse to Reform. He was of opinion that hon. Gentlemen did not consider the effect of that admission. They ought to reflect that he who opened the door a few inches to a strenuous applicant, might as well open it to a larger extent, and they ought to apply that argument to this question, which was not now agitated for the first time, but which had been agitated for the last fifty years, and had been agitated in vain till the present hour, when the admission was at last made, that it was a question which ought to be entertained. It appeared to him to be trifling and absurd to consider this measure in its minor details: on the contrary, he thought that they ought to make up their minds to some large and substantial measure of Reform. The question on the second reading of this Bill was a question of Reform or no Reform. Yes, in plain terms, the second reading of this Bill involved the question whether they would have a large substantial measure of Reform, or whether they would be content with a mere vague expectation of a non-existing phantasy, to be brought forward hereafter by his hon. friend the member for Cornwall, and to be supported only by those who were either adverse to all consideration of the question, or who brought up the lagging rear of the Reformers, in the hope that their march would be speedily and effectually stopped. Those who professed themselves friendly to Reform, and yet stated that they could not support this Bill, because there were parts of it which would not admit, in the Committee, of any modification that they could approve of, must not be surprised if they were classed in future by the country among the decided opponents and stoppers of Reform. He would not trouble the House with the explanation of the feelings which he had formerly entertained on this question, or of that sense of duty which impressed him with the necessity of supporting the present attempt to remedy such defects in the constitution as no eloquence could now hope to maintain,—as the common sense of the country would no longer hear justified, and would scarcely tolerate, such defects as gave to every enemy of the Constitution the means of inflicting an additional wound upon it, and to every friend the certainty of feeling an additional pang. He would not pretend to describe his feelings: he would only say, that he had never had a more painful task imposed upon him than the endeavour to find out the course of duty which he ought to pursue upon a subject which, of all the subjects that had been submitted to Parliament in the twenty years during which he had en-enjoyed the honour of a seat in it, was the most important, both in itself and in its probable effects. Indeed he might say, that it was one of the most important questions which had ever been submitted to any Legislature. He could assure Ministers it had been his most anxious wish to be able, on principle, to give his unqualified support to the measure. But he was bound to say, that although he saw in it very much to approve, and also observed the fairest intentions in its proposers, after every effort that he had made to bring himself up to the point of supporting the Bill without qualification, he did think it went too far. He regretted that he could not give an unqualified support to the plan, in the details of which Ministers had, according to his opinion, moved with too rapid a pace. He was not unwilling to consent to a very large and ample disfranchisement—he was not unwilling to stake for the basis of such disfranchisement the proposition contained in the Bill, with some abatement, but, at the same time, he was not willing to consent to the total disfranchisement of the boroughs as proposed. With respect to Scotland, he thought that the Government did right to propose that the Representation should be thrown open, and it was likewise, in his opinion, advisable that the large towns of the country should be represented. With respect also to the distribution of Members obtained by the proposed disfranchisement, he thought that it was, on the whole, wise and just, with some exceptions, such as the large addition of Members to the metropolis. Notwithstanding the objections he had taken, being a reformer on principle, he felt it indispensably necessary to vote for the second reading of the Bill, with a view to its modification in the Committee, and hoping that those who had done so much that was wise and good would consent to arrange the details of the measure so as to remove reasonable objections, and render the plan generally satisfactory [*renewed cries of " Question," and " Divide."*]

Lord *John Russell* asked the House to give him some of its attention while he gave such explanations as he could upon certain points that had been touched on during the course of the Debate of yesterday and that night; and at the same time attempted to answer parts of the arguments used by the opponents of the Bill. He was aware, however, that a great part of those arguments had been so completely and satisfactorily replied to by his hon. and learned friend the Attorney General, that it would be worse than needless for him to trouble the House with any repetition of the points touched on in his hon. and learned friend's speech. He wished here to state, that he differed from his hon. and learned friend, the late Attorney-general (Sir James Scarlett) entirely, in thinking that his hon. and learned friend, as a reformer, could, with propriety, vote against the second reading of the Bill. Mr. Burke had spoken of certain persons as being prospective patriots, who, when the question came to the present day, were always found wanting. Looking at his past life, his hon. and learned friend might be called a retrospective patriot, and his prospective patriotism was also undoubted, so long as the Legislature dwelt in generalities, and the hon. and learned Member had only to make speeches in that House and to his Constituents, expressive of his wishes for some Reform; but now that the Ministers came forward with a distinct and tangible measure, his hon. friend used arguments which were not in favour of a more moderate Reform than the present, but which militated against any Reform whatsoever. He begged to observe, that although many concessions had been made in the general language of the opponents of the Bill since the seven nights' Debate, commencing on the 1st of March, in point of promise or pledge in favour of any specific measure of Reform there had been no concession—nothing distinct—on the part of those opponents. If the late Solicitor-general could point out parts of this Bill which were not quite intelligible to him, still it must be admitted that it was a little more plain and intelligible than the imaginary resolution which, in the event of this proposition being defeated, the hon. member for Cornwall was to propose at some future day, no one knew when —to do no one knew what, and which was to afford satisfaction to no one knew whom —except, indeed, it were intended to satisfy those who opposed Reform, yet wished to persuade others and themselves into the belief that they were not opposed to it. His hon. and learned friend had alluded to the speech which he (Lord John Russell) made at the commencement of the Debate, and to the reference which he had then made to the commonalty; and his hon. and learned friend had given a strange interpretation to the word " commonalty," for he interpreted it to mean " the Barons." If this were correct, instead of Peers being intruders in their interference with that House, they were the true Representatives of the people, for after all the Barons, and the Barons alone, were the real commonalty, (according to his hon. and learned friend), and possessed the right of voting taxes. But he begged his hon. and learned friend to come down a little later when he referred to the constitution of the House. The statement he had made in his opening speech was, that this was a question of right,—that those who asked for Reform had the letter of the law in their favour, and, such being the case, possessed a fair claim that the House of Commons should truly represent the people. That was a proposition which it required no great degree of ingenuity to establish: it was supported by the very words used in Acts of Parliament, and by the well-known language of the Constitution. What did our ancestors do in 1688? First they declared that elections ought to be free and uninfluenced; and, in the next place, two or three years afterwards, when the Lord Warden of the Cinque Ports had assumed the right of nominating Members to that House, they passed an Act very contrary to the theory of the right of persons of wealth and property to nominate Members of that House; for they specifically enacted, that all such nominations were contrary to the laws and constitution of the realm, and that they were null and void. He alluded to the Nomination Act, which said, " Be it further enacted, that all such nominations are contrary to the laws of this realm, and are to be so construed, and are hereby declared null and void, any pretence to the contrary notwithstanding." Such was the manner in which our ancestors, at the period of the Revolution, read and understood the constitution of the realm. If there were time, he could show that great part of the abuses now complained of in the Representation, those abuses which limited the return of Members to a small number of persons, had grown up since the accession of George 2nd. When Ministers determined on reforming the system, the first question which they had to ask themselves was this, and he put the same question to all who, affecting to approve of Reform, opposed the Bill—"Is it fit that the direct nomination of Members by individuals, and that the sale of seats for money, should continue to be part of the constitution of the House?" If the hon. member for Cornwall said such nomination and purchase of seats ought to continue in a reformed House of Commons, he would tell that hon. Member, that such a Reform as he meant to propose would not be a final Reform. He would never deny the advantages that in particular cases might have arisen from nomination and purchase of seats for money, as in the case of Mr. Ricardo, who, by the disbursement of 1,000*l*. a-year, was enabled to communicate to the House the results of his very valuable labours and extraordinary intelligence on various subjects. But if the House were to form a plan of Reform on this ground, if it permitted the nomination and sale of seats to continue, in the very first year of a reformed Parliament, if the present House of Commons did not do it, another House of Commons would rise and say, such franchises were contrary to the laws and constitution, and they would have an argument which it would be impossible to resist. Having come to the conclusion that they ought not to permit the practices in question to continue any longer, this question of disfranchisement followed as a natural and necessary consequence of that conclusion. Gentlemen might talk of the hardship of disfranchising voters such as those of East and West Looe, but he denied the hardship, and contended, that the privilege which they at present enjoyed was not one which they were qualified to exercise. The real question was briefly this, was it for the public good that the owners of boroughs should continue to nominate Members of that House? and, having once decided that it was not, it would be only a mockery to say to 200 or 300 voters of inconsiderable boroughs, "you shall have the right of sending Members to Parliament." As to the rule of selection with respect to boroughs to be disfranchised, no doubt, as his hon. and learned friend observed, there was no positive law why places with 2,000 inhabitants should send one Representative to the House, and places of 1,900 inhabitants should not. But such an observation would apply to every species of limitation, and a similar objection might have been taken wherever Ministers had drawn the line. Drawing the line was a matter of prudence and expediency, and how many boroughs should be disfranchised was a subject of nice calculation; and, after due deliberation, Ministers thought it would be reasonable to say, that boroughs possessing fewer than 2,000 inhabitants should not be represented. His hon. and learned friend said, that in consequence of the preponderance given by the new plan to the landed interests, the due influence of the commercial and monied interests would be lost in the House. He did not agree in his hon. and learned friend's view, and he thought there would be no more difficulty than at present in persons of wealth making known their pretensions, and obtaining seats in Parliament. His hon and learned friend also intimated, that the national credit might be destroyed by the Bill, but in arguing against it he had himself given reasons, which proved that this could not be the case: his learned friend said, "if you destroy the national credit, you not only ruin the upper classes, but a number of persons of small property" true, but the Bill did not and would not destroy the national credit, and by giving persons of small property an interest in elections, it tended to bring into the Legislature a larger number of those who wished to maintain the national credit. Then he was told by his hon. and learned friend, that it was unjust to take the census of 1821 as a standard, a census made ten years ago. He admitted that this was not so much the natural course of proceeding, as the line of convenience; and, if Ministers had attempted to obtain a new census, with a view to this measure, they would have opened the door to every kind of fraud. If they had sent down persons, or began by any other means to inquire into the population of different places, with a view to the disfranchisement, all sorts of trickery and deception would be resorted to in order to swell the returns of population, the instant it was known that the fate of boroughs was to depend on the amount of their inhabitants. An hon. and learned Gentleman said last night, that the petitions presented to the House were not merely petitions for Reform, but for the ballot, and a confiscation of tithes. Now it happened that a paper which had been just placed on the Table of the House, in consequence of a motion of the hon. member for Preston, entirely contradicted this assertion. It appeared that the number of petitions for Reform were 645; for the Ballot, 280; respecting tithes, comprehending petitions for commutation, a different arrangement of tithes, &c., seventy. With what sort of justice could it be said, then, that the petitions for Reform were in favour of the Ballot, and of a destruction of tithes and property? But the arguments against the Bill in many cases hardly deserved an answer from him, because they confuted one another. Thus it was said by more than one Gentleman in the same speech, that the effect of the Bill would be to give a preponderancy to the landed over the other interests, and in the next sentence it was added, that the measure would produce the triumph of democracy. Such conflicting statements destroyed each other, and when arguments were resorted to in this vague way, in the hope of catching up a vote or two from opposite sides, when commercial men were threatened with a preponderance of the landed interest, and the aristocracy were alarmed with apprehensions of the mob, it must be apparent that such opposite objections, proceeding from the same lips, were either not well considered or insincere. He requested the House to look at the conduct of Members of small boroughs; they were generally found voting against economy and retrenchment, in the teeth of the popular wish. He found by a reference to certain old tables that he had before brought under the notice of the House, that of the Representatives of boroughs with a population under 2,000 thirty had voted for economy and reduction, and ninety-six against it. On the other hand, in the case of boroughs having 5,000 inhabitants and upwards, although the election was generally close, sixty-six Members had voted for, and forty-seven against, retrenchment. When the people saw the Representatives, who were in fact sent to that House by popular influence, voting in direct contradiction to the Members for the small boroughs upon such a point, what conclusion could he come to, except that the borough Members were neither really nor virtually the Representatives of the people, and that their interest would be better protected if all these boroughs were disfranchised. There was one other point to which he wished briefly to refer. He alluded to the appeal to the Privy Council. He felt, as well as the learned Gentleman, the difficulties which were connected with this part of the measure, and if any thing could be suggested to restrain the power placed in the hands of the Privy Council, without affecting the main objects of the Bill, he should be most happy to adopt it, and to assist in making that part of the Bill more perfect. He had now done with the provisions of the Bill; and he had only a few words to say with respect to the real question before the House. His Majesty's Ministers were anxious to frame such a plan of Reform as would bind firmly and kindly the different classes of society together, and which would secure a Representation on which that House and the country might safely rest. He did not mean to say that the plan proposed by them might not be altered, but he felt that if, in the Committee, it were materially altered, so as to deprive it of the character which he had just described, he should feel that neither he nor any other friend of Reform, would think himself precluded, at any future time, from bringing forward those parts of the measure which had been thrown aside, and which might be considered essential. If any alteration were proposed, which would not interfere with the great objects that Ministers had in view, he felt no hesitation in saying, that to such alteration no opposition would be given. But if alterations were called for that would not satisfy the country, such a course would only lead to a prolonged struggle, instead of conciliating the feelings and affections of the people, and such alterations the Ministers would resist. They lived certainly in extraordinary times. The hon. Baronet, the member for Cornwall (Sir R. Vyvyan), who had strenuously opposed this Motion, and who thought that he could, in some way or other, direct the mighty mass of public opinion which was now in action,—that hon. Baronet had given them warnings, both from circumstances which had occurred at home, and from events which had happened in foreign countries, with respect to the danger that was to be apprehended from making popular concessions. But, he would ask, had the hon. Baronet never looked to the danger of resisting well-founded popular claims? Had he never contemplated the danger which a Government encountered, when it placed itself in a position, and trusted its existence to a principle, that could not be sustained by reason,—and was not tenable against the arguments of common sense? Day after day complaints were made of the state of the Representation,—day after day the people declared that the nominees of boroughs did not represent them, while it was said, that the House of Commons was intended to represent the people: and were they to pay no attention to the constant, the fervent, the glowing appeals of this large, liberal, and enlightened nation? Had the hon. Baronet never thought of the consequences which had resulted to Kings and Princes, in consequence of their resistance to the just demands of the people,—of the people, having found that their representations were fruitless and unavailing? The hon. Baronet had referred to revolutions. He had spoken of the French Revolution of 1789, and he had referred to the Revolution in this country, in the time of Charles 1st. But the latest Revolution that had happened was that which occurred in France, in the month of July last. How was that Revolution caused? Was it occasioned because Charles 10th and his Ministers were too ready to come forward with plans of Reform? Was it because they offered to make greater concessions to the people than ought to be granted? Certainly not. But was it not, on the contrary, because that Monarch and his Ministers opposed themselves to popular rights to the uttermost? Was it not because they were determined to transgress the laws, and to violate Charters? Not, be it observed, to violate Charters by preventing persons from sending Members to Parliament who were unfit to do so; but because they violated Charters connected with the constitution of the realm, and necessary to its safety—Charters which they had sworn to defend. Did they not attempt all this? Did they not make the effort, supported by the most powerful machinery, assisted by a gallant army, and sustained by a finely-appointed guard? Yet, with all these preparations, the determination of the people rendered the project abortive. Would the hon. Baronet call this a lesson that ought to induce them to stem the tide of improvement, and to close the door of concession? Would he say, that when they might conciliate the affections of the people, by listening to their claims, they ought to reject those claims, and rather govern by force? There was a time in France (and he then was acquainted with the French Ministers) when moderate concession would have prevented the catastrophe which had since occurred,—when increasing the electors to 80,000 instead of 40,000, and allowing them to elect the municipal council, would have given the utmost satisfaction to France. He deeply regretted that the Government of that country had taken an opposite course; for sure he was, if it had acted differently, the dynasty of the Bourbons would have been preserved, and the liberty of the people would have been united with the power and the splendor of an ancient monarchy. If, as the hon. Baronet testified, there was danger in concession, it could not be denied that there was also danger in resisting. To include the people in the Government, and satisfy them, was the principle of the present measure. The objections that were made to it were, that it would lead to revolution and democracy, and the destruction of property. He doubted the assumption, and was prepared to confide in the good sense and discretion of the people of England. It was said, that if the people were allowed to send their own Representatives to that House, they would destroy the Monarchy and the House of Lords, and elect Representatives who would have no regard or respect for the institutions of the country. He confided, however, in the people; he believed that they had an interest in the Monarchy, and an interest in preserving the privileges of the House of Peers. He believed, moreover, that if there was that tendency to republicanism which was said to prevail in the country, there would be no use in refusing the wishes to the people; and to resist that tendency to republicanism and all its consequences would be, he believed, beyond the power of Parliament. He firmly believed, however, that if the people were properly represented, that they would not make that Revolution which hon. Gentlemen dreaded. He must continue to place his confidence in the good sense, in the habits, and in the interests, of the intelligent people of this country; and he would tell those who were opposed to that principle, that no power which they possessed could control or govern the people. For the institutions of the country to be stable they must be founded on the general regard. It was, therefore, he said, that what he proposed to the House to do would not advance democracy, but it would make the Constitution harmonize with the present state of the people, conjoining these two together—and conjoining them was one of the most difficult of all political problems,—so as to make the mind of the people harmonize in one balanced Constitution of King, Lords, and Commons, with the representation of the people in the House of Commons; but which difficult thing he believed, if the present Bill were passed into a law, and the principles he had laid down were adopted, they would be in a fair way of accomplishing. He had but one observation more to make. The Members of the House had frequently reproached the Ministers in the course of the debate with having gone beyond expectations—that what the Ministers had done—a reproach which gave him some satisfaction—had surpassed the expectations even of those who looked upon Reform as not endangering the stability of the Constitution. Let him observe that that was a new complaint. He had heard Whig Ministers accused of being too ready to act like their predecessors, of falling into their system as soon as they had got into place, and of forgetting all the pledges and promises they had given when they were out of office. The present imputation he was content to accept. He was content to admit, that when he sat on the other side of the House he was somewhat fearful, when he had no responsibility and power, that what he proposed when he had no share of the Government, and which might then seem wise and expedient to him, might seem neither wise nor expedient to those who had power, and were responsible for its exercise, and might see the defects of what appeared perfect to him. Now that he was in place, and called to take part in the Administration—when he and his friends were in power, and had responsibility, it gave him satisfaction to think that they had not hesitated to go to the full extent of their opinions when out of power; that they had not hesitated to risk that power, to risk their fame, to risk their places, and all that was dear to them as men and Ministers, to improve largely, liberally, and generously, and he hoped successfully, the Constitution of Great Britain.

Mr. *Hunt* presented himself to the House amid much tumult. He declared that he would not detain them two minutes. He understood the hon. and learned member for Weymouth (Sir E. Sugden) to have said, that if this Bill were passed into a law, the electors of Preston would hereafter be prevented from voting, How, then, could he vote, without explanation, for a measure which, it was asserted, would disqualify his constituents? Supposing he voted for it, in the absence of explanation, it would go forth to the world that he had supported a Bill which disqualified those who sent him into Parliament. He had, in consequence of his feelings on this subject, made application to the noble Lord who had introduced the measure, who informed him that no life-interest would be injured by the Bill, but that if it appeared that it interfered with his constituents, that point should be altered. His hon. Colleague had waited on the head of the Government, and had received a similar assurance. Under these circumstances, having explained what had occurred, he felt himself justified in the eyes of his country, when he came forward to give his vote for this measure.

The House then divided. The question was put, that the word "now," stand part of the question: For the Motion, 302; Against it, 301—Majority for the Second Reading at that time, 1.

A LIST OF THE

MAJORITY AND MINORITY.

MAJORITY.

ENGLAND.—238.

Acland, sir Thos. D., bt.	*Devonshire*
Adeane, Henry John	*Cambridgeshire*
Althorp, viscount	*Northamptonshire*
Anson, sir George	*Lichfield*
Anson, hon. George	*Yarmouth*
Arcedeckne, Andrew	*Dunwich*
Astley, sir J. Dugdale, bt.	*Wiltshire*
Baillie, John Evan	*Bristol*
Baillie, Hugh D.	*Rye*
Bainbridge, Edward T.	*Taunton*
Baring, William B.	*Callington*
Baring, Francis T.	*Portsmouth*
Baring, Francis	*Thetford*
Baring, sir Thos., bt.	*Wycombe*
Bayntun, Samuel A.	*York*
Beaumont, Thomas W.	*Northumberland*
Belgrave, visc.	*Cheshire*
Benett, John	*Wiltshire*
Bentinck, ld. W. G. C.	*King's Lynn*
Bernal, Ralph	*Rochester*
Bethell, Richard	*Yorkshire*
Biddulph, Robert M.	*Denbigh*
Blake, sir Francis, bt.	*Berwick*
Blandford, marquis	*Woodstock*
Blount, Edward	*Steyning*
Bouverie, hon. Phillip P.	*Cockermouth*
Bouverie, hon. Dunc. P.	*New Sarum*
Briscoe, John I.	*Surrey*
Brougham, James	*Downton*
Bruce, Michael	*Ilchester*
Buck, Lewis W.	*Exeter*
Buller, James W.	*Exeter*
Buller, Charles, jun.	*West Looe*
Bulkeley, sir R. B. W.	*Beaumaris*
Bunbury, sir Henry E.	*Suffolk*
Burdett, sir F., bt.	*Westminster*
Burton, Henry	*Beverley*
Buxton, Thos. Fowell	*Weymouth*
Byng, George	*Middlesex*
Byng, George S.	*Milborne Port*
Calcraft, rt. hon. John	*Wareham*
Calthorpe, hon. Fred. G.	*Bramber*
Calvert, C.	*Southwark*
Calvert, Nicolson	*Hertfordshire*
Campbell, John	*Stafford*
Carter, John	*Portsmouth*
Cavendish, Henry F. C	*Derby*
Cavendish, William,	*Cambridge Univer.*
Cholmeley, Montague J.	*Grantham*
Clive, Edward B.	*Hereford*
Coke, Thomas Wm.	*Norfolk*
Colborne, Nich. W. R.	*Horsham*
Cradock, Sheldon	*Camelford*
Crampton, T. C.	*Saltash*
Cripps, Joseph	*Cirencester*
Curteis, Herbert B.	*Sussex*
Davies, Thos. Henry	*Worcester*
Denison, Wm. Joseph	*Surrey*
Denman, sir Thomas	*Nottingham*
Dugdale, Dugd. Stratf.	*Warwickshire*
Duncombe, Thomas S.	*Hertford*
Dundas, hon. John C.	*Richmond*
Dundas, hon. Thomas	*York*
Dundas, hon. sir R. L.	*Richmond*
Dundas, Charles	*Berkshire*
Ebrington, viscount	*Devonshire*
Ellice, Edward	*Coventry*
Ellis, hon. G. J. W. A.	*Okehampton*
Evans, William	*Leicester*
Ewart, W.	*Liverpool*
Fane, John	*Oxfordshire*
Fazakerley, J. N.	*Peterborough*
Ferguson, sir Ronald C.	*Nottingham*
Fitzroy, lord James	*Thetford*
Foley, John H. H.	*Droitwich*
Foley, hon. Thomas H.	*Worcestershire*
Folkes, sir W. J. H. B.	*Norfolk*
Fordwich, lord	*Canterbury*
Fortescue, hon. Geo. M.	*Hindon*
Fyler, Thomas B.	*Coventry*
Garlies, viscount	*Cockermouth*
Gisborne, John	*Stafford*
Gladstone, T.	*Queenborough*
Gordon, Robert	*Cricklade*
Graham, sir J. R. G.	*Cumberland*
Graham, sir Sanford	*Ludgershall*
Grant, Robert	*Norwich*
Greene, Thomas	*Lancaster*
Grosvenor, rt. hon. Robt.	*Chester*
Guest, Josiah John	*Honiton*
Guise, sir B. W. bt.	*Gloucestershire*
Gurney, Richard H.	*Norwich*
Handley, W. F.	*Newark-on-Trent*
Harvey, Daniel W.	*Colchester*
Hawkins, John H.	*St. Michael*
Heathcote, sir Gilbert, bt.	*Rutland*
Heron, sir Robert, bt.	*Peterborough*
Hobhouse, John Cam.	*Westminster*
Hodges, Thomas L.	*Kent*
Hodgson, John	*Newcastle-upon-Tyne*
Horne, sir W.	*Bletchingly*

Howard, Philip Henry	*Carlisle*
Howard, hon. William	*Morpeth*
Howard, Henry	*New Shoreham*
Howick, viscount	*Higham Ferrers*
Hughes, William H.	*Oxford*
Hughes, William Lewis	*Wallingford*
Hume, Joseph	*Middlesex*
Hunt, Henry	*Preston*
Ingilby, sir W. A., bt.	*Lincolnshire*
Jerningham, hon. Hen. V. S.	*Pontefract*
Johnstone, sir J. V. B.	*Yorkshire*
Keck, George A. L.	*Leicestershire*
Kemp, Thos. Read	*Lewes*
Knight, Robert	*Wallingford*
Labouchere, Henry	*Taunton*
Langston, James H.	*Oxford*
Lawley, Francis	*Warwickshire*
Lee, John L.	*Wells*
Lefevre, Charles S.	*Downton*
Lemon, sir Charles	*Penryn*
Lennard, Thomas B.	*Maldon*
Lennox, lord John Geo.	*Chichester*
Lester, Benjamin Lester	*Poole*
Lloyd, sir Edw. Price, bt.	*Flint*
Loch, John	*Hythe*
Lumley, John S.	*Nottinghamshire*
Lyttleton, Edward John	*Staffordshire*
Maberly, John	*Abingdon*
Macaulay, Thomas B.	*Calne*
Macdonald, sir James, bt.	*Calne*
Mackintosh, rt. hon. sir J.	*Knaresboro'*
Marjoribanks, Stewart	*Hythe*
Marryatt, Joseph	*Sandwich*
Marshall, William	*Leominster*
Martin, sir Thomas B.	*Plymouth*
Martin, John	*Tewkesbury*
Milbank, Mark	*Camelford*
Mildmay, Paulet St. John	*Winchester*
Morgan, Charles M. R.	*Brecon*
Morgan, sir C., bt.	*Monmouthshire*
Morpeth, viscount	*Yorkshire*
Morrison, James	*St. Ives*
Mostyn, sir Thomas, bt.	*Flintshire*
Mundy, Francis	*Derbyshire*
Newark, lord	*East Retford*
Noel, sir Gerard N., bt.	*Rutland*
Nugent, lord	*Aylesbury*
Ord, William	*Morpeth*
Osborne, lord F. G.	*Cambridgeshire*
Palmer, Charles	*Bath*
Palmer, Robert	*Berkshire*
Palmer, Charles F.	*Reading*
Palmerston, visc.	*Cambr. Univers.*
Patten, John W.	*Lancashire*
Pelham, C. A. W.	*Newtown*
Pendarvis, Edw. W. W.	*Cornwall*
Penrhyn, Edward	*Shaftesbury*
Petit, Louis H.	*Ripon*
Philipps, sir R. B. P.	*Haverfordwest*
Phillips, George Richard	*Steyning*
Phillpotts, John	*Gloucester*
Polhill, Frederick	*Bedford*
Ponsonby, B. Will. F. S.	*Poole*
Portman, Edw. Berkeley	*Dorsetshire*
Powlett, lord W. I. F.	*Durham Coun.*
Poyntz, W. S.	*Ashburton*
Prendergast, Michael Geo.	*Westbury*
Price, sir Robert, bt.	*Herefordshire*
Pryse, Pryse	*Cardigan*
Ramsbottom, John	*Windsor*
Ramsden, John Charles	*Malton*
Rickford, William	*Aylesbury*
Ridley, sir M. W., bt.	*Newcastle-up.-T.*
Robarts, Abraham W.	*Maidstone*
Robinson, sir George, bt.	*Northampton*
Robinson, George R.	*Worcester*
Russell, William	*Durham County*
Russell, Charles	*Reading*
Russell, lord William	*Tavistock*
Russell, Lord J.	*Tavistock*
Russell, Robert G.	*Thirsk*
Sanford, Edward A.	*Somersetshire*
Sandon, viscount	*Tiverton*
Schonswar, George	*Hull*
Sebright, sir J. S., bart.	*Hertfordshire*
Sefton, earl of	*Droitwich*
Sheil, R. L.	*Milborne Port*
Slaney, Robert A.	*Shrewsbury*
Smith, J.	*Buckinghamshire*
Smith, R.	*Chichester*
Smith, John Abel	*Midhurst*
Spence, George	*Ripon*
Stanley, lord	*Lancashire*
Stanley, hon. Edw. G. S.	*Windsor*
Staunton, sir George T.	*Heytesbury*
Stewart, P. M.	*Lancaster*
Strathaven, lord	*Huntingdonshire*
Strutt, Edward	*Derby*
Stuart, lord Dudley C.	*Arundel*
Stuart, ld. Pat. J. H. E.	*Cardiff*
Surrey, earl of	*Horsham*
Talbot, Christ. R. M.	*Glamorganshire*
Taylor, Mich. Angelo	*Durham City*
Tennant, Charles	*St. Alban's*
Tennyson, Charles	*Bletchingly*
Thomson, Charles P.	*Dover*
Thompson, William	*London*
Thompson, Paul B.	*Wenlock*
Tomes, John	*Warwick*
Tufton, hon. H.	*Appleby*
Tynte, Chas. Kemys	*Bridgewater*
Tyrrell, Charles	*Suffolk*
Uxbridge, earl of	*Anglesey*
Vere, James J. Hope	*Ilchester*
Vernon, Geo. Granv. V.	*Lichfield*
Villiers, Thomas H.	*Wootton Bassett*
Waithman, Robert	*London*
Walpole, hon. John	*King's Lynn*

Warburton, Henry	*Bridport*
Waterpark, lord	*Knaresborough*
Watson, hon. Richard	*Canterbury*
Webb, Edward	*Gloucester*
Wellesley, hon. Will. P. T. L.	*St. Ives*
Western, Charles Callis	*Essex*
Whitbread, Wm. Henry	*Bedford*
Weyland, John	*Hindon*
Whitmore, Will. Wolr.	*Bridgenorth*
Wilbraham, George	*Stockbridge*
Wilks, John	*Boston*
Wilson, sir Robert T.	*Southwark*
Wood, Matthew	*London*
Wood, Thomas	*Breconshire*
Wood, Charles	*Grimsby*
Wood, John	*Preston*
Wrightson, William B.	*Hull*
Wynn, sir Watkin Wm., bt.	*Denbighsh.*
Wynn, rt. hn. C. W. W.	*Montgomerysh.*

SCOTLAND.

Abercromby, hon. G. R.	*Kinross*
Agnew, sir Andrew, bt.	*Wigtonshire*
Campbell, Walter F.	*Argyleshire*
Ferguson, Rob. C.	*Kirkcudbright*
Grant, rt. hon. C.	*Inverness-shire*
Jeffrey, F.	*Forfar*
Johnston, James	*Inverkeithing, &c.*
Johnstone, John J. H.	*Dumfries-shire*
Kennedy, Thomas Francis	*Ayr, &c.*
Maule, hon. William R.	*Forfarshire*
Stewart, sir Mich. S. bt.	*Renfrewsh.*
Trail, George	*Orkney, &c.*
Wemyss, James	*Fife*

IRELAND.

Acheson, visc.	*Armaghshire*
Belfast, earl of	*Antrimshire*
Bernard, Thomas	*King's County*
Boyle, visct.	*Corkshire*
Boyle, hon. John	*Cork*
Brabazon, lord	*Dublinshire*
Browne, hon. William	*Kerryshire*
Browne, James	*Mayo*
Browne, Dominick	*Mayo*
Brownlow, Charles	*Armaghshire*
Burke, sir John, bt.	*Galwayshire*
Callaghan, Daniel	*Cork*
Chapman, Montague L.	*Westmeath*
Chichester, sir Arthur, bt.	*Belfast*
Chichester, lt.-col. A.	*Wexfordshire*
Dawson, Alexander	*Louth*
Fitzgerald, ld. Wm. C.	*Kildareshire*
Fitz-Gibbon, hon. Rd.	*Limerickshire*
French, Arthur	*Roscommonshire*
Grattan, James	*Wicklowshire*
Hill, lord George A.	*Carrickfergus*
Hill, lord Arthur	*Downshire*
Howard, Ralph	*Wicklowshire*
Jephson, C. D. O.	*Mallow*
Killeen, lord	*Meathshire*
King, hon. Robert	*Corkshire*
King, hon. Henry	*Sligoshire*
Knox, J. J.	*Dungannon*
Lamb, hon. George	*Dungarvon*
Lambert, James S.	*Galwayshire*
Leader, Nicholas P.	*Kilkenny*
Macnamara, William N.	*Clare*
Mountcharles, earl	*Donegalshire*
O'Connell, Daniel	*Waterfordshire*
O'Connor, Owen	*Roscommon*
O'Ferral, Richard M.	*Kildareshire*
O'Grady, Standish	*Limerickshire*
O'Hara, James	*Galway*
O'Neil, hon. John R. D. B.	*Antrimshire*
Ossory, earl of	*Kilkennyshire*
Oxmantown, lord	*King's County*
Parnell, sir Henry, bt.	*Queen's County*
Ponsonby, hon. George	*Youghal*
Prittie, hon. Francis A.	*Tipperary*
Russell, John	*Kinsale*
Ruthven, Edward S.	*Downpatrick*
Smith, Robert V.	*Tralee*
Somerville, sir Marc. bt.	*Meathshire*
White, Henry	*Dublinshire*
White, Samuel	*Leitrimshire*
Wyse, Thomas	*Tipperary*

TELLERS.

Duncannon, viscount	*Kilkennyshire*
Rice, Thomas Spring	*Limerick*

MINORITY.

ENGLAND.

A'Court, Edw. Henry	*Heytesbury*
Alexander, James	*Old Sarum*
Alexander, Josias	*Old Sarum*
Antrobus, Gibbs Crawf.	*Plympton*
Apsley, lord	*Cirencester*
Ashley, lord	*Dorchester*
Astell, William	*Bridgewater*
Atkins, John	*Arundel*
Attwood, Matthias	*Boroughbridge*
Baldwin, Charles B.	*Totness*
Bankes, George	*Corfe-Castle*
Bankes, William John	*Marlborough*
Bankes, Henry	*Dorsetshire*
Baring, Alexander	*Dorsetshire*
Bastard, John	*Dartmouth*

Beckett, rt. hon. sir J. bt. .. *Haslemere*
Bell, Matthew .. *Northumberland*
Beresford, sir J. P. bt. .. *Northallerton*
Beresford, Marcus .. .. *Berwick*
Blackett, Christopher .. *Beeralston*
Bonham, Francis R. .. .. *Rye*
Brudenel, lord .. .. .. *Fowey*
Burge, W... .. .. .. *Eye*
Burrard, George .. .. *Lymington*
Buxton, John Jacob .. .. *Bedwyn*
Calvert, John .. .. *Huntingdon*
Capel, John .. .. *Queenborough*
Carrington, sir E. C. .. *St. Mawes*
Cartwright, Wm. R... *Northamptonsh.*
Cecil, lord Thomas .. .. *Stamford*
Chaplin, Charles .. .. *Lincolnshire*
Chaplin, Thomas .. .. *Stamford*
Cholmondeley, lord H... *Castle Rising*
Churchill, lord Charles S... *Woodstock*
Clinton, Clinton J. F. .. *Aldborough*
Clive, viscount .. .. .. *Ludlow*
Clive, hon. Robert H. .. .. *Ludlow*
Clive, Henry .. .. *Montgomery*
Cockburn, rt. hon. sir G. .. *Plymouth*
Cocks, James .. .. .. *Reigate*
Constable, sir Thos. A. C. .. *Hedon*
Cornewall, Fred. H. .. *Bishop's Castle*
Cotterell, sir J. G., bt. *Herefordshire*
Courtenay, rt. hon. T. P. .. *Totness*
Croker, rt. hon. J. W. .. *Aldeburgh*
Curzon, hon. Robert .. .. *Clitheroe*
Cust, hon. Peregrine F. .. *Clitheroe*
Cust, hon. Edward .. *Lostwithiel*
Darlington, earl of .. .. *Saltash*
Davis, Richard Hart .. .. *Bristol*
Dawson, George R. .. .. *Harwich*
Dick, Quintin .. .. .. *Maldon*
Dickinson, William .. *Somersetshire*
Domville, sir C. .. *Plympton-Earle*
Dottin, Abel R. .. .. *Southampton*
Douro, marquis of .. .. *Aldeburgh*
Dowdeswell, John Edm. .. *Tewkesbury*
Drake, Thomas T. .. *Agmondesham*
Drake, William T. .. *Agmondesham*
Dugdale, William S. .. *Shaftesbury*
Duncombe, hon. Wm. .. *Yorkshire*
Duncombe, hon. Arthur .. *East Retford*
Dundas, hon. Henry .. *Winchelsea*
Dundas, Robert Adam .. .. *Ipswich*
East, sir Edward H. bt. .. *Winchester*
Eastnor, viscount .. .. *Hereford*
Egerton, Wilbraham .. .. *Cheshire*
Egerton, sir Phil. de M. G. .. *Chester*
Egerton, William T. .. .. *Lymington*
Eliot, lord .. .. .. *Liskeard*
Encombe, viscount .. .. *Truro*
Estcourt, T. H. S. B. .. *Marlborough*
Estcourt, Thos. G. B. .. *Oxford Univ.*
Euston, earl .. *Bury St. Edmund's*
Ewing, James .. .. .. *Wareham*
Fane, sir Henry .. .. *Hastings*
Fane, hon. Henry S. .. *Lyme Regis*
Fane, John Thomas .. *Lyme Regis*
Fardell, John .. .. .. *Lincoln*
Farrand, Robert .. .. .. *Hedon*
Fleming, John .. .. *Hampshire*
Foley, Edward T. .. *Ludgershall*
Forester, hon. G. C. W. .. *Wenlock*
Forbes, sir Chas., bt. .. *Malmesbury*
Forbes, John .. .. *Malmesbury*
Freemantle, sir Thos., bt. *Buckingham*
Freshfield, James W. .. *Penryn*
Gilbert, Davies .. .. *Bodmyn*
Gordon, James A. .. .. *Tregony*
Gordon, John .. .. *Weymouth*
Gore, William O. .. *Carnarvon*
Graham, marquis of .. *Cambridge*
Grant, sir Alex. Cray, bt. .. *Westbury*
Gresley, sir R. .. .. *New Romney*
Greville, hon. sir C. J. .. *Warwick*
Grimstone, viscount .. *St. Alban's*
Gunning, sir Robt. Hen. .. *Northampton*
Harris, George .. .. *Grimsby*
Hardinge, sir H. .. *Newport, Cornw.*
Hastings, sir C. A. bt. .. *Leicester*
Heathcote, sir W. bt. .. *Hampshire*
Herries, rt. hon. John C. .. *Harwich*
Hill, sir Rowland, bt. .. .. *Salop*
Holmes, William .. .. *Haslemere*
Holmesdale, visc. .. *East Grinstead*
Hope, John T. .. .. .. *Gatton*
Hope, Henry T. .. .. .. *East Looe*
Hotham, lord .. .. .. *Leominster*
Houldsworth, A. H. .. *Dartmouth*
Houldsworth, T. .. .. *Newton*
Howard, hon. Fulk G. .. *Castle Rising*
Hoy, James B. .. .. *Southampton*
Hulse, sir Charles, bt. .. *West Looe*
Ingestre, viscount .. .. *Hertford*
Inglis, sir R. H. bt. .. *Oxford Univers.*
Irving, J. .. .. .. *Bramber*
Jenkins, Richard .. .. *Shrewsbury*
Jermyn, earl .. *Bury St. Edmund's*
Jolliffe, sir William G. H... *Petersfield*
Jolliffe, Gilbert E. .. *Petersfield*
Jones, John .. .. .. *Carmarthen*
Kearsley, J. H. .. .. *Wigan*
Kemmis, Thomas A. .. *East Looe*
Kenyon, hon. Lloyd .. *St. Michael*
Kerrison, sir Edward, bt. .. *Eye*
Kilderbee, Spenser H. .. .. *Orford*
King, sir John D., bt. .. *Wycombe*
Lascelles, hon. Henry .. *Northallerton*
Lewis, rt. hon. T. F. .. *Radnorshire*
Lindsay, James .. .. .. *Wigan*
Lowther, sir John, bt. .. *Cumberland*
Lowther, viscount .. *Westmorland*
Lowther, hon. Henry C. *Westmorland*

Lushington, James L.	*Carlisle*
Luttrell, John Fownes	*Minehead*
Lygon, hon. Hen. P.	*Worcestershire*
Lyon, D.	*Beeralston*
Lyons, W.	*Seaford*
Mackillop, James	*Tregony*
Mackinnon, Charles	*Ipswich*
Mahon, visct.	*Wootton Basset*
Maitland, viscount	*Appleby*
Malcolm, Neill	*Boston*
Mandeville, visct.	*Huntingdonshire*
Manners, lord Robert	*Leicestershire*
Miles, Philip J.	*Corfe-Castle*
Miles, William	*Romney*
Miller, W. H.	*Newcastle-under-Line*
Neeld, Joseph	*Chippenham*
Nicholl, rt. hon. sir John	*Bedwyn*
Norreys, lord	*Oxfordshire*
Nugent, sir George, bt.	*Buckingham*
Owen, sir John, bt.	*Pembrokeshire*
Owen, Hugh O.	*Pembroke*
Palk, sir Lawrence V., bt.	*Ashburton*
Peach, Nathaniel Will.	*Truro*
Pearse, John	*Devizes*
Peel, right hon. sir Robt.	*Tamworth*
Peel, William Yates	*Yarmouth*
Pelham, John Cresset	*Shropshire*
Penruddock, John H.	*Wilton*
Perceval, Spencer	*Newport, I. of W.*
Phipps, hon. Edmund	*Scarborough*
Pigott, George G. W.	*St. Mawes*
Pitt, Joseph	*Cricklade*
Planta, Joseph	*Hastings*
Pollen, sir John W., bt.	*Andover*
Praed, W. M.	*St. Germains*
Price, Richard	*New Radnor*
Price, Samuel Grove	*Sandwich*
Pringle, sir Wm. Henry	*Liskeard*
Pusey, Philip	*Chippenham*
Raine, Jonathan	*Newport, Cornwall*
Reid, sir John R.	*Dover*
Roberts, Wilson A.	*Bewdley*
Rogers, Edward	*Bishop's Castle*
Rose, rt. hon. sir Geo. H.	*Christchurch*
Rose, George P.	*Christchurch*
Ross, Charles	*St. Germains*
Ryder, hon. Granville D.	*Tiverton*
Sadler, Michael T.	*Newark*
Scarlett, sir James	*Malton*
Scott, sir S.	*Whitchurch*
Severn, John C.	*Fowey*
Seymour, Horace B.	*Bodmyn*
Seymour, lord	*Okehampton*
Shelley, John V.	*Gatton*
Shelley, sir John, bart.	*Lewes*
Sibthorp, C. D. L. W.	*Lincoln*
Smith, Thos. Assheton	*Andover*
Smith, Samuel	*Wendover*
Smith, Abel	*Wendover*
Somerset, ld. Rob. E. H.	*Gloucestersh.*
Somerset, lord G. C. H.	*Monmouthsh.*
Sotheron, Frank	*Nottinghamshire*
Stanley, William S.	*Stockbridge*
Stephens, Stephens L.	*Barnstaple*
Stormont, viscount	*Aldborough*
St. Paul, sir H. D. C.	*Bridport*
Stuart, William	*Bedfordshire*
Stuart, James	*Huntingdon*
Stuart, Henry V.	*Banbury*
Sugden, sir Edward B.	*Weymouth*
Sumner, George H.	*Guildford*
Taylor, George Watson	*Devizes*
Thompson, George L.	*Yarmouth*
Thynne, lord John	*Bath*
Thynne, lord H. F.	*Weobly*
Tomline, William Edw.	*Minehead*
Townshend, lord J. N. B.	*Halleston*
Townshend, H. G. P.	*Whitchurch*
Trench, Fred. William	*Cambridge*
Trevor, hon. Geo. Rice	*Carmarthensh.*
Tudor, George	*Barnstaple*
Tunno, Edward R.	*Bossiney*
Twiss, Horace	*Newport, Isle of W.*
Tyrell, John T.	*Essex*
Ure, Masterton	*Weymouth*
Valletort, viscount	*Lostwithiel*
Vaughan, sir R. W. bt.	*Merionethsh.*
Vaughan, John E.	*Wells*
Villiers, viscount	*Rochester*
Vyvyan, sir Rd. Rawl. bt.	*Cornwall*
Wall, Charles Baring	*Guildford*
Walsh, sir J. B.	*Sudbury*
Ward, William	*London*
Warrender, rt. hn. sir G. bt.	*Honiton*
Welby, Glynne Earle	*Grantham*
West, Frederick R.	*East Grinstead*
Wetherell, sir Chas.	*Boroughbridge*
Whitmore, Thomas	*Bridgenorth*
Williams, Owen	*Marlow*
Williams, Thomas Peers	*Marlow*
Williams, Robert	*Dorchester*
Winchester, Henry	*Maidstone*
Wortley, hon. Charles S.	*Bossiney*
Worcester, marquis of	*Monmouth*
Wyndham, Wadham	*New Sarum*
Wynne, Charles W. G.	*Carnarvonshire*
Yorke, sir Joseph Sydney	*Reigate*

SCOTLAND.

Arbuthnot, hon. H.	*Kincardineshire*
Baillie, lieut.-col. J.	*Fortrose*
Balfour, James	*Anstruther*
Blair, William	*Ayrshire*
Campbell, Archibald	*Renfrew*
Carnegie, sir James, bt.	*Aberdeen, &c.*
Dalrymple, sir Adol. J.	*Haddington, &c.*
Douglas, Wm. R. K.	*Dumfries, &c.*

Douglas, hon. Charles	*Lanarkshire*
Drummond, Henry H.	*Stirlingshire*
Duff, hon. Alexander	*Elgin, &c.*
Gordon, hon. Will.	*Aberdeenshire*
Gower, lord F. L.	*Sutherlandshire*
Graham, lord Montagu W.	*Dumbartonsh.*
Grant, hon. Francis W.	*Elginshire*
Hay, lord John	*Haddingtonshire*
Hope, hon. sir Alex.	*Linlithgowshire*
Loughborough, lord	*Dysart, &c.*
Lowther, John Henry	*Wigtown, &c.*
Maitland, capt. A.	*Berwickshire*
Monteith, Henry	*Lanark*
Murray, rt. hon. sir Geo.	*Perthshire*
Pringle, Alexander	*Selkirkshire*
Rae, sir William, bart.	*Bute*
Scott, Henry F.	*Roxburghshire*

IRELAND.

Bateson, sir Robert	*Londonderryshire*
Beresford, lord G. T.	*Waterfordshire*
Bernard, viscount	*Bandonbridge*
Blaney, C. D.	*Monhaganshire*
Bruen, Henry	*Carlowshire*
Brydges, sir J. W. H.	*Coleraine*
Castlereagh, viscount	*Downshire*
Clements, John M.	*Leitrimshire*
Cooper, Edward J.	*Sligoshire*
Coote, Eyre	*Clonmell*
Coote, sir Chas. H., bt.	*Queen's County*
Corry, hon. Hen. T. L.	*Tyroneshire*
Corry, viscount	*Fermanaghshire*
Dering, sir E. C.	*Wexford*
Fitzgerald, rt. hon. Mau.	*Kerryshire*
Forbes, viscount	*Longfordshire*
Goulburn, rt. hon. Henry	*Armagh*
Handcock, Richard	*Athlone*
Jones, Theobald	*Londonderryshire*
Knox, hon. John Henry	*Newry*
Lefroy, Anthony	*Longfordshire*
Lefroy, T.	*Dublin University*
Maxwell, Henry	*Cavan*
M'Clintock, John	*Louth*
Meynell, Henry	*Lisburne*
Moore, George	*Dublin*
North, John H.	*Drogheda*
Ogle, sir Charles, bt.	*Portarlington*
Pennefather, Matthew	*Cashel*
Rochfort, Gust.	*Westmeath County*
Shaw, Frederick	*Dublin*
Shirley, Evelyn J.	*Monaghanshire*
Stewart, sir Hugh, bt.	*Tyroneshire*
Tullamore, lord	*Carlow*
Valentia, viscount	*Wexfordshire*
Wynne, John	*Sligo*

TELLERS.

Clerk, sir Geo., bt.	*Edinburghshire*
Chandos, marquis	*Bucks*

PAIRED OFF, IN FAVOUR.

Burrell, sir C. M., bt.	*New Shoreham*
Loch, James	*Kirkwall, &c.*
Newport, rt. hon. sir J., bt.	*Waterford*
Powell, W. Edward	*Cardiganshire*
Saunderson, Alex.	*Cavan*
Sykes, Daniel	*Beverley*
Tavistock, marquis of	*Bedfordshire*
Wrottesley, sir J., bt.	*Staffordshire*

PAIRED OFF, AGAINST.

Archdall, Mervyn	*Fermanaghshire*
Borradaile, Rich.	*Newcastle-under-L.*
Brogden, James	*Launceston*
Cooke, sir Henry F.	*Orford*
Dundas, rt. hon. Wm.	*Edinburgh*
Fitzgerald, John	*Seaford*
Gascoyne, Isaac	*Liverpool*
Knatchbull, sir Edw., bt.	*Kent*

ABSENT.

Barnes, Frederick	*Dunwich*
Bradshaw, R. H.	*Brackley*
Bradshaw, James	*Brackley*
Bulwer, Henry L.	*Wilton*
Burrell, Walter	*Sussex*
Cavendish, lord G. A. H.	*Derbyshire*
Cole, hon. Arthur H.	*Enniskillen*
Cradock, hon. John H.	*Dundalk*
Frankland, Robert	*Thirsk*
Gordon, sir James W. G.	*Launceston*
Gurney, Hudson	*Newtown*
Hart, George Vaughan	*Donegalshire*
Kavanagh, Thomas	*Carlowshire*
Legh, Thomas	*Newton*
Leslie, Charles P.	*New Ross*
Mackenzie, sir J. W. bt.	*Ross-shire*
Montgomery, sir James, bt.	*Peebleshire*
Morison, John	*Banfshire*
O'Brien, William S.	*Ennis*
Pechell, sir Samuel J. B.	*Hallestone*
Rumbold, Charles E.	*Yarmouth*
Smith, sir Culling E.	*Pontefract*
Smith, George	*Midhurst*
Thynne, lord W.	*Weobly*
Townshend, lord Chas. V.	*Tamworth*
Walrond, Bethel	*Sudbury*
Williams, John	*Winchelsea*

Clare, one ineligible.
Colchester, one ineligible.
Durham, one unduly elected.
Evesham, two void by reason of bribery.
Londonderry, ineligible.
Nairnshire, vacated.
Romney, vacated.

ABSTRACT.

FOR,	England	238
	Scotland	13
	Ireland	53
AGAINST,	England	241
	Scotland	26
	Ireland	36
PAIRED OFF,	For	8
	Against	8
ABSENT		27
PLACES UNREPRESENTED		7
THE SPEAKER		1
	TOTAL	658

SUMMARY ANALYSIS OF THE DIVISION.

	For.	Against.	Absent.	Total.
ENGLAND—				
Counties	53	27	2	82
Close Boroughs	83	168	13	264
Open Boroughs	93	42	3	138
	— 229	— 237	— 18	— 484*
WALES—				
Counties	7	5	—	12
Boroughs	7	5	—	12
	— 14	— 10		— 24
SCOTLAND—				
Counties	10	16	3	29
Boroughs	4	11	—	15
	— 14	— 27	— 3	— 44*
IRELAND—				
Counties	40	21	2	63
Boroughs	15	16	4	35
	— 55	— 37	— 6	— 98*
	312	311	27	650
Of Places to be				
Disfranchised	29	79	8	116
Reduced	31	59	5	95
	60	138	13	211

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* The Speaker is, of course, not included in this enumeration, nor the vacancies of Evesham, Colchester, and Durham, making four vacant seats. Scotland has one vacancy, Nairnshire; and Ireland two, Clare and Londonderry.

BOROUGHS IN SCHEDULE (A) TO BE ENTIRELY DISFRANCHISED.

I.—The Members for which voted against the Bill.

BOROUGHS.	PATRONS.	MEMBERS.
Aldborough	Duke of Newcastle	F. Clinton—Lord Stormont.
Aldeburgh	Marquis of Hertford	Lord Douro—W. Croker.
Great Bedwin	Lord Aylesbury	Sir J. Nicholl—J. J. Buxton.
Beeralston	Lord Beverley	C. Blackett—D. Lyon.
Bishop's Castle	Lord Powis	E. Rogers—F. H. Cornewall.
Boroughbridge	Duke of Newcastle	Sir C. Wetherell—Mr. Attwood.
Bossiney	Lord Wharncliffe	Stuart Wortley—E. Tunno.
Bramber	Duke of Rutland, 1—Ld. Calthorpe, 1, *agst.*	J. Irving—F. Calthorpe, *for.*
Buckingham	Duke of Buckingham	Sir G. Nugent—Sir T. Freemantle.
Castle Rising	Greville Howard, 1—Ld. Cholmondeley, 1	Greville Howard—Ld. F. Cholmondeley.
Corfe Castle	Bankes	G. Bankes—P. J. Miles.
Eye	Sir C. Kerrison	Sir C. Kerrison—W. Burge.
Fowey	— Lucy	Lord Brudenell—Severn.
Gatton	Lord Monson	J. T. Hope—J. V. Shelley.
Haslemere	Lord Lonsdale	Sir John Beckett—W. Holmes.
Hedon	.. ..	Sir Thomas Constable—R. Farrand.
East Looe	Hope	Henry T. Hope—A. Kemmis.
Lostwithiel	Lord St. Germains	Lord Valletort—C. Cust.
Malmesbury	J. Pitt	Sir C. Forbes—J. Forbes.
Minehead	Luttrell	J. F. Luttrell—W. E. Tomline.
Newport, Cornwall	Duke of Northumberland	Sir H. Hardinge—J. Raine.
Newton, Lancashire	Legh	Holdsworth.*
Orford	Marquis of Hertford	Sir H. Cooke—S. H. Kilderbee.
Petersfield	Jolliffe	Sir W. Jolliffe—G. E Jolliffe.
Plympton	Lord Mount Edgecumbe	G. E. Antrobus—Sir C. Domville.
Reigate	L. Hardwicke, 1—L. Sondes, 1.	Sir J. Yorke—Hon. — Corby.
New Romney	L. Londonderry, 1— ——— 1.	W. Miles—Hon. A. Trevor.
St. Mawes	Duke of Buckingham	Sir C. Carrington—G. W. Pigott.
Old Sarum	James Alexander	James Alexander—Joseph Alexander.
Seaford	.. ..	Lyon—J. Fitzgerald.
Tregony	J. A. Gordon	J. A. Gordon—J. M'Killop.
Wendover	Samuel Smith	S. Smith—Abel Smith.
Weobly	Lord Bath	Lord W. Thynne—Lord H. F. Thynne.
Whitchurch	Sir L. Scott, 1—Ld. Sydney, 1.	Sir L. Scott—Hon. J. R. Townshend.
Yarmouth, I. of W.	Miss Holmes	Yates Peel—G. L. Thompson.

* Colonel Legh did not vote.

II.—The Members for which divided their Votes on the Bill.

Appleby	Lord Thanet—Ld. Lonsdale ..	H. Tufton, *for*—Lord Maitland, *agst.*
Callington	Alexander Baring	A. Baring, *agst*—F. Baring, *for.*
Dunwich	.. ..	F. Barne, *agst*—A. Arcedeckne, *for.*
Heytesbury	Lord Heytesbury	Sir G. Staunton, *for*—A'Court, *agst.*
West Looe	Buller	C. Buller, *for*—Sir C. Hulse, *agst.*
Ludgershall	.. ..	Sir S. Graham, *for*—E. T. Foley, *agst.*
Newton, I. of W.	Lord Yarborough, 1—Sir F. Barrington, 1	Hon. C. A. Pelham, *for*—H. Gurney, *absent.*
Okehampton	.. ..	Lord Seymour, *agst*—Agar Ellis, *for.*
Queenborough	Ordnance in former times, now open	J. Capel, *agst*—Gladstone, *for.*
St. Michael's	Hawkins	J. H. Hawkins, *for*—Hon. L. Kenyon, *agst.*
Stockbridge	Lord Grosvenor	Sloane Stanley, *agst*—G. Wilbraham, *for.*
Woodstock	Duke of Marlborough	Lord Blandford, *for*—Ld. S. Churchill, *agst.*
Wootton Bassett	Lord Clarendon, *agst*	Lord Mahon, *agst*—H. Villiers, *for.*

III.—THE MEMBERS FOR WHICH VOTED FOR THE BILL.

BOROUGHS.	PATRONS.	MEMBERS.
Bletchingley	W. Russell	C. Tennyson—Sir J. Horne.
Saltash	W. Russell*	Crampton—Lord Darlington, *agst.*
Brackley	T. H. Bradshaw	Bradshaw, *for*—Bradshaw, *absent.*
Camelford	Marquis of Cleveland	M. Milbank—S. Cradock.
Higham Ferrars	Lord Fitzwilliam	Lord Howick.
Hindon	Lord Grosvenor	J. Weyland—Hon. G. M. Fortescue.
Ilchester	Lord Cleveland	M. Bruce—Hope Vere.
Midhurst	John Smith	J. A. Smith—G. Smith, *absent.*
Milborne Port	Marquis of Anglesea	G. S. Byng—R. L. Sheil.
Wareham	J. Calcraft	J. Calcraft, *for*—J. Ewing, *absent.*
Winchelsea	Lord Cleveland	J. Williams, *abs. on circuit*—H. Dundas, *agst.*
Steyning	Duke of Norfolk	E. Blount—G. R. Philips.

* M.P. for the county of Durham.

SCHEDULE B.—BOROUGHS TO LOSE ONE MEMBER.

I.—THE MEMBERS OF WHICH VOTED AGAINST THE BILL.

Amersham or Agmondesham	T. T. Drake	T. T. Drake—W. T. Drake.
Bodmin	Marquis of Hertford	H. Seymour (dis.)—D. Gilbert.
Chippenham		Joseph Wilde—Hon. P. Pusey.
Clithero	Lord Brownlow—Mr. Curzon	Hon. R. Curzon—Hon. P. F. Cust.
Cockermouth	Lord Lonsdale	* *
Dorchester	Ld. Shaftesbury—R. Williams.	Lord Ashley—R. Williams.
East Grinstead	D. of Dorset—Ld. Delawarr	Lord Holmesdale—F. R. West.
Guildford		Holme Sumner—Baring Wall.
Helston	Duke of Leeds	Lord J. Townshend—Sir F. Pechell, *absent.*
Huntingdon	Lady Sandwich	John Calvert—James Stuart.
Launceston	Duke of Northumberland.	J. Brogden—Sir W. Gordon, *absent.*
Liskeard	Lord St. Germains	Lord Elliot—Sir W. Pringle.
Lyme	Lord Westmorland	Hon. H. Fane—J. T. Fane.
Lymington	Sir H. Neale	G. Burrard—W. T. Egerton.
Marlborough	Marquis of Aylesbury	T. H. Estcourt—W. J. Bankes.
Marlow	O. Williams	O. Williams—T. P. Williams.
Northallerton	Col. Beresford—Ld. Harewood	Sir J. Beresford—Hon. H. Lascelles.
St. Germains	Lord St. Germains	C. Ross—W. Praed.
Sudbury	Open	Bethel Walrond—Sir J. Walsh.
Tamworth	Sir R. Peel—Mr. Robins	Ld. C. Townshend, *absent*—Sir R. Peel.
Totness		T. P. Courtenay—C. B. Baldwin.
Truro	Lord Falmouth	Lord Encombe—N. W. Peach.
Wilton	Lord Pembroke	J. H. Penruddocke—H. L. Bulwer, *absent.*

* Lord Garlies, and the Hon. P. Bouverie, both voted for the Bill, being returned in exchange for the two nominees of Lord Lonsdale for other Boroughs.

II.—THE MEMBERS FOR WHICH DIVIDED THEIR VOTES ON THE BILL.

Arundel	Open	Lord D. Stuart, *for*—Ald. Atkins, *agst.*
Ashburton	Lord Clinton—Sir L. Palk	W. S. Poyntz, *for*—Sir L. Palk, *agst.*
Bridport	Open	H. Warburton, *for*—Sir H. St. Paul, *agst.*
Great Grimsby	Open	C. Wood, *for*—Captain Harris, *agst.*
Honiton	Open	J. J. Guest, *for*—Sir G. Warrender, *agst.*
Leominster	Open	W. Marshall, *for*—Lord Hotham, *agst.*
Maldon	Open	T. B. Lennard, *for*—Quintin Dick, *agst.*
Penryn	Open	Sir C. Lemon, *for*—J. W. Freshfield, *agst.*
Rye	Dr. Lamb	H. D. Baillie, *for*—F. R. Bonham, *agst.*
Sandwich	Open	J. Marryat, *for*—R. E. Price, *agst.*
Westbury	Sir M. Lopes	M. G. Prendergast, *for*—Sir A. C. Grant, *agst.*
High Wycombe		Sir T. Baring, *for*—Sir J. D. King, *agst.*

III.—The Members for which voted for the Bill.

BOROUGHS.	PATRONS.	MEMBERS.
Downton	Lord Radnor	James Brougham—C. Lefevre.
Droitwich	Lord Foley	Lord Sefton—J. H. H. Foley.
Hythe	Open	S. Marjoribanks—J. Loch.
Morpeth	.. ..	Hon. W. Howard—W. Ord.
Richmond	Lord Dundas	Hon. J. C. Dundas—Hon. S. R. Dundas.
St. Ives	.. ..	Hon. W. L. Wellesley—J. Morrison.
Shaftesbury ..	Lord Grosvenor	E. Penrhyn—W. S. Dugdale, *agst.*
Thetford	.. ..	Francis Baring—Lord J. Fitzroy.
Wallingford	.. ..	W. L. Hughes—R. P. Knight.

CLOSE CORPORATIONS TO BE THROWN OPEN BY THE BILL.

I.—The Members for which voted against the Bill.

Andover	.. ..	Sir J. Pollen—T. A. Smith.
Banbury	Lord Bute	Villiers Stuart.
Bewdley	W. A. Roberts	W. A. Roberts.
Bury St. Edmund's.	.. ..	Lord Jermyn—Lord Euston.
Cambridge	Duke of Rutland	Colonel Trench—Lord Graham.
Christchurch ..	Sir G. Rose	Sir G. Rose—G. P. Rose.
Harwich	Treasury	Rt. Hon. C. Herries—Rt. Hon. G. R. Dawson.
Hastings	Treasury	Sir H. Fane—J. Planta.
Newport, I. of W. .	Miss Holmes	Spencer Perceval—Horace Twiss.
Scarborough	D. of Rutland—L. Mulgrave. .	The Speaker—General Phipps.
Wigan	Lord Balcarras—J. A. Hodson.	Colonel Lindsay—J. A. Hodson.

II.—The Members for which divided their Votes on the Bill.

Bath	.. ..	C. Palmer, *for*—Lord C. Thynne, *agst.*
Winchester ..	Duke of Buckingham—Sir H. Mildmay	P. S. J. Mildmay, *for*—Sir C. H. East, *agst.*
Wenlock	.. ..	P. B. Thompson, *for*—Hon. C. Forrester, *agst.*

The following has been given as an Analysis of the Majority *and* Minority *(including Pairs-off and Tellers.)*

ENGLAND.	MAJORITY.	MINORITY.
Members returned by		
Counties	60	32
Counties of cities	26	4
Universities	2	2
Boroughs, in which the right of suffrage is extensive, the population exceeding 4,000	74	56
Boroughs, where the population exceeds 4,000, but where the suffrage is now in the hands of a close corporation, or a very small number of individuals	20	20
Boroughs, where the population does not exceed 2,000 (to be disfranchised)	30	80
Boroughs, where the population does not exceed 4,000 (to lose one representative)	32	52
	244	246
SCOTLAND.		
Members returned by counties	10	16
Boroughs	4	11
	14	27
IRELAND.		
Members returned by counties	40	22
Close Corporations	3	10
Boroughs with an extensive right of suffrage	11	6
	54	38

HOUSE OF LORDS.

Wednesday, March 23, 1831.

MINUTES.] Bills. The Colonial Trade and Sugar Duties brought up from the Commons.

Petitions presented. By the Earl of ILCHESTER, from Buckland Newton, for a Commutation of Tithes. By the Earl of HARDWICKE, against the General Registry Bill. By Lord SUFFIELD, from the Cotton Spinners of Manchester, and from the Inhabitants of Preston, complaining of the unreasonable length of time in which children of an early age, employed in Cotton Manufactories, were compelled to work. In favour of Reform, by the Earl of HARDWICKE, from Wisbeach:—By Lord KENYON, from Wrexham:—

[The noble Lord characterised the Reform Bill as the most dangerous and most mischievous measure ever submitted to the Legislature.]

By the Earl of ILCHESTER, from Blandford:—By Lord DACRE, from the County of Hertford, and other places:—By Earl GREY, from the Noblemen, Gentlemen, and Bankers of Dublin; from Kidderminster; from Brompton, Blackburn, Worcester; from persons employed in the Iron Mines of Staffordshire; from Coleraine; from the Freeholders of Worcester; from the County of Louth; from the Corporation of Wexford; from St. Mary-le-Strand; from Galway; and from different other places; in all thirty-two:—By Lord DURHAM, from the Borough of Southwark, from Dromore, and from Galway.

DUBLIN PETITION AGAINST REFORM.] Lord *Farnham* presented a Petition against the Reform Bill from the Sheriffs and Common Council of the City of Dublin. The petitioners deprecated the adoption of the measure, as calculated to give an undue weight to the democratic part of the Constitution; and also because, if extended to Ireland, it would create a constituency in that country hostile to the continuance of the Union. The noble Lord said, he entertained the same apprehensions as the petitioners, of the results likely to proceed from the proposed Bill of Reform. He also presented a Petition to the same effect from the Master, Wardens, and Brethren of the Guild of Merchants, Dublin.

The Earl of *Roden* said, that having been requested to support the prayer of the petitions, he felt bound to state, that he conceived the petitioners had made out their case, as to the danger to be apprehended from the passing of the proposed Bill. He wished to take this opportunity of saying, that he was not one of those persons who were altogether opposed to every system of Reform, because he thought that very important, efficacious, and safe changes might be made in the Representation of the people in the Commons House of Parliament. But he begged leave to say, that he had ever been, and he trusted ever should continue, hostile to any revolutionary measure. With respect to Ireland, he believed that the effect of the Bill would be to effect a dissolution of the legislative union, and consequently the dismemberment of the empire. He was certain that it would be the means of annihilating the Church in Ireland. Entertaining these views, he had thought it his duty to express his disapprobation of the Bill at the earliest opportunity. He considered that the inconsistency of public men on great and important questions had opened the door to sweeping theories and dangerous experiments, which he was afraid was calculated, not only to undermine the Constitution, but the foundation of the empire.

Earl *Grey* was by no means disposed to deviate from what was understood to be for their Lordships a convenient course of proceeding, viz. not to enter into a discussion of the general question of the Reform on the presentation of petitions. At the same time he never could hear a measure which he, in common with his Colleagues, had recommended to the Legislature to be passed into a law, designated as a measure of a revolutionary character, without in opposition to that assertion—for it was assertion only—making an assertion with equal confidence, that the Bill had no such tendency. He said, on the contrary, because the Bill offered the best means of putting a stop to all revolutionary tendency, that he was determined to support it. The noble Lord had stated, that in his opinion the petitioners had made out their case, that the proposed measure would lead to a dissolution of the legislative union between the two countries. The petitioners had made out their case much in the same manner as the noble Lord had made out his,—by assertion alone, without any argument to support it. Whenever the time came for the noble Lord to adduce his arguments, he would be ready to maintain the directly opposite position. He was so strongly convinced that the continuance of the legislative union was necessary for the security of both countries, that if the proposed measure could be shown to have any tendency to dissolve that Union, he should think it one of the strongest objections that could be urged against it. He said on the contrary that it would tend to create satisfaction and contentment in this country where doubt and division had long prevailed; that it would tend to put down in

England those theories which the noble Lord thought so dangerous, and at the same time in his opinion, it would also, if extended to Ireland, tend to create in that country satisfaction and contentment, and to excite that confidence which was the best security for the peace and tranquillity of the empire. It was for these reasons that he was prepared to give it his most cordial support. With respect to the last part of the noble Lord's speech, in which he stated that the cause why dangerous theories was proposed, was the inconsistent and contradictory conduct of public men,—against that charge he was not called upon to defend himself. With respect to the question to which he conceived the noble Lord had particularly alluded, as having given rise to inconsistent conduct in public men, he for one had not conceded it from any fear of agitation, but from a conviction founded upon the justice as well as policy of the measure. That was an opinion which he had maintained for years; on account of which twenty-six years ago, he had relinquished the office he held in his Majesty's service, when he only concurred with the other members of Government in proposing a limited measure of relief to the Roman Catholics. For that opinion he had relinquished office, and to that opinion he had uniformly adhered, till at last he saw it adopted, and triumphantly carried into execution, by those very persons who had always expressed sentiments hostile to the concession of any measure of relief to the Roman Catholics. Against the charge of inconsistency, therefore, he was not called upon to defend himself. With respect to the question more particularly before the House, he had the same thing to say,—namely, that he had uniformly supported it, from its earliest introduction to the present moment, when it was now brought to a state which made him hope that it would likewise be carried. But, if that should also fail in his hands, he was certain of this, that it would be soon forced upon the country; and if others succeeded to power on the destruction of the present Government on the question of Reform, the measure would be forced upon them, and they would be obliged to concede it on the same principle as they conceded that question to which the noble Lord had alluded in speaking of the inconsistency of public men—the principle of fear. He could not help stating thus much; and he should only further say, that the measure of constitutional Reform proposed by his Majesty's Government—he said constitutional Reform, in contradiction to the statement of the noble Lord, who had given it the character of a revolutionary measure—was calculated to restore those principles on which the Constitution rested, and would give general satisfaction to the people, security and strength to the Government, and prosperity to the country.

The Earl of *Roden* begged it to be understood, that when he alluded to the inconsistency of public men, the noble Earl was the last person to whom he could have alluded; and he begged leave to remind him, that, on the occasion of the Catholic Debate, he had expressed his great admiration at the uniform consistency of the noble Earl, and placed it in contrast with those public men who had not virtue to adhere to their declared principles.

The Earl of *Carnarvon* hoped, that the proposed measure could be proved not to be a revolutionary one. That it had the portentous character of a revolutionary measure, he apprehended was the impression of one-half of the thinking people of this country, connected with its trade, its monied interests, and landed property. He thought that the vote of the House of Commons last night had decided that some Reform was necessary; but it was his opinion, that that great question could be entertained only after great deliberation, and after due time had been given to consider it. He disapproved of a measure of such great magnitude as the one proposed by the Government being brought in with such breathless haste. The noble Lords opposite had only been six weeks in office, when they came down to the House to announce a measure by which he feared all the settled institutions of the country would be undermined and overturned. The whole system of county, borough, and town representation in the country was to be changed. When he had said that such a sweeping measure was nothing less than a new Constitution, he had been derided by the noble Lord opposite. But this was as much of a new Constitution as were any of those changes which were being made in the nations of Europe. Whether it would strengthen or overwhelm the institutions of the country, it was impossible for him to say. He would rather see a practical and gradual Reform proposed than such a sweeping measure, which bore away all the old institutions of the country. A Constitution, in his opinion, was not the gift of a day, it grew up with the manners and wants of a country. It was formed by the manners of a people, and it formed them in return, and it was idle to think it could be shifted like a garment. There were many virtues in theory which became vices in practice; and many seeming errors and inconsistencies, in practice worked and blended well together. Those who proposed to change should well consider that the power, glory, and greatness of England had grown up with, and been maintained by, the institutions which now existed, whilst other nations had fallen to decay; and they should be cautious how they withdrew a single prop of a system which had been so eminently successful. Many were the Constitutions which he had seen laid down with geometrical accuracy, and forced upon a people who were unprepared to receive them, and which vanished as they appeared. He was connected with no boroughs, and he was not aware that he could influence a single vote. He had no interest in the question, but what every man felt who loved his country. He believed that moderate and gradual change might be carried to an unlimited extent, if carried progressively. He was always ready to reform abuses, and to advance as time advanced, step by step, to perfection; but he was adverse to any sudden and sweeping change. It was under the present Constitution that the country had risen to prosperity and power; and that the rights and interests of Englishmen had been preserved, while every other empire around had tottered to ruin. He had seen no less than twenty-six Constitutions produced in the course of the French Revolution, as fast as they were formed in the prolific brains of the French philosophers. We had seen how the constitutions manufactured on the Continent had fallen to the ground. We had ourselves been great constitution-mongers. We had modelled a constitution for Corsica; and a very respected and distinguished person opened, in vice-regal splendor, the Parliament constituted according to the perfection of the British Constitution, without one rotten borough. That constitution of Corsica existed for a few years; but the Lord-lieutenant, instead of being hailed by the gratitude of the regenerated nation, was at length obliged to take shelter from the fury of his reformed Parliament by going into the fortress, where he was defended by the British army, and at length made his escape into a British vessel. We also tried a similar experiment in Sicily; but the constitution no longer existed in that country. It was the attempting to reform all at once which produced these practical evils; and it was therefore that he, whether he was right or wrong, was disappointed with this measure. With cautious, slow, temperate Reform—with Reform, bit by bit, as abuses appeared and the occasion called for it, he would have been pleased. He considered the proposed measure of a revolutionary character, and calculated to disappoint the just expectations of the people. He admitted that the noble Earl opposite was not called upon to defend himself personally against the charge of inconsistency; but if the noble Lord chose, he might find plenty to do in defending some of his friends on that score. Was the measure now proposed what was to be expected from the speech in which his noble friend had announced it, and was the speech a fitting prologue to the plan? It was the greatest of all humbugs to say that Reform would be a panacea for all political evils. His noble friend had said, that there would be little difference between his noble friend and him, and that they only proposed to do the same in a different way; and was his noble friend then aware of the desperate plunge which he was afterwards to take? But he hoped the Commons would modify or alter it, for, as it stood at present, it was the most dangerous that had ever been brought forward. He was favourable to Reform as the occasion called for it; but he did not know that he could ever be persuaded to go to that extent. He hoped that the Bill, if it ever reached their Lordships, would receive considerable modifications in the Committee. He felt that he ought not to have trespassed so long on their Lordships' time at the present moment. [*"Hear, hear!" from the Lord Chancellor.*] No doubt the noble and learned Lord would like to hear only one side of the question. [*"No, no," from the Lord Chancellor.*] He should be glad to listen to the noble Lord at another time: he might, perhaps, fall under the lash of the wit of the noble and learned Lord who interrupted him in this irregular way, but he did not think these interruptions at all consistent with their Lordships' rules of proceeding. He should not have said so much, but, after the statement made by the noble Earl opposite, he did not think it proper to allow only one side of the question to be heard.

The Marquis of *Lansdown* did not mean to enter upon the important details of the question at the present moment; but it appeared to him, from what had fallen from the noble Earl who had just sat down, that he had forgotten that the subject was brought before the House, not by the noble Earl near him (Earl Grey) but by the noble Earl opposite (the Earl of Roden); and his noble friend, in reply to the statement made by the noble Earl opposite, had only acted in accordance with the rule laid down by the noble Lord who had just spoken—that both sides should be heard. With respect to one part of the charge made against Ministers by the noble Lord opposite, of having introduced this measure with breathless haste, he was relieved from the necessity of saying anything, because the Votes of the other House would afford a sufficient answer. This measure was not new to the public, nor new to Parliament. It was announced at the very moment the present Administration was formed. It was introduced into the other House of Parliament three weeks ago, and debated on that occasion for seven days, and after an interval of seven days, was again debated two nights on the second reading. The noble Earl would also find by the Votes, that it was not proposed to consider it in Committee until after the Easter holidays; and yet this was described as passing the Bill in breathless haste, without affording Parliament due opportunity of considering it with attention. But he contended, that this question had been under consideration over and over again; and the more it had been considered, in Parliament, or out of doors, the more he had cause to be convinced that the Bill proposed by Government, or something amounting to it, was the only security against those disorders which the noble Lord deprecated. But let him call on the noble Lord, and others out of doors, who had now at last come to a conviction that some change was necessary in the Representation of the people, to state, previous to the approaching recess, what their schemes of Reform were, so that Parliament and the country might know what it was they proposed to give, under the name of Reform, but without the substance. Let, then, the public judge between their plan and the plan of the present Government, which was founded on the ancient principles of the Constitution of this country; he said the ancient principles of the Constitution, because he knew no other principles but the Representation of the people, founded on the property and knowledge of the country. In the course of ages, and by the mutations of time, considerable changes had been made in the property and knowledge of the country, which it became necessary to meet. The proposed Bill was founded on a desire to connect with the Representation of the people all those accumulations of knowledge in some quarters, and of property in others, which, when left unrepresented, formed the lever on which ambition and treason worked against that Constitution which the noble Lord was so anxious to preserve. The noble Lord had abstained, with the same caution which was observable elsewhere, from explaining what his scheme of Reform was, but still he had given some slight hints of what he would wish to see done. He had told the House that he was for moderate and progressive Reform. The noble Earl said, that his Reform would be a moderate and a gradual Reform, and that it would be a Reform carried on slowly—bit-by-bit, as the occasions arose. But if his noble friend meant that it was to be a Reform by perpetual changes, —constantly keeping alive discussion, and irritation, that was what he must protest against. His Majesty's Ministers had proceeded slowly and deliberately, and with much consideration, as the importance of the subject demanded. But then a scheme was wanted on which Parliament could make its stand, and not one which should leave the subject liable to continual discussion from Session to Session. A measure of Reform was wanted which would unite in its favour the feelings of all classes, and which would afford a reasonable prospect that Parliament could make a stand without the necessity of making continual changes. What the noble Earl's scheme was did not distinctly appear, but the noble Earl said, that he would reform bit by bit. The noble Earl seemed in that to allude to some schemes of Reform of his in this House which he himself produced bit by bit for two years, calling a multitude of witnesses to this House, at a very serious expense, as in the case of the Penryn election; but the noble Earl had his bit-and-bit Reform thrown back on his hands, and he knew what was the opinion of the House about it. The noble Earl's bit-by-bit Reform would be neither more nor less than a source of constant irritation, agitation, and discontent, and that was a scheme of Reform against which he protested. As to the measure proposed by his Majesty's Ministers, it was formed on the basis of the ancient principles of the Constitution, and it was most just and reasonable in its provisions, and well deserved the support of Parliament and of the country. As to the noble Earl's allusions to Corsica and Sicily, he could not but be aware, that the state of society there was very different from what it was here, and that although the measure might not suit either of those places, it by no means followed that it would not suit this country.

The Earl of *Carnarvon* explained, that when the noble Marquis opposite supposed him to have imputed haste to the Ministers in their efforts to get the Reform Bill passed through the Lower House, he had erred. What he had complained of was, the short interval that had occurred between the present Ministry taking office, and the production by them of a measure, the effect of which would, he apprehended, be to overthrow the Constitution of the country. The noble Marquis had also complained that he had not himself produced a plan of Reform, if he objected so strongly to that now before the country. He did not intend to do so now, however, and he did not know whether he ever should propose such a plan; but his opinion on this subject was the same at the present time as it ever had been; and that opinion was, that a Reform of a moderate nature, and on a proper occasion, ought and might be introduced with safety to the country. The present extensive and sweeping measure would never prevent the people from progressively increasing in their demands for concessions in their favour, and those demands would ultimately rise to a pitch that would be found subversive of all the existing institutions of this country.

The *Lord Chancellor* said, he would not have said a word on the present occasion if he had not been personally alluded to by his noble friend. He did not pretend to know the forms of the House, but he always understood that a Member might, in the usual parliamentary manner, express his dissent from what another Peer was stating, as readily as he might express his assent to it. In what he uttered he had intended to intimate, in the broadest possible manner, his total dissent from his noble friend, when he imputed to him a desire to hear the arguments on one side, and not on the other, because it was insinuated that he could not meet them. He could assure his noble friend that he never felt less unable to meet the observations of an antagonist in the whole course of his life than—he spoke it with all possible respect—he did to meet the extremely shallow, unsubstantial, inconsistent, and contradictory arguments which his noble friend had, contrary to the 19th Standing Order, which declared that no Peer should speak twice on the same question, addressed to the House. If he had felt any apprehension of meeting his noble friend as an antagonist, he should be relieved from all difficulty by the triumphant answer which his observations had received in the judicious, as well as powerful and eloquent speech which had been delivered by the President of the Council. His noble friend, in order to make good his charge that the Government had urged on the measure of Reform with breathless impatience, had been obliged to alter facts, and to cut down time by a good deal more than one-half. His noble friend said, that Ministers had been in office hardly three weeks before they came down to Parliament with this measure. Why, it was more than three months. That period certainly was not a century, but it was double six weeks. Himself and his colleagues came into office on the 22nd of November, and the Bill was introduced on the 1st of March, and it was read a second time on the 22nd of March. The noble Earl had not, of course, the same opportunity of knowing the state of opinion, and the principles of action which prevailed in the country, as the Ministers had from their correspondence from all quarters. But if he had been in office, and had access to that correspondence, he (the Lord Chancellor) was morally certain that the noble Earl would be so far from attacking this plan as revolutionary, that, on the contrary, he would hail it as his strongest support against revolution, and sacrifice his bit-by-bit Reform—a happy name which he had found for his system—on the altar of his country. But if the Ministers had delayed the bringing forward their plan but one month longer, they would, he had no doubt, have been assailed on the opposite ground by those who now chose the side of the breathless haste. He had seen such a disposition in the noble Earl to attack the Ministers, ever since they came into office, that he had no doubt but that such would have been the case. He had opened his fire upon them, not by platoons, but by a pop-pop from his pop-gun. It was a bit-by-bit attack. But had they delayed but for one month more, then the noble Earl would have said, "You made great promises on the subject of Reform when you came into office, but here are four months elapsed since, and not a bit of Reform has been produced." But he had rather meet the attack in this shape than in the other. He had rather be opposed by those who openly and frankly avowed that they wanted no Reform, than by the bit and bit Reformers. He would not enter into a comparison between the present measure and that of the noble Earl's shadowy shape of a Reform—

> "If shape it might be called which shape had none,
> Distinguishable in member, joint, or limb,
> Or substance which but shadow seemed,
> Or each seem'd either."

After all, nothing would astonish him more than to find that this scheme of Reform had any existence. [The Earl of *Carnarvon:* I am not obliged to produce a plan.] Why, then, he was not bound to wait for it. The noble Earl desired them not to go on till he produced his plan, and now he said he would do nothing —he would not even advance step by step, nor bit by bit, and yet he desired them to wait till he had done nothing. But the present measure was complete improvement, which ought to satisfy the country; and, according to all appearances, would satisfy all classes of the community. He had acceded to the measure which had been proposed by Government, wishing that less might have been done, but convinced that less would not have satisfied the country. He would rather have to deal with the open enemies of Reform—those who declared all improvement to be unnecessary, than with those who pretended to have a plan of their own, but who had been all their lives hostile to Reform. He thought that Parliament might learn a lesson from the fate of the Catholic Question. It would be wise to grant Reform now which would satisfy the people; for, if the time were allowed to pass, there were many chances to one that a plan, not so safe and wholesome, would be forced upon Parliament hereafter. It was not unlikely, too, that that plan would be proposed by the very men who now objected to the present measure, but who would turn round when they saw the storm was raging around them, as they had done upon the Catholic Question, and take credit for doing what they had all their lives been declaring they never would do.

Lord *Farnham* observed, that every advocate for the repeal of the legislative union had hailed this measure of Reform as the means by which his object was to be effected, and every one of those advocates had expressed their approbation of the mode in which the franchise was to be extended to Ireland.

The Duke of *Richmond* said, that he had given his support to the measure proposed by Ministers, because he thought that the people were entitled to have the Representative system improved. He would like to know whether, in the noble Earl's plan of Reform, the rotten boroughs, and Gatton amongst the number, were to be retained? The noble Lord on the second bench (Lord Monson) was much interested in a reply to this question.

Lord *Monson* said, that after the pointed manner in which he had been alluded to, he felt it necessary to observe, that if he were convinced that the retention of the close boroughs was detrimental to the true interests of the people, he would be the first man to propose their abolition. He, however, did not entertain such an opinion. He would state his reasons for opposing the Government measure on the proper occasion.

The Petition to lie on the Table.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Wednesday, March 23, 1831.

MINUTES.] Bills. The Sugar Duties, the Witnesses Examination, read a third time and passed. The Deputy Lieutenants (Scotland), read a first time.

The following Resolution of the Committee of Privileges was brought up and read:—Resolved,—That it is the opinion of this Committee, that in any Bill which, having passed the House of Lords, shall be sent down to this House for their concurrence, or in any Bill which having passed this House shall be returned by the Lords with amendments, it shall appear that any pecuniary penalty or forfeiture is thereby imposed, varied, or taken away, the

Speaker shall, before the second reading of such Bill or Amendments, report to the House his opinion, whether the object thereof be to impose, vary, or take away any pecuniary charge or burthen on the subject, or whether the same relates only to the punishment or the prevention of offences, and the House shall thereupon determine whether it may be expedient in such particular case to insist upon the exercise of their privilege, to originate all such provisions respecting pecuniary penalties or forfeitures.—To lie on the Table, and be printed.

Returns ordered. On the Motion of Mr. LITTLETON, the number of Brick and Tile Manufacturers, and the amount of Excise Duty collected on each description of Bricks and Tiles, in the year 1830:—On the Motion of Mr. HUME, Transports taken up between 1st January, 1830, and 25th February, 1831, both inclusive; specifying the rate of tonnage paid, and if by open contract or private tender, and for what services wanted, and to what places sent.

Petitions presented. By Mr. LITTLETON, from certain Tile and Brick Makers, for the Repeal of the Duties on those articles; against the Cotton Factories Bill, from Master Spinners at Stockport; and in favour of the Bill, from Operative Spinners at Waterhead, Oldham. In favour of Reform, by Sir W. GUISE, from Cinderford, in the Forest of Dean; from Winchcomb, Stroud, Rodborough, Woodchester, Salford, and other places in Gloucestershire:—By Mr. LITTLETON, from Lane-end, Darlaston, Walsall, and Burton-upon-Trent:—By Mr. EGERTON, from Stockport, from the Corporation, Magistrates, and Inhabitants of the Borough of Macclesfield, and from the Inhabitants of Droitwich and Nantwich:—By Mr. J. BROUGHAM, from Kendal, and other places in the North of England, and in Scotland:—By Mr. PORTMAN, from Beaminster, Lyme Regis, Netherleigh, and Blackburn:—By Colonel DAVIES, from Worcester:—By Mr. W. PATTEN, from Eccles:—By Mr. F. BARING, from Portsea:—By Sir F. BLAKE, from Colpe, Durham:—By Lord ALTHORP, from West Bromwich and Huntingdon. Against the Reform Bill, by Mr. SHAW, from the Guild of Merchants of Dublin:—By Mr. BALFOUR, from Pittenween:—By Mr. PORTMAN, from Bramber; and one against Tithes from Sherbourne. By Mr. WARBURTON, from Shipowners of Dumbarton, against the proposed Tax on Steam Vessels. By Mr. C. GRANT, from Shipowners in Galway, against the Reduction of the Duty on Barilla; from Coach Contractors for Inverness-shire, for the Repeal of the Coach Duty; and from Tavistock Chapel, Drury-lane, for a Public Fast. By Mr. J. BROUGHAM, from Marylebone, against the Vestries Bill; and from Firbank, for limitation to the time at which Tithes may be claimed. By Sir R. HILL, from Wellington, Whitchurch, and other places, against Slavery:—By Mr. HUGHES HUGHES, five similar Petitions. By Lord KILLEEN, from Parishes in Meath, for an Amendment of the Grand Jury Laws, complaining of Distress, and for a Repeal of the Union.

REFORM PETITIONS.] Mr. *Egerton* presented a Petition from the Freeholders of the County of Chester, in County Meeting assembled, with the High Sheriff in the Chair, in favour of the Ministerial plan of Reform. He owed it to himself to state on this occasion, that though he was an advocate for moderate Reform, he could not go the length of the Bill which had been brought forward by his Majesty's Ministers. He regretted that, as a whole, he could not give his support to that Bill.

Mr. *Wilbraham* said, that this petition had been adopted at a most numerous and respectable meeting, and that there were only seventeen voices raised against it, so that it might be fairly taken as expressing the unanimous opinion of the county of Chester on this question. He would take this opportunity to say, that it was his determination to support his Majesty's Ministers in every part of the Bill which they had introduced, and which had been read a second time that morning. He begged to add, that if they should relax a single essential point from that Bill as it at present stood, he would not give them his support.

Petition to lie on the Table.

Mr. *Portman* presented a Petition from the town of Blandford, against the Reform Bill, and a Petition from Dorsetshire, in favour of Reform. Great care the hon. Member said, had been taken that none but the most respectable signatures should be subscribed to the petition, and that it spoke the strong and unanimous opinions of the county was to be inferred, because an opposite petition had been got up at the same place, and it had received only thirty-four signatures. In supporting the Reform Bill, he was convinced that he was acting in conformity with the wishes of a very great majority of his constituents.

Mr. *George Bankes* very much doubted if the hon. Member were correct in his last observation. One petition against Reform had been presented from a body of his constituents, and if more numerous petitions of the same nature were not sent into that House, it was merely because persons did not usually petition for what they already possessed but for what they desired.

Mr. *Calcraft* was friendly to the prinple of Reform, but he would struggle in the Committee against many of the details of the pending measure. Dorset was a passive county, and did not much like to interfere in politics, and its petitioners were therefore not strong or numerous. He knew, however, that in one borough in Dorsetshire the people were much against the Bill and though he had given his vote for the second reading, that pledged him to none of the details, and there were some of them against which he meant to struggle as much as he possibly could.

Colonel *Sibthorp*, though desiring more than what was called moderate Reform, could not support the Bill. From the conduct of the right hon. member for Wareham, he expected soon to hear again his musical voice from the other (the Ministerial) side of the House.

Mr. *G. Dawson* said, that probably his right hon friend the member for Wareham felt himself peculiarly entitled to represent a passive county and was probably looking for the representation of Dorsetshire. He could not possibly reconcile the speech of his right hon. friend on the first reading of the Bill with his vote on the second reading. He could not approve of his right hon. friend's course nor could he concede the claims made by his right hon. friend to excessive purity upon this occasion.

Mr. *Portman* believed, that he had voted for moderate Reform in voting for the Bill, and had not voted against his constituents wishes. He also believed that the country would be in a state of great danger unless they could support the Crown and Aristocracy by uniting the people in sympathy with that House, and which was to be done only by a thorough Reform.

Mr. *George Bankes* explained.—The hon. member for Preston had declared that he had given his vote for Reform only upon the ground of his having succeeded in making his bargain with Ministers in favour of the electors of that borough. Probably the hon. member for Wareham had had a similar success in relation to Wareham which might account for his speech and vote being at variance one with the other.

Mr. *Calcraft* wished the hon. member for Preston pleasure at his success, and he regretted that he had no chance of being equally serviceable to his constituents at Wareham. It would have been inconsistent with all his former conduct had he not supported the Reform Bill. His first vote in that House had been for the abolition of the Slave trade, his second for the repeal of the Test and Corporation Acts. his third in favour of Parliamentary Reform and the fourth in favour of Catholic Emancipation. These votes had been given under Mr. Fox; all the measures had been eventually carried, except Reform and if that were longer delayed, he believed that the country would have most seriously to lament its postponement. He was satisfied with the vote he had given and believed he should be justified in the eyes of his country.

Mr. *Hunt* said, there had been no bargain between him and Ministers. When the Reform Bill was brought forward the noble Lord (Lord John Russell) stated that there would be no interference with the life-interests of voters. This was sufficient to protect his constituents, as he had ascertained.

Petition to lie on the Table.

SUPPLY.] Mr. *C. W. Wynn* moved that the House resolve itself into a Committee of Supply.

Mr. *Goulburn* objected to taking the Army and Navy Estimates, unless there existed an urgent necessity on a day not usually devoted to business.

Mr. *C. W. Wynn* said, the half-pay would become due next week, and must be provided for.

Sir *R. Peel* had no particular objection to the votes being proceeded with, if necessary, on a Wednesday; his complaint was, that due notice had not been given. It was not till four o'clock that morning that the bringing on of the estimates had been fixed, and it did appear a little precipitate to press a discussion within a few hours of Members being apprised by the votes of the intention of Ministers. However, if the House desired to proceed, he was content to go into Committee.

Mr. *C. W. Wynn* said, that he would have given earlier notice, but that he was afraid that the adjourned debate on the Reform Bill might have been carried on.

The House then went into Committee.

On the Motion for granting 19,975*l.* for the Military Asylum,

Mr. *Hume* objected to the vote on principle. It was encouraging a population which the Government was also anxious to get rid of by emigration. He submitted that the grant should be annually diminished.

Lord *Althorp* agreed with the hon. Member in principle, but thought that the Military Orphan Asylum was not calculated to increase the population.

Sir *M. W. Ridley* thought the hon. member for Middlesex was quite wrong.

Sir *Henry Hardinge* always had, and always would support the grant. He knew no other means of providing for the children of soldiers who died abroad. He wished to ask the right hon. Secretary for Ireland, when the Irish Reform Bill would be ready.

Mr. *Stanley* said, that he would lay it on the Table of the House to-morrow, and be ready to enter then, or at any other time that might be deemed more convenient, into an explanation of its details.

Vote agreed to.

The next Resolution was, "That a sum not exceeding 239,803*l.* 19*s.* 8*d.* be granted for paying the expense of the volunteer Corps for 1831."

Mr. *O'Connell* asked, whether this included the charge for the Irish volunteer corps? and being answered in the affirmative, objected to going into that vote in the absence of so many hon. members who intended to oppose the Irish grant.

Mr. *Stanley* had no objection to postpone that part of the vote.

Mr. *C. W. Wynn* admitted, that it would be more correct to take the vote for the volunteers of the whole United Kingdom together, and the proposed vote in its present form was accordingly postponed.

The next Resolution was, "That a sum not exceeding 135,000*l.* be granted to his Majesty for defraying the charges for Generals not Colonels of regiments, for the year 1831."

Mr. *Hume* protested against this vote, on the ground of extravagance, but declined taking the sense of the Committee on the question, on account of the scanty attendance of Members.

Vote agreed to, as were the following Votes. "95,300*l.* for defraying the charges for unattached Officers, for the year 1831." "697,800*l.* for half-pay and military allowances to reduced and retired officers for 1831." "91,300*l.* for half-pay and reduced allowances to Officers in foreign parts, and pensions to wounded foreign Officers, and also pensions to their widows for 1831." "27,174*l.* for retired Officers of the local Militia, and Militia pensions for 1831." "147,778*l.* for defraying the pensions to Officers' Widows for 1831." "180,619*l.* for allowances for the Compassionate list, the Royal bounty, and pensions to wounded Officers."

On the Resolution granting 1,335,986*l.* for the Pensioners of Chelsea and Kilmainham Hospitals,

Mr. *Hunt* said, that he thought this was a very large sum to be given in this manner in pensions, for if there happened to be in any village a man peculiarly drunken and dissolute, that man was a pensioner. What, he would ask, was the reason of this? Why, because that pensioner enjoyed a large daily pay without the necessity of working for it.

Sir *H. Hardinge* was much surprised to hear the hon. Member, who pretended to be, and who perhaps really was, a friend of the lower classes, take such an opportunity to depreciate the character of the lower classes of the military. The men whom he described in such terms were persons who had served their country for a great number of years in every part of the world, and who enjoyed what he would take leave to call a just remuneration for past labours and services, and perhaps for wounds and loss of limbs; and he believed that, without exception, they were as sober and as industrious, considering the previous habits of a military life, as any class in the kingdom.

Mr. *C. W. Wynn* thought the body alluded to, for the most part, as respectable as any other members of the community

Resolution agreed to.

A Vote of "53,369*l.* for Superannuations in the public departments" was agreed to, as was a vote of 32,000*l.* for Exchequer fees, and Army services.

NAVY ESTIMATES.] On the Motion that the Chairman do leave the Chair,

Sir *H. Hardinge* expressed a hope, that the First Lord of the Admiralty would not bring on the Navy Estimates on that evening.

As the House was about to resume,

Sir *J. Graham* said, that although he had given notice of his intention to bring forward the Navy Estimates this day, in consideration of the present state of the House he should abstain from so doing, and meant therefore to postpone the Motion until Friday, when he was sorry he should be constrained to interfere with the Scotch Reform Bill, which stood for that day. The Navy Estimates, however, must take precedence of all other business before the House, as the present supplies would not suffice for more than six or seven days longer.

Sir *H. Hardinge* requested, that the chief Secretary would give notice of his intention to explain the details of the Irish Reform Bill to-morrow, on bringing in the Bill, in order that the members for Ireland who were not aware of the day fixed, might be in attendance to hear his promised explanation.

Mr. *Stanley* said, he had supposed, that the notice which had been already given to that effect must have had sufficient publicity, but in compliance with the suggestion of the gallant Officer, he would not hesitate to repeat it.

The House resumed.

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HOUSE OF LORDS,

Thursday, March 24, 1831.

MINUTES.] Petitions presented. In favour of Reform, by the Earl of KINNOUL, from the Provost and Magistrates of the Royal Burgh of Perth; also praying the Town of

Perth might have the privilege of returning for itself a Member to Parliament; that Town being a very flourishing place, and containing 23,000 inhabitants:—By the Earl of Essex, from the County of Essex, from Kettering, and Havering-atte-Bower:—By Lord Durham, from the Inhabitants of Chester-le-street, Durham:—By Lord King, from the non-resident Freemen of Dover, from Rochester, and four other places:—By Lord Suffield, from Wells:—By the Earl of Glengall, from Ballymoney. For a Revision of the Tithe System, by Lord Calthorp, from South Molton:—By Lord Suffield, from East and West Flegg. For the Abolition of Slavery, by the Bishop of Bath and Wells, from South Moreton and Hagebourn:—By Lord Calthorp, from Southwark, and several Congregations of Protestant Dissenters. By Lord Durham, from the Workmen of Glasgow, for a Repeal of the Duty on Newspapers.

Beer Bill.] The Bishop of *Bath and Wells* presented a Petition from the Clergy of Bath, complaining of the alarming increase of immorality, pauperism, and vice, among the lower orders, arising from the great number of Beer-shops which had been opened under the Act of Parliament passed in last session. The right rev. Prelate concurred with the Petitioners in thinking that that Act of Parliament had had the most pernicious effect, and he believed that there never had been a Bill on the Statute-book more disgraceful to a Christian Country.

The *Lord Chancellor* said, that the right rev. Prelate was not the only person from whom he had heard complaints respecting the Beer Bill. He had, in truth, heard similar complaints made by various persons in the west and north of England; but he believed that in the west of England the effect of it had been worse than in the north. He therefore thought it his duty to bear testimony to the accuracy of the right rev. Prelate's statement of the bad effects of that measure. The original plan of the Bill was, he believed, very different from that which had been adopted. He did not know by what accident the change had been effected; but he supposed it had taken place in some stages of the Bill in the House of Commons. He had brought a Bill into the House of Commons, in 1822 and 1823; but the object of that Bill was expressly confined to making the sale of Beer open, provided it was not consumed on the premises where it was sold; and his purpose was, to enable the poor man to send his wife or daughter to buy a pot of beer at places where they were not likely to meet with improper company. From all the accounts he had received, it would appear that many of the late disturbances in the country had originated in Beer-shops. He thought, therefore, it would be expedient to take the subject into consideration, to see whether the evils complained of were merely temporary or confined to a small district; and if they were not found to be local in extent, and temporary in nature, he should wish to see the Bill repealed.

The Bishop of *Bath and Wells* was glad to hear the candid statement of the noble and learned Lord. He had described the Bill as it was: he did not know what it was intended to be.

Reform Petition—County of Down.] Earl *Grey* presented a Petition from the Freeholders of the county of Down, assembled at a public meeting, convened by the High Sheriff, in favour of Parliamentary Reform. The petition touched upon a variety of topics, and prayed, that in order to secure the purity of the House of Commons, the Members should be required to make oath that they had not procured their return by any species of corruption.

The Marquis of *Londonderry* was unwilling to break through the sort of understanding which their Lordships had come to, not to discuss the question of Reform on the presentation of petitions; but knowing the mode in which the petition just presented had been got up, he should ill discharge his duty, he conceived, if he did not put their Lordships in possession of the circumstances connected with the petition which had come to his knowledge. There was, in the county of Down, an independent club, or rather a radical club, and the members of it convened a meeting for the purpose of agreeing to a petition to the legislature on the subject of Parliamentary Reform. The meeting was not attended by any person of consideration or property; the petition was signed by the lowest freeholders in the county; and there was not an individual of respectability whose name stood affixed to that petition. He begged leave further to state, that after the petition was thus got up, it was determined to send it to the Representatives of the county, in order to be presented to Parliament, if their sentiments accorded with the opinions contained in the petition; but as it prayed for Annual Parliaments and Vote by Ballot, the Representatives of the county, knowing that the entire sense of the county was averse to these propositions, refused to support the prayer. A discussion then took place in the Court-house upon the petitions, and these gentlemen, not being able to carry their object there, adjourned to a private room in the town of Downpatrick, and having got up the petition sent it about the county to get signatures; and their Lordships might form an idea of their success, when he told them that only the names of 1,300 freeholders were attached to the petition, coming from a county which contained 25,000 freeholders. It might perhaps be asked why, if the present petition did not express the sense of the county, had not a counter-petition been got up? He replied,—for the same reason which had operated upon the people in different parts of England against sending petitions. It was not that they had not strong feelings on the subject; but they had shown a degree of tranquillity, and a feeling of apathy, because they never conceived it possible, that such a measure of Reform as the one proposed, would be entertained. He happened to hear the noble Earl at the head of his Majesty's Government announce his intention of proposing a measure of Reform, which the noble Earl had promised should be efficient and moderate. It certainly was a very efficient one, but where the moderation was to be found he was at a loss to discover. He considered it to be only a resting place to Universal Suffrage and the Vote by Ballot. He was glad that the noble Earl had stated himself to be opposed to Universal Suffrage, Vote by Ballot, and Annual Parliaments; because it would be his greatest consolation, if the proposed Bill passed into a law, to have the assistance of the noble Earl in opposing those propositions. He was afraid that, if the Bill passed, the hitherto unrivalled Constitution of England would be destroyed, and the country become a prey to all those calamities which were now desolating the other parts of Europe. He was sorry to say, that undue influence had been employed in the course of the debate on the proposed measure, and, notwithstanding what had fallen from the noble and learned Lord on the Woolsack, he considered the introduction of the sacred name of the Sovereign as highly unconstitutional and mischievous. It had had the effect of making a loyal people believe, that in getting up petitions for Reform they were advocating the royal wishes. He said in his place, that the people of England were deceived by such an improper proceeding. Threats had also been held out by Cabinet Ministers of a dissolution of Parliament, such threats were still held over the heads of hon. Members; but he could not believe, that the noble Earl sanctioned such declarations on the part of some of his colleagues. It had also been stated, that if the Bill did not pass, Ministers could no longer carry on the government of the country. Such declarations were exceedingly unfair, for the measure ought to be allowed to stand on its own merits alone; and he hoped the noble Earl would declare that those unfair helps which had been given to the Bill did not meet with his approbation. He was glad the noble Lord had expressed himself unfavourable to the Ballot, because he knew that in another place some Members of the Government had declared their approbation of the Vote by Ballot. The Bill had been termed a revolutionary measure. He would not give it that epithet, for he could not believe that the noble Earl, surrounded as he was by some of the highest aristocracy in the land, and disposed to uphold his order, could knowingly, bring forward any proposition of a revolutionary nature. But his (Lord Londonderry's) belief was, that the measure would effect the ruin of the aristocracy. Notwithstanding it might be said that the measure, while it took away close boroughs on the one hand, upheld the aristocracy on the other, yet he defied the noble Earl to make good that position when the Bill came to be discussed by their Lordships. The whole system of Representation would be so completely changed, that the communication of the aristocracy, with the Members of the other House, would be entirely destroyed. The whole machinery of our unrivalled Constitution would be swept away, and he did not believe that any Minister, after the passing of the Bill, could form a permanent Administration. How, for instance, if the proposed Bill had been in operation, could the Secretary for Ireland, after being rejected by one place, have been brought into the House of Commons to carry on the business of the country? If the aristocracy did not rally together, they would find that in a short time that House would be shook to its very foundation. He was sorry to have observed the power of the Crown diminishing of late; but he feared, if the proposed Bill passed, it would still further diminish. When he saw, that not only an extreme measure of Reform, but also extreme measures of retrenchment were proposed,—when he saw the system of government which was now acted on, and which went to the root of every thing hitherto held sacred, he maintained that the danger to the country was imminent, and, as long as he was able, he would stand up and protest against a measure, which tended to place England in the same unhappy state of revolution and anarchy as prevailed at the present moment on the Continent. He said this advisedly; for he had long considered the subject, and he was sorry that he must offer the noble Earl his opposition on this question.

Earl *Grey* felt himself called upon to make a few observations to their Lordships, in reference to the speech which had just been delivered by the noble Marquis. He would first of all advert to what had fallen from the noble Marquis, with repect to the petition which he had presented from the county Down. The noble Marquis had stated, that that petition did not represent the sense of the county. He (Earl Grey) could not, of course, pretend to speak with certainty as to the feelings which prevailed in that county, and all he could say was, that the petition had been sent to him, as one emanating from a county meeting, called by the regular authorities, and held under the presidency of the High Sheriff. It had also been stated to him that, at the meeting so convened and so held, no opposition was made to the adoption of the petition; and that the petition had been signed by 1,300 persons, every one of whom was either registered, or entitled to be registered, as a freeholder of 10*l*. a year. But the noble Marquis had stated that there was not annexed to the Petition the signature of any one person of respectability, and that it was signed by—he thought the noble Marquis's expression was—the lowest rabble. He could not be expected to know many of the gentlemen of the county of Down, but the first signature he saw upon the petition was that of Nicholas White, the High Sheriff,—not affixed in his official capacity, but placed at the head of the roll, as the signature of an individual who subscribed to the opinions expressed in the petition. The next name on the petition was that of a gentleman, whom he asked the noble Marquis whether he would designate as an individual belonging to the lowest classes, as a man of no respectability in Downshire, or as a person not respected by the noble Marquis himself? It was the name of Alexander Macdonnell.

The Marquis of *Londonderry* here interrupted the noble Earl. He said there was a physician of that name living in Belfast, and he might be a freeholder of the county of Down for all that he (the Marquis of Londonderry) knew to the contrary. He thought that there was no occasion for the noble Earl to go through all the signatures attached to the Petition, because the noble Marquis (Lansdown) could tell the noble Earl how many names of respectability were attached to it. He would maintain what he had said, that there was not a man resident in the county, of any consequence, whose name could be found in the petition.

Earl *Grey* had no intention to go through the whole list of signatures attached to the petition; but he would refer to one more in contradiction to the general assertion of the noble Marquis, that no person of respectability had signed the petition; and that was the signature of Mr. Forde, a gentleman who had once represented the county of Down, and who had often contested the election for the county in opposition to the person supported by the interest of the noble Marquis's family. He was a gentleman of large property and great respectability, and certainly was not one of the lowest rabble. That name alone, then, contradicted the assertion of the noble Marquis, that no person of respectability had signed the petition. He knew it was very often the custom, when petitions were presented, containing prayers not palatable to individuals in that House, to attempt to throw discredit on them, by saying that they did not speak the sense of the country; and the noble Marquis, following that laudable course, had stood up and stated that petitions had been got up in different parts of the country in favour of Reform, he knew not by what arts and stratagems, while on the other hand a degree of apathy prevailed on the part of those individuals who were opposed to the proposed measure of Reform. That was an assertion for which he believed no satisfactory reason could be stated. He, on the contrary, believed, that there never existed in the country so general and so nearly unanimous a feeling in favour of any measure as that which had been expressed in favour of the plan of Reform which had been recommended to Parliament by his Majesty's

Ministers. But this, it seemed, was a wholly fallacious appearance, and produced by the apathy of those who objected to the measure of Reform. If such apathy existed in individuals, this conclusion at least was to be drawn therefrom,—that there was not that general feeling of danger in the country which the noble Marquis had described as existing, and which he had said called upon their Lordships strenuously to oppose the proposed Bill, in vindication of their own privileges, and in support of the authority of the Crown, and the principles of the constitution, which, according to the noble Marquis's statement, the proposed measure tended to subvert. If such apathy existed in the country as the noble Marquis had described, it was plain, that it was not from the feeling of the people that the proposed measure deserved the character given to it by the noble Marquis. As to the principle on which the measure proceeded, and the particular way in which it would operate, he was not disposed on the present occasion to argue before their Lordships. The argument of the noble Marquis, as well as that of other persons, consisted, as he said last night, merely of a strong assertion of individual opinion. This he would, however, state, that the principle of the measure was the principle of Reform, and was founded on the necessity, in the present state and feelings of the country, of some reformation of the representation of the people in Parliament being made. He should like to know whether or not that was fact? Was that the general sentiment of the country, or was it not? Could it be denied that there never was any thing so nearly approaching to unanimity, as the feeling, that the principle of Reform was completely established, so completely indeed, that there could hardly be found a single individual to dissent from it? Placing out of consideration the unanimous declarations of opinion on the subject of Reform at all the public meetings in this country, he would refer, in support of his assertion, to the division in the House of Commons. He should be told, no doubt, of the limited majority of one; but only let the House consider how the matter stood with respect to the principle of Reform. How, he asked, was that large minority obtained, except by declarations made on the part of every one who spoke on the principle of the measure, that if the second reading of the Bill was rejected, another measure of Reform, though not the same, should be offered [*"No, no"*]. He said, "Yes, yes." He had, therefore, in favour of the principle of Reform, besides the general declarations of the sentiments of the people of England, the unanimous vote of the House of Commons, given in one of the fullest houses ever assembled; for every one, without a single exception, admitted that some Reform was necessary; though some persons objected to the proposed measure as being too extensive and dangerous. If he understood the noble Marquis rightly, he also advocated the principle of Reform; he was for gradual measures —a bit-by-bit Reform; which had this disadvantage over all others, that while it discredited our institutions equally with a large measure of Reform, it satisfied nobody, and sowed in the hearts of the people the seeds of discontent, and would at last lead to the bringing forward, in its worst state, those very measures which the noble Marquis so much dreaded. The noble Marquis had stated, that the proposed Bill was only a step to Universal Suffrage, and that it was some comfort and consolation to him, that he (Earl Grey) had declared his opinion without reserve against that and other extensive and obnoxious theories of Reform. That was a consolation which the noble Lord might have had long ago. Never, at any period of his life, had he not stated his decided opinion against Annual Parliaments and Universal Suffrage, and latterly—because it was only latterly that the subject had been brought under the public notice—against the Vote by Ballot. But the noble Marquis had also said, that the proposed measure was inconsistent with the statement he (Earl Grey) had made of his intention to propose a moderate Reform. He must, in justice to himself, recall their Lordships' attention to what fell from him on the first day of the present Session, in the course of the discussion on the motion to address his Majesty in answer to his gracious Speech. At that time, so strongly was he impressed with the necessity of granting Reform, from the state of things and feeling of the country,—having always been convinced of the justice and policy of the measure, that he stated to their Lordships his opinion, that one of the best steps that could be taken to conciliate the sentiments of the country, and restore the confidence of the people in the Legislature, which was so necessary to the security of the Government, was to address themselves immediately to the question of Reform. This he had stated at a moment when it was most distant from his expectation, and he might also add from his wish, that he should be placed in the situation in which he had then the honour to stand. When the situation which he then filled was offered to him—under circumstances which, he conceived, made it his duty not to decline the proposal—by his gracious Sovereign, in a manner which would command his respect, gratitude, and affection, as long as he lived, he strongly urged to his Sovereign—and his services were accepted on that condition—that he could not faithfully and usefully serve his Majesty if he were not permitted to propose a measure to Parliament of the description which had been submitted to the other House. This brought him to what was one of the great complaints of the noble Marquis—namely, that undue influence had been employed with respect to the Bill before the House of Commons;—that use had been made of the sacred name, which he agreed with the noble Marquis in saying, ought never to be introduced for the purpose of influencing the votes of Members of that or the other House of Parliament. The noble Marquis had said, that the name of a gracious personage had been abused, for the purpose of giving undue weight, by the assumption of his authority, to the statement made in favour of the measure. He thought the noble Marquis would acquit him of having done any thing of the sort: nor was he aware that any body whatever had stated any thing more than that which was to be collected from the manner in which the proposition had been made; because, when any measure was introduced, as a measure proposed by his Majesty's Ministers, without using his name in any way that was improper or unconstitutional, it must be well known that the measure could not be so introduced without the sanction and authority of that master whom they served. He was not aware that any thing more than that had been done to influence the decision of Parliament on the proposed measure of Reform. The noble Marquis thought it unworthy in him to lend himself to any proceeding calculated to influence the vote of any person. He had done nothing of the sort; but as a Minister of the Crown he had discharged his duty faithfully to the Sovereign who had accepted his services on the condition he had stated, by proposing in conjunction, with his colleagues a measure of Reform, though the noble Marquis thought that there must be a difference of opinion among them with regard to the Vote by Ballot. That measure of Reform, which had occupied so much of the attention of the public, and which was looked upon by the noble Marquis with so much alarm, did not proceed upon the principle of the Ballot, nor did it contemplate the adoption of the principle of the Ballot. It had, however, he could inform the noble Marquis, met with the unanimous concurrence of all his Majesty's Ministers. Under these circumstances, he left their Lordships to judge between the noble Marquis and himself, whether there was any foundation for the charge that undue use had been made by the Ministers of the Crown of that sacred authority under which they acted, to influence the votes of Members of either House of Parliament. The noble Marquis had also complained that threats had been held out of a dissolution of Parliament in the event of the rejection of the measure, and had called on him for some explicit declaration on that point. He would make no such explicit declaration, All he would state was this,—that he considered himself to be committed to the proposed measure, without the possibility of compromise or retreat; by that measure he would stand or fall; and he was determined not to consent to any thing which would detract from its efficiency. He was not presumptuous enough to say, that the measure was so complete and unexceptionable that there might not be some matters requiring correction; but to nothing in any degree detracting from its efficiency would he ever consent. He said again, by that measure he would stand or fall; and without wishing to throw out any threat, yet he declared, that to carry a measure which he believed was calculated to do the greatest good it was possible for any measure to do, by silencing the voice of complaint, by removing the cause of discontent, by uniting in confidence and affection to the Government of the country the people of the country,—to carry a measure of this description to which he stood committed, there was no proceeding, dictated by public duty, from which he would shrink. Now, he hoped he had expressed himself explicitly enough, and satisfactorily, at least, to the noble Marquis. Any thing more he did not know that it was necessary for him to say. To the assertion that the measure was revolutionary, he would answer by the contrary assertion, that it was not revolutionary, but constitutional. To the assertion that the measure was calculated to subvert the privileges of that order (using a word which, as the noble Marquis knew, it had been imputed to him almost as a crime for having uttered) to which he belonged, he replied, that it was his opinion that the measure would not cause their subversion, but prove their best support. He was a member of the aristocracy by situation; still more so, some perhaps might think, by disposition and habit. He did not deny that. At the same time he did not uphold the aristocracy as a useful order (using that obnoxious term again) on any other ground than this, that it formed one of the orders of the Constitution necessary to its general support, connected with all, and united with all, for purposes of common advantage. If the aristocracy ceased to bear that character, he was no longer one of that order. It was to support the aristocracy in that useful situation by which it formed the connecting medium between the Crown and the people, that he had proposed the measure of Reform. He should be always ready to support the privileges and rights of that body; and when he was told that the proposed measure would subvert the aristocracy, his answer was, that it would support the aristocracy, by taking from the members of it that power which made them odious to the people, and by placing them in that situation where the influence they were desirous to possess must depend on their cultivating a good understanding with the people; becoming known for their good offices; supporting the principles of the Constitution, and the rights of the people, and by the performance of all those duties for which, and for which alone, the public trust, and confidence, and all the privileges they enjoyed, were given them. He had nothing more to say on the present occasion; but thus much he could not help stating. It was impossible for him to remain silent after the sort of attack which had been made upon him; and having vindicated himself, he should sit down, leaving the petition from the county of Down to be received by their Lordships as the petition adopted at the county meeting regularly convened. He should say no more at present; but when the day came for entering at large into argument in support of the measure for which he and his colleagues stood personally responsible, he should be prepared to maintain, that it was calculated to preserve the institutions of the country.

The Marquis of *Downshire* said, that a considerable number of the signatures to the petition were those of gentlemen with whom he had long had the honour of being acquainted, and he knew them to possess considerable property in the county. With respect to the measure which had been introduced into the other House of Parliament, he approved of its principle and would be happy to give it his support if some of the details should be modified.

The Marquis of *Londonderry* repeated that the petitioners, taken as a whole, were not persons of wealth and influence in the county. He added that Colonel Forde had at first opposed the petition, although he had signed it afterwards on its being altered, and that Doctor Macdonnell had no great property in the county. He could have no pretensions to contend in declamation with the noble Earl, but he must support his own opinion according to the best of his ability—however unequal he might be to contend with such fearful odds as the noble Earl.

The Duke of *Wellington* said, that it was not his intention to prolong the discussion, having often had occasion to regret that discussions of this nature should take place with respect to important questions which were likely to come under the consideration of the House. Upon occasions of this nature their Lordships had not an opportunity of entering into the different topics which ought to be fairly argued and discussed, in order that the House and the public might understand what were the real opinions of the Members of their Lordships House. He confessed, therefore, that it was with great unwillingness that he had determined to trouble their Lordships with a few words that evening, in order to advert to what had fallen from the noble Earl at the head of his Majesty's Government. It was far from his wish to impute to the noble Earl or his colleagues any desire to introduce revolutionary measures into Parliament; but he must say this, that having looked at the measure which had been brought into the other House of Parliament under their auspices, he could not but consider that it would alter every interest existing in the country,—that in consequence of its operation no interest would remain on the footing on which it now stood, and that this alteration must lead to a total change of men—he meant of men intrusted with the public confidence in Parliament. He was of opinion that this alteration must have a most serious effect on the public interests,—an effect which he confessed he could not look at without the most serious apprehension. He did not charge the noble Earl and his colleagues with a desire of overturning the institutions of the country, but he could not look at the alterations proposed by the Bill without seeing that those alterations must be followed by a total change of men, and likewise by a total change of the whole system of Government. Why, he asked,—for what reason was all this to be done? He would not now enter into the question of what was the opinion of the other House of Parliament, but he would say again, as he had said before, in the presence of their Lordships, that he saw no reason whatever for altering the constitution of Parliament. It was his opinion that Parliament had well served the country, and that it well deserved the thanks of the country for a variety of measures which it had passed, particularly of late years. He saw no reason for the measure now proposed except the reason stated by the noble Earl,—namely, his desire to gratify certain individuals in the country. It was possible that those individuals might be a very large body; it was possible, even, that they might be a majority of the population. He had heard no reason excepting this, why the measure should be introduced or adopted. Whilst he thus declared his sentiments, he begged their Lordships to believe that he felt no interest in the question, excepting that which he shared with every individual in the country. He possessed no influence or interest of the description which would be destroyed by the measure now proposed. He was an individual who had served his Majesty for now nearly half a century—he had been in his Majesty's service forty-nine years. He had served his Majesty in situations of trust and confidence. He had been in command of his armies;—he had been employed in embassies and councils for thirty eventful years of that period; and the experience which he had acquired in the various situations which he had filled imposed on him the duty of saying to their Lordships, that he could not look at the measure which had been introduced into the other House without the most serious apprehensions, that from the period of the adoption of that measure would date the downfall of the Constitution.

The Marquis of *Clanricarde* said, that although he could not agree with the assertion of the noble Duke (Wellington), that the Ministerial plan of Reform had been introduced for the purpose of pleasing individuals, because he thought the measure was eminently calculated to promote the general good, rather than individual interests; yet he quite concurred with the noble Duke in thinking that the proposed Reform would please the majority of the nation; and that was one reason wherefore it pleased him, and for which it should have all his support. But it was not a large majority only that approved of it, almost the whole of the community he believed was in its favour, and this was a strong reason for concluding that it was well calculated to promote the best interests of all classes. He was not surprised, however, at the noble Duke objecting to that Motion which would turn out that class of men who had supported the noble Duke's Government. Their popularity and the opinion which the country entertained of their merits were shewn by the places they represented. They had generally fled from or been rejected at populous places and taken refuge in close boroughs. He denied that the measure would destroy the proper influence of the aristocracy and repeated that it should have his warmest support.

Lord *Farnham* said, that he could not admit the correctness of the position laid down by the noble Marquis,—namely, that the opinion of Parliament should follow the opinion of the majority of the population. Parliament should represent the opinions of persons of wealth and property. The education and property of Ireland were opposed to the measure which had been brought forward by Ministers.

Petition to lie on the Table.

Earl Grey presented a Petition in favour of the Reform Bill from the county of Nottingham.

The Duke of *Newcastle* said, the petition could not be considered as that of the county; not above 200 persons being present when it was voted.

Earl *Grey* said, that the petition had been agreed to at a meeting regularly convened, and was signed by many of the gentry of the county.

The Duke of *Newcastle* admitted, to his sorrow, he said, that many of the gentry approved of the Bill; but was convinced that the majority of the yeomanry was opposed to it.

Earl *Grey* said, that the correctness of the noble Duke's opinion on that point might be put to the test if a general election should take place.

Petition laid on the Table.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Thursday, March 24, 1831.

MINUTES.] Bills. Deputy Lieutenants' Indemnity (Scotland), read a second time. Printed Cottons Marking, read a first time.

Returns ordered. On the Motion of the Marquis of CHANDOS, Return of Abstract of Slave-laws of St. Vincent, Dominica, St. Christopher, Nevis, Tobago, and the Virgin Islands, and of other Documents transmitted to the Secretary of State for the Colonies on the 7th of March, 1831, under the following heads:—No. 1. Shewing the abstracts of the Slave-law, passed by the Legislature of St. Vincent, previously to 1823. No. 2. The provisions enacted in conformity with the recommendations sent out by the Secretary of State in 1823. No. 3. Provisions enacted previously or in addition to those enacted in consequence of those recommendations, and in force. No. 4. Remarks and observations.—Documents annexed: No. 5. Copy of a Petition for inquiry into the condition of the slaves, compared with that of the poor whites and free people of colour, dated 9th May, 1826. No. 6. Copy of a Petition for inquiry, dated 23rd June, 1828. No. 7. Ditto, ditto, dated 23rd November, 1830. DOMINICA.—Returns, Nos. 1, 2, 3, and 4, similar to those for St. Vincent. ST. CHRISTOPHER.—Returns, Nos. 1, 2, 3, and 4, similar to those for St. Vincent. NEVIS.—Returns, Nos. 1, 2, 3, and 4, similar to those for St. Vincent. TOBAGO.—Returns, Nos. 1, 2, 3, and 4, similar to those for St. Vincent. VIRGIN ISLANDS.—Returns, Nos. 1, 2, 3, and 4, similar to those for St. Vincent. Also, Report of a Committee of the Legislature of St. Vincent, appointed to inquire into the Financial, Commercial, and Political state of the Colony, and of the Appendix, dated 27th October, 1830 (copy transmitted to the Colonial Secretary of State on 23rd December, 1830):—On the Motion of Mr. BALDWIN, the amount of Assessed Taxes levied in each year, during the last ten years, at the undermentioned Towns, viz. Abingdon, Aylesbury, Andover, Barnstaple, Banbury, Calne, Christchurch, Dartmouth, Grantham, Hertford, Horsham, Knaresborough, Lewes, Malton, Peterborough, Pontefract, Ripon, Scarborough, Tavistock, Totness, Wigan:—On the Motion of Mr. BETHELL, of the amount paid for Drawback on Soap used in the Worsted trade in Leeds and Halifax collections, and the rate per pound of that drawback; likewise of the quantity of Wool washed with such soap, from the year 1820 to 1830 inclusive; distinguishing the amount of drawback, and the quantity of wool in each year.

Petitions presented. Against Reform, by Mr. BALDWIN, from Totness:—By Sir C. WETHERELL, from Wootten Bassett:—By Mr. WM. MILES, from New Romney. In favour of Reform, by Colonel LYGON, from Repton and Normantown:—By Mr. GISBORNE, from Dukinfield:—By Mr. RUTHVEN, from Galway. Against contributing to Greenwich Hospital, by Mr. LESTER, from the Seamen of Poole. Against the Registry of Deeds Bill, by Mr. SCHONSWAR, from Hull. For the Repeal of the Assessed Taxes, by Mr. BETHELL, from Great Driffield.

UNION WITH IRELAND.] Mr. *Ralph Howard* presented a Petition from the Noblemen, Gentry, and Landowners of the county of Wicklow, complaining of the efforts which had been made to disturb the tranquillity of Ireland, by seeking for a Repeal of the Legislative Union,—a measure which, in their opinion, would inevitably tend to produce a separation of the two countries, and a dismemberment of the British empire. The petition was most numerously and respectably signed, and the signatures of the Governor of the county, and of thirty Magistrates had been affixed to it. He begged leave to add, that if his Majesty's Ministers should feel it necessary to come down to that House and ask for the extension beyond another year of the Act for the suppression of illegal associations in Ireland, they should have his support, for he looked upon the agitation which had been so mischievously got up in Ireland for a Repeal of the Union, not as the use, but the abuse, of the laws and Constitution under which we lived.

REFORM PETITIONS.] Sir *J. Scarlett* presented a Petition from the inhabitants of Malton, in favour of the plan of Reform which had been introduced by Ministers. About 500 electors of that borough would be disfranchised by the proposed Bill; notwithstanding which, they petitioned in favour of the measure. He was sorry that he could not go the length of his constituents in approving of that Bill. He did not feel himself bound to surrender his own conscientious opinions to those of his constituents; but differing, as he did, from the sentiments of his constituents, he should be ready to surrender the trust which they had confided to him into their hands, if they should require it.

Mr. *Hunt* said, that nothing could be fairer than the declaration which the learned Gentleman had just made, that if he acted in opposition to the sentiments of his constituents, he would be ready to resign his seat if required. He would take that opportunity to contradict an assertion which had been made by the learned gentleman in a former debate,—namely, that the people of this country wished for a republic. They were perfectly satisfied with the form of government which they possessed, if a cheap government and a proper Representation of the people in Parliament were established.

Sir *J. Scarlett* was happy to hear such a statement from an hon. Member who, it was to be presumed, was so well acquainted with the sentiments of the people.

Mr. *G. Dawson* was surprised that the hon. member for Preston should have forgotten his own declarations in that House. He could positively assert, that he heard the hon. member for Preston himself declare in that House, before the measure of Reform had been introduced, that he preferred a republican form of Government to any other. With his own ears he had heard the hon. Member make such a declaration and the hon. member for Middlesex checked him at the time.

Mr. *Hunt* begged to state most unequivocally, that neither in that House, nor out of that House, upon any occasion, had he said, that he preferred a republican form of government to that which now existed in this country. He had never gone further, in that House or out of it, than to say that the people would be perfectly satisfied with the present form of government, if that House were properly chosen by the people, as according to the constitution it ought to be chosen. He certainly had said out of that House, and he would now repeat the sentiment, that if the people of England should be unfortunately driven to fight for their liberties, and that he (Mr. Hunt) should survive the contest, he, for one, would then be for a republican form of Government.

Mr. *Hume* said, that he had no recollection that such an assertion as that attributed to the hon. member for Preston by the right hon. member for Harwich had ever been made by the hon. member for Preston.

Mr. *Jones* said, he recollected that the declaration which had been made by the hon. member for Preston on the occasion alluded to was, that if that House should not be reformed, and if a cheap Government should not be established, he then might prefer a republican form of Government. He (Mr. Jones) trusted that hon. Members would have the good taste to refrain from expressing their opinions on the measure until the Bill went into Committee.

Captain *Maitland* presented a Petition against Reform from the town and county of Berwick.

An hon. *Member*, in supporting the petition, said, that he believed that the sober sense of the nation was against Reform. Petitions were fabricated for others to sign in favour of the measure, and Ministers were inconsistent, for when the people petitioned against the Catholic claims the present Ministers said the petitions deserved no attention; whereas, now that the petitions of the people were coincident with the wishes of Ministers they were argued upon as things of importance. He hoped never to see such a revolutionary measure as the Reform Bill succeed; for if it did, the British House of Commons would be transformed into a Chamber of Deputies, the British House of Lords into a Chamber of Peers, and the British King into a King of the English.

Mr. *Kennedy* said, that the county of Berwick contained 33,000 inhabitants at least, and not more than forty or fifty had attended the anti-reform meeting. The petition was filled with signatures from other places and resembled one lately presented from Edingburgh to the same effect, it was signed by about 500 persons; whereas one which he had presented from that City in favour of Reform was signed by 31,000 persons.

Captain *Maitland* said, that the Berwick petition was agreed to at a county meeting regularly convened.

Petition to lie on the Table.

Lord *R. E. Somerset* presented a Petition from the county of Gloucester, in favour of the Ministerial plan of Reform. Being a Representative of the county he was sorry that he could not concur in the prayer of the petition, being of opinion that the measure, if carried into effect, would be subversive of the Constitution.

Sir *W. Guise* gave his cordial support to the measure, for which the whole country owed a debt of gratitude to the present Government. If he thought with the noble Lord that the plan was revolutionary in its tendency, he would be the last person to approve of it; but he was satisfied that the noble Lord's apprehensions were perfectly groundless.

Mr. *Cripps* took that opportunity to state, that he had voted for the second reading of the Reform Bill, in order that the subject might be fully investigated. He trusted, however, that the Bill would be considerably modified in the Committee, and unless it were, he should be unable to support it.

Sir *E. Sugden* was surprised that the hon. Member could expect the Bill would be modified in the Committee after the declaration of the noble mover (Lord J. Russell), who distinctly stated, that he would admit of no material alteration in the plan as originally proposed.

Colonel *Davies* denied that Lord J. Russell had so expressed himself.

Mr. *C. W. Wynn* said, no statement of the noble Mover could be considered binding upon the House, which was able to make whatever alterations it might think proper in the measure. He was one of those who voted for the second reading with the desire that the Bill should be materially altered and modified in the committee. As the Bill stood at present, he could not give it his support. His principal objection was to the first clause of the Bill, and whenever it was submitted to a Committee, he should propose either to omit or postpone that clause. It was his wish to make the disfranchisement and the enfranchisement co-equal.

Mr. *George Bankes* understood the noble Lord (Lord J. Russell) to express his sentiments respecting the measure as the hon. and learned Member (Sir E. Sugden) interpreted them.

Sir *J. Wrottesley* would rather the Bill should be thrown out than submit to any alteration in its principle. If any material change were made in the measure, it would no longer deserve the confidence of the country. He might be disposed to yield a little in minor details, but he would not have the Bill frittered away in the Committee.

Mr. *R. Gordon* was astonished, that the hon. Member (Mr. Cripps), or any body else, should have thought it necessary to apologize for supporting the second reading of the Bill. For himself, he gave his full and entire approval to the measure of his Majesty's Ministers, and he sincerely hoped it might be carried into effect in all its leading principles, whatever slight alterations some of the details might require.

Mr. *Cripps* explained, that he had offered no apology for his support of the second reading, which was quite consistent with his wish that the Bill should be modified.

Mr. *H. Gurney* had also voted for the Bill, that its details might be modified. He did not conceive that his vote pledged him to any one of those details.

Mr. *Benett* cordially approved of the Bill, which, as it now stood, afforded satisfaction, not only to moderate reformers, but to persons who were considered immoderate reformers.

REFORM BILL FOR IRELAND.] Mr. *Stanley* brought in the Bill to amend the Representation in Ireland. Though it was somewhat unusual to enter into any remarks on a bill in bringing it in, yet as it had been understood that some observations should be made on it at that stage, he would enter upon it, though at no great length, confining himself strictly to the details of the Bill, as it would be unpardonable in him to say any thing upon the general subject after the lengthened discussions that had already taken place. He should therefore confine himself to the details of the Bill as far as it respected Ireland, and as far as it differed from the principle of the English Bill. From the first to the concluding paragraph of the Bill, there was not one single mention of disfranchisement. The Bill was wholly confined to the extension of the franchise. He had the pleasure to say, that this Bill was not a measure of disfranchisement. It did not take away the existing rights of a single individual, except the right of a few non-residents. In forming the county representation it followed the principles of the English Law, extending the right of voting beyond the freeholders, and admitting to that right that respectable class of men who constituted the leaseholders, holding land for twenty-one years, at a rent of 50*l.* The Irish Bill was different, in one respect, from the English Bill. The English Bill excluded those leaseholders from voting whose leases had been renewed within two years. That was not to be the case in the Irish Bill, and gentlemen acquainted with the state of property in that country would see the reason why this difference was made. In that country there was a large class of leaseholders, holding their leases for twenty-one years, renewable every year, who would be excluded from voting by the clause of the English Bill. He was alluding to that class who held leases for ever, renewable yearly, under clerical or other corporations. The clause, therefore, of the English Bill, which required that the lease should not have been renewed within two years before the day of the election, was not included in the Irish Bill. As to copyholders, there was but one copyholder, he believed, in Ireland, and there was no occasion to admit them into the Irish Bill. There was no other alteration he had to notice. It was intended to give the clergy a right of voting, not as beneficed clergy, but for any freeholds they might possess, being duly registered. — [*Mr. O'Connell inquired of what amount?*]— The same as other parties, if the property were leasehold—50*l.* In towns it was intended to provide for the elections as in England. Householders who paid 10*l.* a year rent, or who occupied a house which, if let to a solvent tenant, would yield 10*l.* a year, and if the rent was paid up, were to be allowed to vote. It was not thought right to exclude the freeholders and leaseholders in boroughs, cities, and towns, from voting, if the latter held a lease of 50*l.* for twenty-one years, and all these were now to be allowed to have votes in towns, and as the extinction of the 40*s.* freeholders had already been provided for, the Bill proposed to assimilate all the freeholders of Ireland to those of this country. Thus there would be three classes of resident voters—the freeholders, the leaseholders of 50*l.* a year having a lease of twenty-one years, and the householders paying a rent of 10*l.* a year. With respect to the powers granted to the Privy Council by the English Bill, which were so much objected to, they would be much mitigated by the state of Ireland. There would be no necessity in Ireland either to unite or separate districts for the purpose of voting, and the power of the Privy Council as to Ireland would be limited to determining the limits of boroughs. It was obviously necessary to have some persons to decide whether suburbs and villages adjoining towns, should or should not be considered as belonging to those towns, and this would be determined by the Committee of the Privy Council. In regard to registering the votes, this Bill followed the enactments of the English Bill. It provided that the Churchwardens, or, where there were no Churchwardens, two persons to be appointed by the Lord Lieutenant should make out a list of persons claiming a right to vote, and the list should be subject to the examination of a Barrister appointed by the Lord Lieutenant. There was not, however, to be a Barrister for each county, as in England, but only eight Barristers were to be nominated, who would each go a certain circuit to examine the lists. The Bill followed the plan of the English Bill in making the registration every year, and it gave a power of making corrections in the annual list to a class of officers who, he was sure, would meet the confidence of the hon. Gentleman opposite—the assistant Barristers. In their hands he was sure that power would not be subject to abuse. The duration of the polls was regulated like that of the polls in England. Polls were to be open for two days and no more in towns, and in the counties fifteen polling places were to be provided, where the votes would be taken. The towns would be divided so that it should not be necessary to poll more than 600 persons at any one place. These were the principal alterations which the Bill made in the right of voting in Ireland. The result of what he had stated was, that a considerable alteration would be made in the right of voting in boroughs, but not a single borough would be disfranchised. The franchise would be extended to the inhabitants at large, because it was not right that a few individuals should exclusively exercise that right. Towns now in possession of the right of returning members, would retain that right; but it would be wrong, even if they proceeded on the principle of making population the basis of representation, which they did not, to make the smallest alteration, which was not necessary, but only to take an exclusive privilege from some, and admit others to share it. The ministers had no wish to interfere unnecessarily with existing rights; and, amongst all the towns now possessing representatives in Ireland, there was no one not in possession of sufficient population to give respect to that representative whom it might send to parliament. That being the case, they did not think it right from any untried theory, or from the wish to adopt any plan which they might prefer to the present state of things, to trespass further on existing rights than was necessary, or to make any change for the mere sake of changing. No good object, however, could be effected, by preserving the right of electing the members of parliament exclusively in the corporations of the towns instead of the respectable inhabitants at large. By the census of 1821, it appeared, that among the towns which possessed the right to return members, on comparing the number of inhabitants with the number of voters—though there was no such case of gross inconsistency as was found in England — still there were inconsistencies enough to require the interference of Parliament to correct the abuses. The first place he would refer to was the town of Armagh, which had 8,900 inhabitants, and only thirteen voters. Bandon Bridge, again, had upwards of 10,000 inhabitants and only thirteen voters. Belfast had 37,377 inhabitants, and thirteen voters. Carlow had 8,000 inhabitants, and only thirteen voters. Dublin, with a population of 185,000, had only 2,500 voters. [*Mr. O'Connell and other Members, stated, that it had three times that amount*]. Then the returns he held in his hand must be incorrect. Dundalk, with 9,256 inhabitants, had thirty-two voters. Ennis had 16,320 inhabitants, and only thirteen voters. Kilkenny had 23,000 people, and 600 voters. Sligo had 9,322 inhabitants, and thirteen voters. Tralee had 7,547, inhabitants, and again the mystical number of thirteen voters. He could not tell why this said number of thirteen was always preserved, or what proportion it bore to the various other numbers he had mentioned, so that these thirteen electors, whether the towns were large or small, should monopolise the representation, and that they alone should elect the members for such towns as Belfast or Armagh. As to Belfast, not to go into any very exact calculation of its population compared to the population of other towns, he would only observe that it was one of those places which stood prominently forward in Ireland as distinguished for the rapid increase of its population, the growth of its wealth, and the importance of its commerce; and those who looked at it under these relations, would hardly deny that it was necessary and proper, and not exceeding the fair limits, to give to that flourishing town one additional Member. He proposed, then, that Belfast, with 37,000 inhabitants, should hereafter return two Members to Parliament. He proposed, too, that Limerick, which had 29,000 people, should have another representative; that Waterford, with 28,000 inhabitants, should have another representative; that the county of the town of Galway, which had nearly 28,000 people, should have another representative. It was plain that the members of these corporations did not represent the population, the intelligence, or the wealth, of these towns; and therefore it was proposed, by extending the right of voting in them, and by adding these Members, to assimilate the practice in England and Ireland. There was another case in which no alteration had been made in England, but as to which it was proposed also to assimilate the practice of Ireland to that of England. It was proposed to extend the right of voting, now enjoyed by the Provost, Fellows, and seventy junior Scholars of the University of Dublin, to all those who had at any time been scholars of the University, and who should, within six months, have placed their names upon the books of the University. In making this innovation, Government were recurring to the original right granted by the charter, for while the charters of Oxford and Cambridge gave the right of voting to Masters of Arts, the charter of the University of Dublin gave it *præposito et scholaribus;* and it went on to say, *juxta formam Universitatis Oxoniensis et Cantabrigiensis.* According to this, the Provost and Scholars were looked upon in the same light as the Masters of Arts in the English Universities. But there was another reason for the alteration. To become scholars of the University of Dublin, it was necessary to pass through a public examination, in order to prove that the candidate was worthy of being admitted; and according to the existing franchise, the right of voting as he would shew to the House, was now most anomalous. It was given to young men of eighteen years of age, who had undergone this examination; but after they had acquired the experience of five years more, when their judgment was matured, when they were able to appreciate the merits of parliamentary candidates—for it was well known that the young scholars must be under the influence of their tutors—when they had been five years scholars, and when their judgment was mature, and they had escaped from this influence, then the right was taken from them. That was not according to the original Charter, which conferred his rights on the scholar for life; but by a subsequent charter they were taken away at the end of five years—at least the scholars' *stipendia* were taken away, and by rather a forced construction of that charter, it had been held by the Courts, that in taking away the *stipendia* the scholars' right to vote for a Member was also taken away. The case had indeed been before a Committee of that House, and so decided; but he knew that it was the opinion of many men of high authority, and among others, of the present Lord Chancellor of Ireland, that the rights conferred on the scholars by the original charter, as to electing Members for Parliament, were not taken away by the subsequent charter. He meant to propose, therefore, in extending the franchise to all the scholars—and this was, he thought, not going too far—to assimilate the Dublin University to the two English Universities, which had four Members, and give it, instead of one, two Members. The whole addition, then, which he proposed to make to the Representation of Ireland amounted to five; four for the cities and towns he had mentioned, and one for the University. That increase, in proportion to the whole number of Representatives, was small, but he proposed to make a very large increase in the constituent body. He had gone through all the propositions which were contained, he believed, in the Bill, except one. There was a Bill on the Table of the House which had been introduced by the hon. and gallant Member opposite (Colonel Trench), which provided, that "when a person owned two freeholds, the united value of which exceeded 10*l.*, though neither separately amounted to that sum, he should have the right of voting as a 10*l.* freeholder." As some doubts existed as to the state of the law on this subject, a declaratory clause had been introduced into the Bill, explaining the law on this point. There was another clause introduced in the Bill of the gallant and hon. Member, which related to giving a cautionary notice by the candidates to the freeholders on coming to the poll to tender their votes. That clause was thought likely to give a great deal of unnecessary trouble, and therefore it was not thought right to insert such a clause in the present Bill. He had then explained, he believed, all the points of the Bill, and he hoped clearly. He should be quite ready, if it appeared necessary, to give any further explanation; but, as the principles of the measure had been already explained, he should abstain from offering any further observations, reserving himself to meet any objections to the Bill on the second reading, which he wished should not take place till after Easter. In the mean time, he should propose that the Bill be printed and circulated in Ireland, which would make its provisions known.

Colonel *Trench*, notwithstanding what had fallen from the right hon. Secretary, declared that he meant to carry forward his Bill, if the dissolution with which the Parliament had been threatened allowed him. He hoped that the Bill of the right hon. Gentleman would not pass, and he certainly should press his own measure.

Mr. *O'Connell* expressed his great satisfaction with the Bill, and was sure that it would give great pleasure to all Ireland. There were some of the details of the Bill to which perhaps he should not assent, and which he trusted the right hon. Gentleman would make no objection to alter in the Committee, if they did not interfere with the principle of the Bill. He was happy to hear that non-residents were to be disfranchised. He was happy also to hear, that the corporations were no longer to return the Members; and he wished that the disfranchisement had been extended further, and that the right of electing the corporation officers had been extended to all the inhabitants. As he understood the present measure, the 40*s.* freeholders, being residents in towns, were not to be deprived of their franchise during their lives.—[Mr. *Stanley* was understood to answer, that the hon. and learned Gentleman was right].—He was glad of that, and approved of the plan laid down for voting in the counties; because he thought that there was a prospect of forming a better class of freeholders and of voters. He approved of the sum of 10*l.* being chosen as the point of exclusion; being of opinion that freeholds under that sum should not entitle the owners to votes. He conceived the proposed alteration would be advantageous. The right hon. Gentleman had described the electors of several towns to consist of thirteen. In fact, there were seventeen boroughs in Ireland, the whole constituency of each of which consisted of twelve members and a sovereign. They, however, were not the real constituency; for, generally, in each case, the whole thirteen were appointed by one man; and they thought themselves as much bound in honour to vote for the persons who appointed them, as they were to abstain from picking pockets. This was the case with the whole seventeen boroughs, except Ennis, which has two masters, for there the proprietors lay two in a bed. He felt convinced that Ireland would regard the proposed change as a great good, as it would get rid of that mockery of representation, that corruption, and that public sale of seats to the highest bidder, which were a disgrace to the country. Seats were offered for sale, not by ringing a bell certainly, but as distinctly as if they were advertized in any newspaper. Such places as the borough of Tralee or Portarlington were put up and sold as by auction to the highest bidder, who did not, indeed, pay for them in money, as that would be contrary to law, but by a cheque on his banker. These formed part of the boroughs created by King James in Ireland; and he rejoiced to find that the system of individual nomination, with respect to them, was about to cease, and that those places were to have a real, and not merely a nominal constituency. He wished to call the attention of right hon. Gentlemen opposite, to some parts of this Bill, which he hoped they might be disposed to reconsider in its progress through the House. He did not understand, for example, on what principle five new Members were to be given to Scotland, with only a population of 2,100,000, while Ireland, with 6,800,000, was only to have five additional Members. It was proposed to add five to forty-five for Scotland, and only to add five to one hundred for Ireland, which, as far as he saw, was very disproportionate, according to the arithmetic which he had been taught at school. There was one town which had escaped the right hon. Gentleman's notice, owing, he was afraid, to the manner in which it was described in the return. That town was Kilkenny, which was said to contain only 23,000 inhabitants; but if St. Canice, which formerly returned two Members as well as Kilkenny, though it formed but one town with it, they being divided only by the river, were added to it, Kilkenny would exceed in population both Galway and Waterford, and would deserve to have an additional Member. Dublin also, was, he thought, ill-treated, by not receiving an additional Member. Edinburgh and London had each received two additional Members, and why should not Dublin, which, including the suburbs and the vicinage of the Black Rock, contained at least a population of 250,000, receive an additional Member? They might strike off the north side of the town and, leaving the two Members for the south, give an additional Member to the north. With respect to the University, he knew that it might be convenient to have two Members for that place; but was it not preposterous to make this enlargement? There could be but seventy-two scholars in Dublin University. Each continued for five years. The number of individuals who were thus scholars was not great, nor could it ever possibly be great. Amongst those scholars would be found beneficed clergymen of the first rank and station in society. In the next place a number of Fellows were originally scholars. Thus, therefore, the addition would not be great; but it had this inconvenience—it was continuing the principle of exclusion. This Government ought not to do any thing that should sanction or perpetuate the principle of exclusion. Not one single Presbyterian, or, at all events, not one Catholic, could be a member of the University. Were they to perpetuate that principle of exclusion, by excluding Catholics from the right of voting in the University, and thus continue the separation between the Catholic and Protestant? He did not propose to give Catholics scholarships, but he thought that the right of voting might be common. There, perhaps, might be ten Catholic scholars. But why not take up the principle of the University of Cambridge, and give the vote to Masters of Arts? This would increase the constituency, and increase the combined education of Catholics and Protestants. He could assure the right hon. Gentleman that his narrow plan on this subject would be received with considerable disapprobation in Ireland. Nothing was at present more mischievous than the distinction between Catholic and Protestant. It produced a great many of those mischievous apostates without conviction. In getting rid of one religion, they disregarded all religion. Talent was frequently driven to infidelity, in order to secure the worldly advantages of a scholarship. He himself knew many frightful instances. A man was a good Protestant during the five years that he held a liberal situation; he then returned to his Catholicism, and advertised his shame. As for counties, he wished that the right of voting had been given to him who had a profitable interest in the ground to the value of *50l.*, for freeholders might have large tracts of ground, nominally of much greater value, without its yielding them so much. He believed it would have been better to give the vote to those who had leaseholds. The owners of freeholds, as he understood, might be non-residents, and the plan he suggested would have the effect of encouraging the increase of the middle classes. What was wanted in Ireland was a substantial body of yeomanry, and he had felt some consolation, when he was called upon to sacrifice the 40*s.* freeholders, on reflecting that it would give the landlords a motive for making free holders of 10*l.*, giving them a chattel interest. He wished that to be followed up, but he feared that this Bill would encourage the making of nominal freeholders. He feared that considerable facilities would be given by this Bill to the making of such 10*l.* freeholders. In Connemara, one gentleman had made 500 10*l.* freeholders in a year. This, he believed, could not occur in any other part of Ireland; but certainly it appeared to him that the Bill offered facilities in that respect, which it ought not to do. A man might make a lease for twenty-one years at 50*l.* without any reference whatever to the value of the property so leased. He therefore wished that the men who had a profitable interest of 10*l.* in the land should be the voters, rather than those whose freeholds were more a burthen than a profit to them. These, however, were details for the Committee, and he would wait till the Bill got into the Committee to state them. He had one other observation to make. In England there were seven counties, each of which had less than 200,000 inhabitants, which were to have two additional Members each, or fourteen Members in all; in Ireland, however, there were counties containing from 280,000 to 300,000 people, which were not to receive an additional Member. One county in Ireland, that of Cork, had a population of nearly 600,000, but it had only two Members. There was one county in England which had not above 72,000, which had two Members, while Down and Tyrone, which had nearly 300,000 people each, had only two, and were not to get any more. An objection was taken the other evening by the hon. member for Bristol to the general plan, on the ground of the addition of four or five Members for Ireland, because, as the hon. Member stated, whenever he had occasion to make any application to Government, where the interests of that place came in any degree in collision with those of Ireland, the Minister declined to interfere, alleging that he was afraid of the opposition of the Irish Members. The hon. Member was therefore unwilling to add to the strength of the Irish interests. This was at least candid in the hon. Member. It was natural that he should wish to do every thing to promote the interests of Bristol, but at the same time it would be but fair that those of Ireland should not be neglected. It was on the Representation of the inhabitants of Bristol that William 3rd deprived Ireland of one of the most important branches of trade she had ever enjoyed—that of the woollen manufactures. Had the interests of Ireland not been made to give way to those of England on that occasion, she might now be in the enjoyment of the fruits of her industry in that important manufacture. Now, a century and a half after that event, an hon. member for Bristol objected to a measure lest it should be advantageous for the interests of Ireland. He did not want that the interests of Ireland should be dominant. All he wanted was, that she should have fair play. He hoped, when the Bill went into a Committee, that the difference in the Representation of some of the populous counties, and that which was proposed for some of the large counties in England, would be considered. He asked if it were fair play that the counties of England should get several additional Members, and the counties of Ireland get none? He wished to see the franchise extended, and the distinction between Catholics and Protestants done away in all that concerned corporations and political rights. If that were done, he had little doubt that this Bill would give, as he hoped it would, such general satisfaction, that no man should any longer desire any change, except those who asked for change for the sake of change itself. He did not think mere change desirable; and if the people had reason to be satisfied, they would cease to wish for a separation. He should rejoice if that desire was superseded by a wish to engage in mutual good offices, and show mutual kindness. He hoped that the propositions of the right hon. Gentleman would be taken into consideration, and that the Bill, when passed, would contribute to make a perpetual and irreversible union of the two countries.

Mr. *Leader* regretted, that he had not been in the House to have heard the entire statement of the right hon. Secretary for Ireland. He was, however, most happy to learn that it was intended to give additional Representatives to his country. He had not interfered during the prolonged discussion that had taken place, and which involved the dearest interests of the country, but he had voted for the second reading of the Reform Bill, and was prepared to vote for that Motion, and would go into the Committee on the Bill with a mind unbiassed by any wish but to promote the advantage of both countries. He had listened to the topics alluded to by his hon. and learned friend, the member for Waterford, and in most of the opinions urged by him he agreed; but he could not be silent, nor help submitting to the House his sentiments upon what would tend to the cementing of the interests of both countries. He was one who thought that effectual relief could be afforded to Ireland, from the distresses and embarrassments and dissensions under which she laboured, only by spreading Representation equally and judiciously over the face of that country. He wished to submit to the House some considerations of great political importance, which were worthy of their best attention, before they decided the great question. He wished to show them a way out of their difficulties, and how they might spread Representation more equally over the country. What he meant to state were facts of great importance, and nothing but facts. If they drew a line from Londonderry to Cape Clear, they would find, that on the North-west and South-west of Ireland there were only five boroughs returning Members to Parliament, while on the East and North-east the cities and boroughs returned twenty-one Members; Sligo, Galway, Ennis, Tralee, and Limerick, each returned a Member on the Western side; while on the east and north-east they had Londonderry, Coleraine, Carrickfergus, Belfast, Downpatrick, Newry, Dundalk, Drogheda, Dublin City and Dublin University, Wexford, New Ross, Waterford, Dungarvon, Bandon, Youghall, Cork, and Kinsale, returning twenty Members, in opposition to the five on the other side. If, then, it was wished to know why famine and desolation made their home in the south-western part of the country, was he not justified in saying that it was because of the want of Representatives over that great space—of men who should be bound and interested to develope the resources of a portion of the country abounding in means, and possessing every facility for commerce, but, unfortunately, neglected, and of course uncultivated? On the other side of the line, there were twenty-one Members returned from towns on the north-east, east and south coasts; and the consequence was, that, while the interests on the one side were protected, those on the other were thrown into the shade. The House must see from his statements that one side of the island had a large number of Members to attend to its commercial and manufacturing interests, while the other side was comparatively neglected. Could any one say that this was a fair distribution of Representation in a country which was almost unknown to those who governed it, which had no tie to connect it with the institutions of the Monarchy except its Representatives, and which had been subjected to the change of sixteen Secretaries in the course of fifty years, each Secretary having a new system of government? He contended, therefore, that an extension of the Representation was as necessary in that country as an alteration of the franchise; and that, with such a Government, and under such institutions, Representatives must be given to other parts of Ireland, in order that the people might possess organs through whom they might communicate directly with the Legislature. He supported the principle of the Bill. He approved of it in common with all the friends of Ireland; and he would vote for its going to a second reading; but he did hope, when it came into a Committee, that such alterations would be made in its details as would enable him to say, that the Representation of the parts of Ireland, as well as its fair share in the Representation of the Empire, were such as the friends of that country could cordially approve; and that it would at length possess a means of making the opinions of its people known in the Parliament of the United Kingdom. Passing over the question of the difference between the representation of the boroughs on one side of the island and the other, he would apply himself to the point adverted to by the hon. member for Waterford; namely, that the counties of Ireland, possessing a larger population than the counties of England, should also obtain additional Representatives. There was the county of Donegal, for instance, which possessed at the present moment a population of 310,337 persons; was it not, he would ask, of more importance that a county like that should possess an additional Representative, than that another Member should, as the right hon. Gentleman announced, be bestowed on the town of Galway? Let the House look at the population of some of the counties which had but two Representatives, compared with that of some of the English counties which were now to have four. In the north there was Donegal with 310,000, Cavan with 243,845, Monaghan with 218,000, Tyrone with 327,000, and Down with 406,762. Then, in the south-west, Galway had 386,000, Mayo 366,000, Limerick 273,000, Tipperary 433,000, and Cork 787,000. Now, without saying any thing of Down and the others, any one of which had a population twice as large as some of the English counties, how the noble Lord (Lord J. Russell) could have overlooked the county of Cork in his estimate, he was at a loss to imagine. That county, with its immense population, trade, and resources, possessed but two Members, although it had a resident gentry, at all times numerous enough to form five different sets of Grand Juries, composed of men who would be entitled to take rank beside his Majesty's Ministers. How, too, could the noble Lord, in his distribution of Representatives, pass over the borough of Kilkenny, the seat at one time of the Parliament, at the present moment possessing 23,000 inhabitants, and one of the most opulent and rising towns of Ireland? He hoped that the claims of these and other places would be well considered in the Committee, and that England would at last attach to herself, by an act of justice and policy, the feelings of the people of Ireland. By giving a voice to the weak as well as to the strong in the great council of the nation—by giving Representatives to support the interests of the poor as well as the wealthy and the opulent, they would at last possess the country in good earnest, and binding to England the affections and interests of the people of Ireland, dispelling their doubts, securing their confidence, governing by love, not by fear, they might defy all enemies who would venture to assail them. When it was considered that in 1820 the trade between England and Ireland amounted to 20,000,000*l*., and when it was known that Ireland had contributed near eighty millions in a few years to the revenue, the prosperity of Ireland would contribute to the gain of this country, and she would be an immense consumer of English productions. It could not be said, that he used one language in that House, and another out of it, nor that he said then what he had not been in the habit of uttering for the last twenty years in every assembly. No man had done more than himself for that part of the country with which he was connected, and which was, as it were, shut out from intercourse; and which must be given to it before it could be improved. There were no means by which the improvement of the manufactures and agriculture of Ireland could be more securely effected than by increasing the number of Representatives, and giving the great proprietors and capitalists a stimulus to reside on their estates, and cultivate the good will of their tenantry. At the present moment there were in the vicinity of the Blackwater, where he resided, and which was, he believed, one of the most fertile districts in Ireland, full thirty miles in which there was not to be found a single resident gentleman. The effect of the ravages of absenteeism were but too evident in the poverty and misery of the people, and it was to this evil, and to the consequent ignorance and demoralisation of the people, that the House ought now to apply a successful remedy. He had stated facts well known. There was nothing new in them; but they were supported by testimony which could not be controverted, and it was for the House to judge of their importance. He repeated, that the present state of the Representation would not be remedied unless great alterations were made in the Bill, and he therefore implored them to consider well the nature of the claims he had put forth on behalf of others before the measure passed into a law.

Mr. *Bankes* said, he did not rise at that moment to enter into an examination of the details of the Bill, for, of course, he could not be supposed to have obtained information enough for that purpose: but there was a fundamental objection to the principle on which it proceeded, which he thought extremely well worth attention. The hon. member for Waterford said, all he wanted was fair play for Ireland. But he would say, give fair play to England also. He, for one, doubted very much the competency of the Parliament of the United Kingdom to do what the Bill proposed. He knew very well that it was difficult to say to what the omnipotence of Parliament did not extend, and that any attempt to question that omnipotence was not very often willingly received by those who were called on to exercise the power. But still he would ask those who supported the Bill, whether they recollected the balance of Representation, as settled by solemn compact at the Union between England and Scotland, and confirmed by the Union with Ireland, nearly a century afterwards? Now, if it was in the power of nations to declare any of their Acts permanent and irrevocable, and if it was in the power of language to express their intentions that their Acts should be so, he believed that a reference to the terms of the Act of Union would show that such was the meaning and intention of those who were parties to them. If they looked to the words of the compacts entered into on those occasions, they would find that nothing was omitted which could render solemn, and binding, and unalterable, that part of the Act which settled the relative proportions of the Representation of the different countries. If, then, they were now to destroy that proportion in the manner proposed, they would defeat and destroy the terms of a compact which was intended to be as binding and as permanent as any treaty which could be framed between independent nations. When, therefore, the hon. member for Kilkenny (Mr. Leader) pressed on their attention the comparative wealth, population, and commerce of the boroughs and counties of Ireland, he would answer him by saying, that it involved a question into which Parliament could not enter; and he would beg that hon. Member to direct his attention to what had been done formerly on settling the balance of Representation between England, Ireland, and Scotland. Some persons considered the measures of his Majesty's present Government to be revolutionary; and he was one of those who entertained that opinion; but if he entertained the least doubt on the subject, that doubt would be removed by the plain attempt involved in it, to break up that solemn compact with Scotland and Ireland which was contained in the Acts of Union. If the Parliament thought that the number of its Members should be decreased, he would say, let them be decreased; but let it be a decrease in proportion. If there was to be a diminution at all, let the balance of the Representation between the three kingdoms be preserved. If the scale was to be preserved, Ireland, instead of having 104 or 105 Members, ought, if England was to lose 62 Members, to be limited at once to 84 or 85. This would be consistent with the principle of the Union, which that House had formally sanctioned and adopted; but he was one of those who thought that this was one of the few questions with which it was not competent for the House to deal.

Mr. *Crampton*, in answer to the objection of the hon. member for Dorsetshire (Mr. Bankes), begged to refer him to the terms of the Act of Union itself. By the 40th of George 3rd, c. 29, the hon. Member would find that certain boroughs and towns of Ireland were to continue to send Members to Parliament in the proportions there mentioned, not for ever, but until the United Parliament might otherwise provide; the boroughs which were disfranchised being allowed 15,000*l.* each as a compensation for the loss of their right. The very borough mentioned in the debate by the hon. member for Waterford, that of St. Canice, claimed 15,000*l.*, or rather the Bishop, who had returned the Members, claimed it, but the claim was disallowed, and the money applied to other purposes. The hon. Member called the Bill revolutionary, but he contended that the whole plan was founded both in law and in equity. The measure was called for by the unanimous voice of the people. It was supported by every principle of sound legislation, and justifiable on every moral and sacred feeling. The time was come when such a change could not be delayed; and it was the merit of the plan that it did not reconstruct, but restore the Constitution, in a manner which would place an effectual bar to the inroads of all who desired more violent alterations. The hon. and learned member for Waterford seemed to think that the part of the Bill which gives a vote to a person in possession of 50*l.* leasehold property would prove injurious, and defeat the objects of its framers. The hon. and learned member, if he (Mr. Crampton) understood him right, seemed to say, that a person in this manner might obtain a vote, although the subject matter, on the right of which he voted, might not be worth fifty shillings. The hon. Member could not, however, have said this, if he had read the very first clause of the Bill, for he would find it there expressly stated, that the leasehold must be *bonâ fide* worth 50*l.*, and that the legality of the vote was to be determined in the same manner as in England—by a reference to a barrister, appointed for that purpose. The hon. member for Kilkenny intimated an opinion that the town of Galway was not so well entitled to an additional Representative as some other places; but the hon. Member did not, perhaps, recollect, that although the population of Galway itself was only 27,000, the population of the suburbs, which were now to participate in the right of voting, amounted to full 40,000 persons; and so great had been the increase of its trade, that the Customs' Duties, which five years ago were only 30,000*l.*, now amounted to near 100,000. The hon. and learned member for Waterford, among other objections to the Bill, contended, that the right of voting for the University of Dublin would be too limited, and that it should be extended to all who had taken the degree of Master of Arts. The hon. Member should, however, recollect, that the right was regulated by a Charter. These Charters were very different in the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge. In Oxford, for instance, the right was placed in the Chancellor and the Masters. In Trinity College the right was in the Provost, Fellows, and Scholars. Now, one of the great principles of the Reform Bills was, to preserve all existing institutions, as far as it was possible to preserve them, consistently with the objects which were to be attained. The usage for a long time had been, that no scholars should vote who were not on what is called the foundation. The Bill, however, set this right, and restored the ancient practice, which allowed the whole of the scholars to exercise the right of electing a Representative. If they were to admit the Masters of Arts, it would be an invasion of the Charter, and, at the same time, render the number of voters most inconveniently large. He believed that the number would then be near 5,000, and that must render the elections so tumultuous, and, from the voters being brought from a great distance, so expensive, that he thought it would be anything but an improvement. According to the present arrangement, there would be about three or four hundred voters. The hon. Member, when he argued so strongly in favour of the right of Catholics to vote, seemed to forget that the Charter of Trinity College was granted for the support and extension of the Protestant religion. The hon. and learned member for Waterford probably thought the Catholic religion the better religion. He (Mr. Crampton) thought otherwise. He thought the Protestant religion the better; and, it should be recollected, from the number of Catholics who had graduated, and who would continue to graduate in Trinity College, that, if the plan of the hon. Member, in allowing the Masters to vote, was adopted, the Catholics would certainly return Catholic Members. The arguments of the hon. Member did not go against the Bill so much as it went to the subversion of the Charter of the College. The obstacle to the course proposed by the hon. Member was to be found in the oath; and if the hon. Member would bring in a Bill to remove that oath, he could understand the hon. Member's object, but he could not understand the objection as an argument against the Bill. Having thus attempted to reply to some of the objections urged against the Bill, he would now merely say, that it was, in his opinion, calculated to avert revolution, not to produce it; and, he was confident, that the benefits the people would derive from it must associate the noble Lord who introduced it to that House, and the name of that other noble Lord who was known to have drawn it up, with the glory and prosperity of their country, and that they must go down to posterity, among its greatest benefactors.

Mr. *O'Connell*, in explanation, said, that the hon. member for Saltash (Mr. Crampton) had proved himself, at all events, a sufficiently good Protestant to represent the most Protestant University.

Sir *C. Wetherell*, although *impar congressus* in any contest between two such able and learned persons as the Solicitor General for Ireland, and the hon. member for Waterford, yet he was unable to resist the temptation to break a lance with the learned Solicitor on one part of his argument. The hon. and learned member for Saltash, the Solicitor General for Ireland, had concluded his speech by a reference to the perpetuity of the fame of the founders of the Reform Bill. The Members of that House had heard of a certain worthy of antiquity, who, in order to obtain immortality, had burnt down the Temple of Ephesus. He did not know what kind of immortality he obtained, but some such immortality was that which the hon. and learned Gentleman was disposed to confer on the authors of the Bill. In some such manner the hon. member for Saltash himself was brought over from Ireland to represent the borough of Saltash, in order that he might follow up the true Ephesian and immortalizing principle, by burning down the borough he represented. The instances of this kind of Ephesian conflagration were not, however, confined by the present Cabinet to Irish Members. There was his hon. and learned friend, the member for Bletchingley; he was another of those Ephesian conflagrators; he was another of these Reformers, these Restorers; who were brought into the House for the purpose of showing that they ought not to be there. Then there was the learned Lord Advocate. He had also been brought in for the same purpose; namely, to close the avenues to the House against all future Attorneys and Solicitors-general, and against all future Lords Advocate; and, in short, against all future men of talents and genius. Last, but not least, of these Ephesian conflagrators, was the hon. and learned member for Milborne Port, who on a late occasion had expressed sentiments as well conceived as they were forcibly delivered. He had received peculiar pleasure in hearing that hon. and learned Gentleman say, that if, on former occasions, he might have shewn himself too warm, and intemperate, and violent, he had given them up, and would not return to, that agitating system. He could not refrain, indeed, from expressing his satisfaction at the modest and decorous manner in which that learned Gentleman had expressed his intention to abstain from agitation, after the object which he so long sought had been constitutionally obtained. The First Lord of the Admiralty, by the way, who must be so conversant with naval geography, was no doubt aware that this same Milborne Port was not a Port, properly so called, not having any connexion with the Channel, it was therefore to be blocked up, or suffocated with sand, and not blockaded by the legislative manœuvrers who had the conduct of the Reform Bill. The hon. and learned member for Milborne, it appeared then, was another of those who came amongst them to declare that they had been returned by corruption, and to denounce the system that returned him. He was also, in this instance, countenanced by the hon. and learned member, the Solicitor-general for Ireland; who, with a certain constitutional confidence, or, if he might so speak, a force of visage which an English lawyer could not easily attain, protested with both hands against the system which returned himself and his learned friend, bearing in mind the maxim of an ancient writer, with whom he was, of course, well acquainted:—"*Suadet monentis exemplum plusquam oratio.*" The member for Milborne Port should meantime have recollected, that there was a distinction between declamation and argument in favour of a proposition, the absurdity of which himself, and others similarly circumstanced, in their own persons so well demonstrated. They ought to remember that the more brilliant and powerful their speeches, the more conclusive were they as arguments against their side of the question. He hoped, indeed, that Saltash would be long furnished with so able a Representative, and that the House would enjoy the benefit of his assistance hereafter, in deliberations on other subjects, besides that ungrateful one on which he had already indulged them with the expression of his opinions. Then there was also the learned member for Nottingham, than whom a profounder scholar or abler man had never been sent to that House from the classic retirements of Cam or Isis, but he did not then see him in his place. [*The Attorney General, who happened at the moment to be seated on the Opposition benches, here intimated his presence.*] Oh! his learned friend, it appeared, was in the House, and he was happy, moreover, to find that he had found his way to the right side of the House, which change of place certainly was, an indication of his learned friend's liberality and good sense. [*The Attorney General again returned to the Treasury bench, and the hon. and learned Gentleman proceeded.*] He was sorry to perceive that his hon. and learned friend was so much addicted to the arbitrary exercise of locomotion, and could not help applying to him the passage of the poet:

> ———"Video meliora proboque,
> Deteriora sequor."

The hon. Gentleman had come thither, he believed, from the banks of the Cam, which was certainly a circumstance quite accordant with his character; for at the sister University of Oxford, they were habitually more sensitive to change than the Alma Mater which had had the honour of his scholastic education. When he was interrupted, he was about to observe, that there was an anti-Reform petition from Cambridge on its way to the House; and when it was said, that there was complete unanimity in favour of the Bill out of doors, he did not know why such a place as Cambridge should be overlooked. It appeared to him very strange, however, that this Cambridge petition had not been presented before the second reading of the Bill. Perhaps it was delayed on the way,—some accident happened to the Mail, or it might be delayed in the Dead Letter Office. It was to be expected, however, that it would find its way some day after the second reading, and that the distinguished ornament of the University whence it emanated—he meant the Attorney-general, who gravely, and he was a grave man, told them the feeling out of doors was unanimous in favour of the Ministerial Reform measure—would stand up in his place and maintain his assertion in the teeth of the petition of so erudite a body. And next with respect to the proposition immediately before the House. He entirely agreed with the hon. member for Dorsetshire, that the proposed increase of the number of the Irish and Scotch Representatives in that House would be an infraction of the Treaties of Union with those countries. By the Act of Union with Ireland—an Act that was not a mere Statute of Parliament, but was a federal Treaty between the two countries,—100 Members were made the numerical basis of the aliquot relative proportion of the Irish fractional quantity of Representation in that House; and by the federal Treaty with the people of Scotland, he meant the Union of Scotland, forty-five Members were to be the Scotch aliquot ratio of Representation; therefore to disturb these numerical proportions would be to violate the Irish and Scotch Treaties of Union. But the Bill would alter these proportions altogether; and he should like to hear from the hon. and learned advocates of that Bill, on what ground they knocked off sixty-two Members from, not, be it borne in mind, the aggregate Representation of the United Kingdom, but the direct Representation of the people of England. The inviolability of the numerical ratio and aggregate sum of the Representatives of the three countries, was laid down over and over by the advocates of the Catholic Question as an argument against those who contended that the admission of Catholics to civil power would be fraught with danger to existing institutions. Such was the line of argument urged by Mr. Pitt, by Mr. Fox, and by Mr. Wyndham; that the numeral aggregate being inviolable, the infusion of a few Catholic Members could not affect the Protestant excess of the entire body of Representatives in that House; that the few Catholics who might find their way into Parliament would be so many "*rari nantes*," undistinguishable in the "*gurgite vasto*," of Protestant Representatives. But this was a point of too much importance to be thus incidentally touched upon. He would bring it in the distinct form of a Resolution before the Committee, to the effect that the lopping off sixty-two English Protestant Members, while they were adding to the Irish and Scotch Representation, was fraught with danger to the interests of the Established Church in this country. But more of this anon. With reference to the mere principle of disfranchising sixty-two Members of the people of England, he could not help expressing his surprise that a Bill based on such a monstrous principle, should receive the support of the hon. member for Preston, who was in his own opinion, though not in fact, *par excellence*, the Representative of the *vox populi* in that House. That hon. Member seemed to think, that he performed his duty as an echo of the popular will by securing the stability of the popular franchise of his own popular borough; but such narrow and selfish compromising was unworthy of a Representative of the people of England. Then let them look at the numerous shirkings and alterations which had been introduced into the Irish revolutionary Bill. [*a laugh.*] He would repeat revolutionary, and would seek his epithets in the vocabulary of his own political dictionary. When the general measure was proposed by the noble military Deputy Paymaster, it was stated, that but three Members would be added to the number of Irish Representatives; but now they were told that the Dublin College should possess one additional Representative, and the town of Galway. The fact was, the Bill was a kind of stock in trade to the present ricketty and almost bankrupt Administration: it enabled them to job here and to job there, as it suited their immediate wants, and insured them supporters; and hence the present jobs with respect to the Dublin College and the borough of Galway. When Ministers were, through the measure of their military Deputy, disbanding one numerous set of boroughs altogether, and putting another numerous set on half-pay; there was no respect for, no mention even made of Charters; but now the exception was made, though on what grounds they had not condescended to mention, in favour of the Dublin University; and this, forsooth, was the great discovery they had made after twelve nights' Debate. It was the only time during the whole of the discussions that the supporters of Reform had mentioned Charters. It could hardly be known that any Charters were in existence, or that any Charters were about to be destroyed. But now, after twelve days' deliberation, there came this miserable postscript, in which the necessity of consulting Charters was insisted upon! He must repeat, that to add to the Irish and Scotch Representation, while they lessened the number of English Representatives, would be an infraction of the Articles of the Irish and Scotch Treaties of Union, apart from his other serious constitutional objections to the Bill.

Lord *Althorp* could not avoid making one or two observations in reference to what had fallen from the hon. and learned Gentleman. The hon. and learned Gentleman had characterised the present Bill, as he had that first brought before the House, as a "revolutionary" measure. He might persist in doing so, if it so pleased him, he might call it what names he thought most disparaging, but the people of England would not be affected by his abuse. Far from it; the people of England had hailed the measure with welcome, and would support it, let hon. Members in that House designate it as they might. The people of England, he repeated, approved of the Bill, and the abuse of the hon. and learned Member would be as dust in the balance. The hon. and learned Gentleman had made the most of the Cambridge University Petition against the Bill not having been presented before the second reading, as if the delay was an artifice of the Representatives of that body in favour of the Bill. He did well to make the most of this unique Anti-Reform Petition. [Sir *C. Wetherell* said, that two other petitions from important corporate bodies had been presented against the Bill.] Well, be that as it might, the fact that but very few petitions from the people of England against the Bill had been presented, while hundreds in favour of it had been and were still to be presented, remained unaffected. But the hon. and learned Gentleman's censure with respect to the Cambridge petition was unmerited; for the fact was, his noble friend, and the other hon. Representative of that University had not received it in time. Then with reference to the observations of the hon. and learned Gentleman, touching the disfranchisement of the close, or rotten boroughs, he begged to say, that he was in error if he supposed that Ministers would consent to any departure from the principle of that disfranchisement in Committee. They would not, and they knew that the public mind was with them. All the objections against this part of the Bill, which had been brought forward on the other side of the House since the commencement of the Debate, had been over and over again urged against the Catholic Relief Bill, and in fact were a part of the "stock in trade" of the enemies of every species of Reform whatever. They were proved to be idle with respect to the Catholic Relief Bill, and would be found still more so as they applied to the much more important measure of Reform. "But," says the hon. and learned Gentleman, "recollect that by the articles of the 'federal treaty' of Union with Scotland, forty-five was fixed upon as the basis of the proportion of Scotch Representatives to the aggregate of the two countries—the number in this country being laid down as 'fixed, unalterable, and definitive.'" But did the hon. and learned Gentleman recollect that this federal treaty was most essentially according to his interpretation of it, violated by the addition of 100 Irish Members to that House, swelling the "aggregate sum" of the "proportion" which the whole representation bore to the Scotch? And then, with respect to his objections as to the increase of five Members being made to the Irish Representation, was the hon. Gentleman so absurd as to suppose that his raising a "no popery" cry of that increase being fraught with danger to the interests of the Established Church in Ireland, would in these times, and in that House, prevail against the lessons of wisdom and experience? Let the hon. and learned Gentleman try how far his "no popery" cry against Reform would avail him in the present enlightened state of the public mind. He would find that the day for such idle clamours was gone by; and the attempt to raise it now would recoil upon its promulgators. Then the hon. and learned Gentleman argued that Ministers were destroying popular rights by disfranchising the close boroughs, in the same breath that he most inconsistently argued that they were turning the balance in favour of popular rights by the other provisions of the Bill. If these boroughs were truly popular, then to disfranchise them could not be, without the rankest contradiction of the literal and obvious meaning of words, tortured into a throwing the weight of popular representation into the balance. The fact was, that the Bill would extend the popular franchise in the best sense of the terms, and disfranchising the dispeopled boroughs would be a means to that object. The hon. and learned Gentleman asked Ministers, did they mean to persist in disfranchising the sixty close boroughs mentioned in the Bill? Their answer was, "We do." Nay more,—they would not abate a jot of the principle of that disfranchisement, but would stand or fall, as it succeeded, or the reverse. The hon. and learned Gentleman was in error with respect to the borough of Preston. There was no arrangement entered into with its Members, under which it would be made an exception to the general operations of the Bill. As with other places, a life-interest would be preserved with respect to the present mode of franchise; but on the expiration of the lives of the present electors, the Bill would be in force in Preston as elsewhere. It was true, that the hon. and learned Gentleman opposite (Sir E. Sugden) had pointed out some verbal defect in the Bill, under which, according to him, Preston might be an exception; but all those verbal defects would be guarded against when the Bill was in Committee. Then with respect to the additional Member that was to be conferred on the University of Dublin, and the alteration as to the nature and period of the tenure under which the electors there might vote, he begged it to be understood that the alteration was one founded on the principles and usages of the representation in the two great Universities in this country. It was deemed expedient that Oxford and Cambridge should possess their present elective system, as a means of protecting the interests of the Established Church in this country; and in conformity with that principle it was thought but fair, that the interests of the Established Church in Ireland should be equally represented in that House. On this ground, too, he must tell the hon. and learned member for Waterford, that the franchise ought to be confined to Protestant scholars.

Sir *Henry Hardinge* said, that although he had a very high respect for the noble Lord himself, he had none at all for the measure which he had introduced. He would repeat, and maintain, that the measure was of a revolutionary nature He would ask the noble Lord himself, if he could assert that a Bill, which completely changed the whole Constitution of England, was not, in fact, a new Constitution? He would ask, if a Bill, which, by violent means, upset and destroyed the charters of so many boroughs throughout England, and annihilated the rights and privileges of so many thousands of the population—whether a measure which effected such purposes as these, by a sudden and sweeping change, could be called other than revolutionary? The change which was made in 1688 was called, at the time, a revolution; but that was only a removal of the Stuart family from the Throne, while the whole representation of England, and all the ancient privileges, were asserted and maintained unimpaired; and the close boroughs which were so stigmatized and called rotten boroughs by the hon. Gentlemen opposite, were retained in the same manner in which they had existed before the change. The object of the change, in fact, was to preserve things in the state in which they had before been. The object of this revolution was to change every thing that is. This was a disfranchisement of a large portion of the population—a summary privation of their rights, without any proof of guilt, and the weak and feeble were selected as the victims in this unjust sacrifice. The noble Lord professed to found his Bill upon the principle of combining population and property in the qualifications for the elective franchise, but he directly contradicted his own principle by giving to Bedford, Tavistock, Calne, and Malton, which contained a population of 21,000 persons, more Members than were to be given to Bradford, Bolton-le-Moor, and Blackburn, which consisted of about 50,000 each. Nor would the delegates, for he would not call them Members, who would sit in the House of Commons, represent property. When this revolution was consummated, and the delegates came into the House, each would be trying to get for his constituents a larger representation, and could these demands be refused in 1833? After violating charters, and stripping away every existing right, it would be proved that an Act of Parliament in 1833 was as good as an Act in 1831, and therefore we should have further changes, and where those changes might stop, no man could foresee. It appeared to him, that there was abundant proof of the correctness of that argument to be found even in the discussions which had taken place in that House. Had not the hon. member for Waterford already claimed a greater share of representation for Ireland? The hon.

member for Kilkenny had done the same, and the demands of those hon. Gentlemen only furnished a specimen of what was to be expected from all parts of the empire if this ill-judged measure should ever be carried into effect. In 1832 some new measures might be proposed which would be considered as good as the measure of 1831. And was it not likely, that some parliamentary Lord would devise some new plan which would be more fashionable than the old one, and which from its fashion would acquire such a degree of popularity out of doors, that the Government of the day would be obliged in 1833, or 1834, to adopt the new plan without the means of resisting it? It was not only the Representation of the towns that was affected by this measure, but the noble Lord had erected a barrier between the lower classes and those which by this Bill were considered the middle classes. Every man who earned his bread by the sweat of his brow was to be disfranchised and thrown into a degraded class, unless he could realise a rent of 10*l.* a-year. Such men finding themselves thus unjustly dealt with, would excite distrust out of doors; and although the hon. member for Preston said, that his object was to take what he could get at present, in the hope of soon obtaining more, yet he felt confident, that when the lower classes found themselves degraded they would become dissatisfied; and when the noble Lord should find himself surrounded by delegates in a Reformed Parliament, he would be unable to resist the further changes which would be demanded. The hon. member for Waterford had said, in letters and in speeches, that this would be a stepping-stone to the Repeal of the Union. Did not this prove that the change was not expected to stop here? The hon. member for Middlesex also, had said, in writing to some of his friends in Scotland—"Do not touch upon the Ballot, or Universal Suffrage. On no account introduce any of these subjects into your petitions. Praise the Ministers—express confidence in them, and be satisfied with this measure for the present." This also proved that there were ulterior objects in view—that some parties expected more than this Bill conceded, and that, in short, it was but the forerunner of still greater changes. He said, that a measure which was the source of constant change must infallibly be a measure of revolution. The noble Lord stated his object to be, to create a firmer and purer Representation, and to augment the democratic power in that House. He would ask the noble Lord, had not the democratic power in the House very greatly increased within the last fifty years, and the influence of the King and the Aristocracy been proportionably diminished? The abolition of patronage showed that this was the case. In the reigns of George 1st and 2nd there were 250 Members of that House who held amongst them places to the number of 400, and many of them perfect sinecures. At the present time, when corruption was said to be so universal, and a Reform of Parliament was so loudly called for, out of the 658 Members there were only seventy-two Members receiving salaries, or holding offices under Government. That made out his case completely. The influence of the Crown had decreased, and the democratic influence in the House increased, during that period. Any larger infusion of democracy would, in his opinion endanger the existence of the monarchy, and instead of having a constitutional King, whose pride and pleasure it is, to wear a constitutional Crown, he would either have that Crown torn with violence from his head, or it would become to him a Crown of terror. If that position were disputed when laid down upon his authority, he was ready to support it by that of much greater names. He had no great favour for the terms Whig or Tory, and disclaimed all idea of speaking as one or the other, but in his conscientious opinion, great danger attended upon enlarging the democratic portion of that House, which was the main object of the noble Lord's plan. He would instance what he conceived would be a part of its effect with regard to Durham, a city which he had long the honour of representing. The constituency was composed of noblemen, and some of the richest gentlemen in the neighbourhood, among them Lord Durham; of shopkeepers, and of the working classes —in all about 1000. Of these, some 600 or 700 were of the lower class; and he could assure the hon. Member opposite, that it was no small satisfaction to that number of poor persons, when they came into the Court-house to give their vote, to find that it was as good as the vote of their richest neighbours. Would not these people be reasonably dissatisfied when deprived of their votes? He affirmed that his Majesty's Government were the innovators, and were striving to carry dangerous measures, and those who opposed them were the conservators. His Majesty's Ministers were the agitators in this question. They agitated the country on the subject of Reform, and between them in England, and the hon. member for Waterford in Ireland, there was no great difference, except in the very objectionable manner in which, that hon. Member might allow him to say, he had always thought the hon. and learned Member proceeded in Ireland. If the measure were calculated to produce mischievous effects in this country, infinitely more mischief would it effect in Ireland, and he apprehended that the legislative connexion of the two countries would be placed in imminent danger, if the measure were applied in the mode which the right hon. Secretary for Ireland had stated. If Gentlemen would look at the condition of Ireland, they would see that five-sixths of the property of the country was Protestant, and an equal proportion of the population—five-sixths of the population—Catholics. How, he would ask, was it possible to combine population and property, when there was so great a disproportion of them? He said, it would be impossible for any Protestant gentleman to be returned, unless two-thirds of the Catholic population chose to return him. Look at the effect of the measure upon the city of Dublin. It had been stated, that the electors of Dublin were 3,000. He understood that they were double that number—that they exceeded 6,000. By this Bill they would become 18,000, instead of 6,000, and of those 18,000, 14,000 would be Roman Catholics. He could appeal even to the hon. and learned member for Waterford, and ask who would be returned in that case? He was afraid, not his hon. and learned friend, the present member for Dublin. The Representation of Ireland was settled at the time of the Union. It was then arranged what proportion the counties and boroughs of Ireland were to hold in the Imperial Parliament. But, for the very purpose of giving protection to the Protestant property of Ireland, twenty-four close boroughs were expressly reserved as stated in the Debates of the day. If the proposed change were made, could his hon. friend, the member for Drogheda, hope to resume his seat? It was certain that no man could do so unless he became an agitator, and pledged himself hand and foot to pursue a particular course, otherwise he was sure to be excluded from Parliament. His Majesty's Government said, that they had no wish to carry on their duties by patronage. He would venture to say, that they would not, even if they were so disposed; for there was very little patronage left them. The late Government—his noble friend, the Duke of Wellington, and his right hon. friend behind him (Sir R. Peel) had, with the assistance of those who were associated with them in the various departments, strangled patronage whenever they could get it within their grasp, and had abolished 4,050 places, amounting to no less a sum than 600,000*l.* He was therefore borne out in stating, that there was but little patronage left to the noble Lord opposite when he entered upon the office of Chancellor of the Exchequer. If patronage could keep a Government in office, he would ask why had Lord Goderich's Government ceased to exist before it had passed through one Session, and why had not the Duke of Wellington's Government continued up to this day? He could safely ask the noble Lord opposite, whether, since he had come into office, even if he had been what he was not—corrupt, whether he could have carried on his duties by such means? and he was sure the noble Lord would candidly admit that he could not. It was, therefore, a vulgar error and a calumny, to assert that the late Government had been carried on by patronage. He had heard a rumour, which he repeated only as a rumour, that it was the wish of his Majesty's present Ministers to annihilate the Tory party in that House by the disfranchisement of so many voters in the boroughs, and to create a new form of Representation, so constituted as to enable them to retain office. He did not entertain any belief which would impute to those Gentlemen unworthy personal motives in the measures which they proposed. He should be the last man in the world to insinuate any thing of the kind; but he must say, that this measure was, most of all others, calculated to create such a suspicion. He could assure the noble Lord, that although those with whom he associated might not present to him the same view which was placed before him, (Sir H. Hardinge), he could assure the noble Lord, into whatever society he went that there was not a person of property who did not regard these measures with apprehension and alarm. If he might with propriety allude to what had passed in another place, he could refer to a declaration, made within the last twenty-four hours of the highest authority there, and who, when in that House, had reflected honour upon it by his talents, that "he was extremely sorry the plan had gone so far. He was sorry it was not less, although he thought, if it had been, the country would not have been satisfied with it; yet, so far as his own feeling went, he was sorry it was not less." This he learned through those faithful means of communication which they had every morning upon their breakfast tables, and by which they ascertained what occurred in the other place to which he alluded. This declaration, coming from such an authority, he considered highly important. He thought this measure would be productive of fatal consequences in Ireland, and of very injurious ones here; and he should have felt that he failed in his duty if he had not stated his sentiments on the occasion. So long as he should have a voice in that House, he would not surrender his reason, his honour, or his conscience, to any fear of public or popular sentiment. Where the Constitution was concerned, he would, in every stage, without, he hoped, incurring a character of factious resistance, give the measure his strenuous opposition in a legitimate and proper manner; and he considered it the duty of every man who wished well to his country, to give such legitimate and proper opposition to this unfortunate, this fatal Bill.

The *Lord Advocate* said, that from the course which this discussion had taken, one would be disposed to imagine that it was the tenth night of the Debate on the other Bill, instead of the first introduction of the Bill relating to Ireland. About that country and its Representation he knew very little, but he would reply to the arguments of the hon. Members. Hon. Gentlemen opposite had again indulged in, not the first, or the twentieth, but the hundredth time repeated charge against the proposed measure, as being revolutionary. Revolution, in the sense which was ordinarily and properly affixed to it, implied some change of the dynasty from one hand to another, or some essential alteration of the fixed principles upon which the Constitution was founded; but he maintained that nothing of that character could be imputed to this measure. If certain changes were proposed, while other parts of the system were to remain untouched, it was their duty to consider how far that which was altered, or that which remained unchanged, formed the substantial principle of the Constitution. A right hon. Baronet (Sir R. Peel) had, in an eloquent, persuasive, and he might say, seductive speech, pointed out to the view of the House the beautiful, and almost theoretically impossible arrangement, by which the democracy, the aristocracy, and monarchy, were blended together in one harmonious machine, so as to combine the advantages of all those different institutions, and save the hazard which would arise from the undue predominance of any. The right hon. Baronet, when expatiating in impassioned language on all the advantages of this Constitution, had quoted those illustrious writers with which every Student was more or less familiar; and remarked, that although the genius of the great philosopher had conceived such a form of Government, he considered it impossible in practice; and that the sarcastic and sententious Tacitus had in bitterness spoken of a Constitution thus prized as the perfection of Constitutions, though he doubted its practicability; and presuming even of that, despaired of its existence for any long period of time. The Constitution was formed of King, Lords, and Commons. Let them now see how it was affected by the measure. The prerogatives of the Crown, and the privileges of the Aristocracy, were left untouched, and it was admitted the Bill rendered the Representation of the people more true. The King and his power then were not directly to be touched. The privileges of the Lords were not altered or affected by the measure. Would it then be said, that the correcting the faults of the popular Representation was a revolution? They had then to see whether the alteration in the mode of returning Members to Parliament could be said, not justly, but even plausibly, to be a revolution or alteration of the Constitution. Two separate charges had been blended, rather skilfully, to distract the public opinion, and to throw on the measure obscurity, not light. He wished to know if the revolutionary vice consisted in the disfranchisement of the boroughs, or in the alteration of the constituency and qualification. They could not properly be taken together. Take the disfranchisement first, and suppose no alteration had been made respecting the boroughs, and that sixty or seventy of them, with 500 inhabitants each, continued to send Representatives to Parliament, while the great towns in the neighbourhood of those boroughs, averaging a population of 50,000 each, remained unrepresented. Now, he asked, would the learned Gentleman opposite say, that there would be any revolution or change in the Constitution by the transference of the right of return from these boroughs to the great towns? They would have the same number of Members in that House, and the same qualification for the electors—the only difference being, that the electors would exist in greater number, and that the Members would have a greater variety of interests, and interests on a large scale, to represent which imperatively demanded their care. In this hypothetical case, would any man think the Constitution was endangered, or a revolution commenced, of which no human eye could see the end, by the transference of the right of electing Representatives from decayed boroughs to thriving towns? He would now come to the next point. Was it the proposed change in the qualification of electors that constituted the revolutionary vice? This change, it was contended, would open the way to an inroad of more democracy in the Constitution, by making the election of Members more depend upon the lower classes of the State. And here mark the inconsistency of the hon. Members who argued thus, when they, at the same time, so piteously bewailed the disfranchisement of a small portion of the very lowest class. They complained of the cutting off of this small portion of the lowest class—yet they, at the same moment, declared the measure would open the way to a too great infusion of democracy. They admit that the persons to be disfranchised are of a lower class than any who gain electoral power by the Bill, yet they will not allow that we became safer as we approached the level. Now, the county Members, it was always understood, held a higher place in the general estimation than the Members for boroughs, although the qualification by which electors were entitled to vote for the county amounted only to 40*s*., and although rustic persons were neither more respectable nor intelligent than the inhabitants of towns. Besides, the 40*s*. qualification in the towns conferred upon the holders the right of voting in the best and most honourable part of the constituency; and therefore it was evident that the fixing a qualification of 10*l*. instead of 40*s*., could not, in the counties, increase the democratic influence; for no one would dream of saying that the intermixture of 10*l*. freeholders would debase or pauperize a 40*s*. constituency. On the contrary, it was plain they were giving greater respectability to the constituency in the counties, and by no means increasing democratic influence. Therefore, it could only be in the boroughs the mischief was effected. But he really could not see how democratic influence could be extended in the larger boroughs by adding richer persons to those who already had—say a 40*s*. qualification. In fact, the only mode was in the small Corporations; and could it possibly be said, that the Constitution was endangered by taking away the right of nomination from close Corporations? The great effect of the Bill would be, that wealthy and respectable men would be let into the right of voting, instead of Corporations, that were neither rich nor noble. As to what had been urged respecting the nominees of the close boroughs, he observed, that he would not advance the opinion that they had been always spies in a hostile camp—really the Representatives of the Aristocracy and Crown—but condescending to sit there under the humble garb of Representatives of the people, and ever voting for the maintenance of aristocratic privileges, and not for the advantage of the nation. The right hon. Baronet had made a list of some twenty or thirty great names in a period of forty years; but he regarded the proportion as by no means great, considering the number of unhonoured names that had been in the same space of time placed upon the list of the House of Commons as Representatives of these boroughs. The truth was, these nominees did not form a *corps d'élite*—they were not Knights Templars in disguise—they were not the champions in that House of the Crown and the Aristocracy—they did not come in as the alloy to democratic influence—they did not stand forth to stay the tide of democracy, for the close boroughs had sent in the greatest agitators. The aristocracy did not, like the ancient noblesse of France, enjoy privileges galling and oppressive, and offensive to the people—privileges which degraded and threw the great body of the nation into a vexatious inferiority. The prerogative of the Crown was not of a nature to press heavy on the people, and therefore the Crown and the Aristocracy needed not the support of the nominees of close boroughs, nor were they defended by them. No, they did not represent either the order of the nobles or the disposition of the King in that House, but they represented the passions and prejudices, and the adverse and corrupt motives of a certain number of individuals. Who were the Peers ?—They were gentlemen who were dignified with hereditary titles,—they exercised a separate legislative power—and it was their duty, according to the scheme of the Constitution, to defend alike the Crown from the encroachment of the democracy, and the people from an oppressive exercise of the influence of the Crown. The Members for these boroughs were neither required to fulfil this duty, nor did they, in fact, undertake any such task. They were not placed there to defend the prerogatives of the Crown, but were, in fact, persons who were intended to maintain the power of the Ministers. These boroughs did not represent any particular order, or any one of the three estates, and they ought not—they represented individual interest, and influence, and caprice, and they obstructed the entrance into that House of the real Representatives of the people. The nature and object of these popular Representatives were much mistaken. They were not sent there in the spirit of a wild democracy, to overturn or weaken, the rights of the Crown and the Aristocracy, but with their knowledge and spirit to represent in that House the knowledge and spirit of their constituents, who were taught that they formed part of a monarchy adorned with an ancient peerage, and sustained and directed by the magnificence of a simple executive. The duty of the House of Commons was to resist, on the one hand, the advances of an oligarchy, and on the other the progress of an executive towards despotism; but they would fail in the discharge of at least the first of these duties, if their Members were nominated by one of the bodies upon which it was their object to act as a check, or if the majority of their number was under the influence of the House of Peers. That House did not interfere with the rights and privileges of the Peers, by sending their nominees into the other House of Parliament to modify their unmitigated Aristocracy; and equally were the Members of the Commons House of Parliament entitled to be free from the influence of that aristocratical body. It was thus that he had been taught to understand the principles of the British Constitution, and those principles appeared to him likely to be best secured by the measure which was now under the consideration of Parliament. He should now take the opportunity of making one remark on the supposed independence of those Members who sat in that House for close boroughs. He should say nothing of the obvious objection to the perfect freedom from control of those persons who called themselves the Representatives of the people, nor of the necessity and justice of the people possessing some degree of influence over the conduct of the men they chose as their Representatives; but he should take that opportunity of declaring, that these borough Members, with but a few exceptions, were, as the practice of that House demonstrated, infinitely more under trammels than were the Representatives of the most populous places in the empire. He had great reliance on the mass of the people, and for that reason he did not fear, as some hon. Members did, a measure that would in some degree give power and influence to the mass of the people. He repeated, that he had great reliance on them; and he would tell the House, that if they did not rely on the body of the people they would find themselves miserably deceived and mistaken; and that if it was true, that there was a taint on the character of the people, that taint must be removed by instruction, and could not be got rid of by those precautions, even the mechanism of which had not been explained to them, and which, in any time of danger and necessity, would be found but a cobweb barrier to the progress of those they were intended to oppose.

Sir *Robert Peel*;—Whatever merit the speech of the learned Lord may have, and its merit I do not contest,—it is not, I fear, much entitled to the praise of being well calculated to recall the attention of the House to the immediate subject of this night's Debate,—namely, the Bill for Irish Reform. Says the learned Lord, and apparently with great truth—"About Ireland and its Representation, I know positively nothing." As to the fitness or unfitness of any one clause of the Irish Bill, the learned Lord seemed to think himself wholly incapacitated to form a judgment but I will take, thinks he, this unsuitable occasion of delivering an ingenious and powerful argument on that which is by far the most important matter in discussion—the ultimate and permanent tendencies of the general measure of Reform. Sir, I quarrel not with the noble Lord for having done this; I am not so zealous a partisan that I cannot listen with satisfaction to the exercise of powerful talent, and the display of astute reasoning, even when they are arrayed against the cause which I espouse; and I listen to them, on this occasion, with the greater satisfaction, when I recollect the avenue through which the learned Lord effected his entrance into Parliament, and when I can appeal to them as an argument against the intended close of every such avenue for the future. Though wholly unprepared to expect the speech of the learned Lord,—having concluded that nine days' Debate had completed the discussion, for the present, on the general question of Reform—I still feel that it would not be right to permit the learned Lord's speech to pass without a reply The learned Lord has disregarded the vulgar appeals to the feelings and passions of the House; has wisely disclaimed the resort to those means by which the cheers of the unreasoning and unreflecting can at any time be easily purchased; and has attempted to establish, by a chain of temperate consecutive reasoning, that our alarms as to the tendencies of the measure of Reform are visionary,—that, so far from being a revolutionary, it is a constitutional and conservative measure, and, above all—and I must say, to my infinite surprise—to shew that it has that which, in the eyes of the learned Lord, is its pre-eminent merit—a tendency to diminish the democratic, and confirm and increase the aristocratic influence in this House. I will attempt to imitate the example of the learned Lord, and follow him step by step in his argument. The learned Lord began his speech by a vehement protest against the application of the word "revolutionary" to the measure of Reform. I, for one, never have used the word revolutionary in the sense and in the mode against which the learned Lord protests—that is, I have not attempted, by giving a nickname to the Bill of Reform, to excite an irrational prejudice against it; but if by revolutionary was meant, by those who did use the term, a tendency to make an immense change in the form and practical working of the Constitution—a tendency to derange the well-adjusted balance of opposite and conflicting powers—to introduce elements into the Government of this country, untried in practice, of power almost unlimited and in their probable effects, replete with danger,—if that be the sense in which, as I believe it was, the term revolutionary was used by those who applied it, then I am prepared to vindicate its application, and to repeat the phrase as one perfectly correct and apposite. The noble Lord equally objects, also, to the course of argument which has been pursued by the opponents of this measure. He says, that we confound two things which ought to be kept perfectly distinct; that the measure, if it be revolutionary, must be so, either on account of the disfranchisement of the boroughs, or on account of the change that will hereafter take place in the Constitution of this House; and that we are bound in argument to assign to each of these separate causes of danger its own proper effects, and that if we cannot prove the effects, separately, to be considered revolutionary, we have no right to combine those effects, and argue, from the cumulative danger, against the measure as a whole. Certainly, Sir, nothing could be more convenient to the learned Lord than to confine within such limits the reasoning of his opponents, but what pretext can there be for prescribing such limits? What could be more rational or more just than, supposing that any given measure should recognize principles that shake the foundations of property, and the security of chartered rights, and should, at the same time, introduce perilous changes in the working of the Constitution—what could be more rational than to argue, "Your measure is unjust in its principle; and is dangerous in its tendency, and it is from the combined considerations of injustice and danger of unconstitutional precedent, and imminent positive evil, that I am compelled to reject it, and reject it by the peculiarly fitting name of a revolutionary measure?" If then, Sir, I am entitled, in estimating the merits of this measure, to consider its general scope and character, let us see what is the amount of the practical change which is made by one stroke in the Representative system of the United Kingdom? It is proposed to destroy the proportions which are at present established between the several parts of the United Kingdom. There is to be an addition to the representative body of Ireland; an addition to that of Scotland; a small addition to that of Wales: all these additions made on no defined principle, and at the same time that they are made, no less than sixty-two Members are to be withdrawn from the representation of England. The constituent body in every place, county, city, and borough, is to be materially changed—the limits of almost every city and borough in England must inevitably be changed—the limits of all without exception are liable to be changed—to be changed, not by law, but by the arbitrary discretion of the Privy Council. By this Bill there are not more than fifty cities and towns in England which can, by possibility, retain their former limits, so far as their borough or electoral jurisdiction is concerned; and those fifty are liable to have their limits changed, if it shall so please a Committee of the Privy Council. But above all, by this Bill the right of returning Members for towns and cities in every part of the United Kingdom is hereafter to be intrusted to one predominant class of the people—that class, subject to the same influences, whether for good or evil, swayed by the same sympathies, agitated by the same passions, combined by the same interests. Is that an unfair description of the scheme of Reform? Now if you had done that which you have totally omitted to do,—proved that *à priori* at least, it was a beautiful scheme,—if you had given, which you have not given, convincing reasons for altering the relative proportions of the Representation of the United Kingdom—if you had established any sufficient ground for the extensive disfranchisement you propose, and had demonstrated the policy of the new qualifications you are about to establish—if you had done all these things—not one of which you have attempted—still I should distrust your predictions as to the future practical working of your beautiful speculative scheme—I should distrust them, from the experience of repeated failures in cases wherein, *à priori,* there had been just as good reason to expect success. Does the learned Lord think there is no hazard in extensive change, apart from any consideration of the nature and character of that change? Does the learned Lord think, that it is wise in any country, above all in a country like this—of institutions so ancient—of interests so complicated—of relations of society so artificial—to abandon the magic influence of prescription—to resign the unpurchasable benefit of those associations which connect the present with the ages that are past, of those feelings and affections of the heart, that in every clime, and under every form of government, are the unseen prompters of loyalty—the true motives of cheerful obedience? You may frown upon them as irrational prejudices. They are no such thing—they are the impulse of a wise and provident nature—the checks upon the restless appetite for change—the unerring instincts that were purposely planted in the heart "to correct and fortify the feeble contrivances of reason." Such are the aids of good government which the learned Lord's scheme has rejected. And yet he tells us, after abandoning the main, the only guarantee against perpetual innovation, that the chief merit of the scheme is—that it is a final settlement. A final settlement!—it cannot be final. If the principles upon which it rests be good,—if the arguments which are its sole vindication be conclusive,—they are conclusive against its being a settlement of the question of Reform. What avails it that reformers are agreed upon the acceptance of it? What consolation is it to me that the member for Middlesex (Mr. Hume) has sent forth his circulars, enjoining unanimity for the present? "Waive," says he (I quote one of his letters,) "all discussion about the Ballot,—be silent about Annual Parliaments,—above all, praise the Ministers, and take the present good they offer you." Why, Sir, he might just as well have added,—what he has thought it politic to conceal, but which he meant to imply. "Seize the instrument which this Bill puts into your hand,—occupy the commanding position which will enable you to extort all that you can wish." What avails it that the Ballot is now kept in the back-ground? If the advocate for the Ballot could say with truth, that this Bill was a compensation for the loss of the Ballot,—that it was an equivalent, which he could accept in the lieu of the Ballot,—there might be some pretence for his supposed compromise; but if this Bill only fortifies his arguments in favour of the Ballot,—if it establishes a new class of voters, peculiarly liable to that aristocratic influence, which the learned Lord says will be so copiously and so successfully exerted

—what pretext has the advocate for the Ballot to postpone, beyond the passing of this Bill, the assertion of his own views? When the learned Lord says this settlement will be a final one, he is so far right that probably, for a short time, there may be a general wish, at least on the part of the reformers, to acquiesce in its provisions. The expectation of great benefits—gratitude for new privileges—the pleasure of novelty, may secure a short trial for the new Constitution. But these impressions will gradually grow weaker. The classes that are left unrepresented will begin to stir—they will read the preamble of the Bill—and with some justice, inquire why they should be excluded from its benefits? Every one naturally seeks for an illustration of his argument, from some place of which he has a local knowledge; and I shall be obliged to the learned Lord if he will now favour me with the answer to the claim which I am about to prefer on behalf of the place of my nativity. I have no interest in preferring it—no property in the place,—no peculiar motive for wishing its prosperity, except one, which the learned Lord, I suppose, will reject as a mere prejudice—that it was the place of my birth, and remains endeared to me by the first and most durable impressions that are made on the mind. Now I ask the learned Lord, what will be his answer to the parish of Bury, in the county of Lancaster, supposing that two years hence it puts forward its claim to the Representation? It will—at least it may—allege, that it had, in 1821, a population of 34,500 inhabitants,—that it included large manufacturing establishments. It may remind you that you confiscated the franchise of thirty boroughs—curtailed that of forty-seven—that you contended you had a perfect right to do this, in order to transfer the privilege to more important and more populous places. Then will Bury put this perplexing question—"Why exclude me from the privilege of sending a single Member to Parliament, and continue to the town of Malton the privilege of sending two?" What is your answer? Surely, not prescription,—surely, not chartered rights. Oh, no! You have no better answer than this:—"That the same population return which assigned to Bury 34,500 inhabitants, assigned to Malton 4,005; and the privilege of Malton rested on this sure and stable foundation, that, ten years since, it had actually five inhabitants more than the number of 4,000." How satisfactory to Bury! In 1821, three prolific ladies of Malton protected their native place from spoliation, by clubbing among them the number of five children. Charter is nothing,—prescription is nothing,—but two pair of twins, born ten years ago, are the guardians of the privileges of Malton; and the bar to the claims of Bury. I suppose, however, that Bury should cheerfully acquiesce in the superior claims of Malton. What will it say to Gateshead? Gateshead is an upstart like itself, with nothing but population to plead; and when the parish of Bury shall have proved to you, that whilst its population was 34,500, the population of Gateshead was less than 12,000, what is the answer which you will make to the claim of Bury to be admitted to a privilege which has been conferred on Gateshead? So much for the prospects of the final settlement of the learned Lord. I approach another branch of the argument of the learned Lord. He says, that the balance of the Constitution has been destroyed—that the popular rights have been invaded—that the ancient theory of the Constitution is in favour of a popular assembly controlling the prerogative of the Crown, and balancing the power of the House of Peers. When the learned Lord reverts to ancient theories of the Constitution, will he revert to them all? And if he does not, is he not deranging, instead of adjusting, a balance between opposing powers? If the learned Lord could find, in his history of the Constitution, any precedent or preamble on which it could be right to give to the people a controlling power, such as he would give to them; and if the learned Lord thinks it advisable now to reinstate the people in the possession of that power; surely it would be right, at the same time, to restore to the Crown those countervailing prerogatives, which it would be necessary, by the learned Lord's theory of the Constitution—that the Crown should not only nominally possess—but be enabled practically to exercise. Can the learned Lord do this? Can he remount to the ages of comparative barbarism, and restore to the Crown, for any practical purpose, its slumbering prerogatives? Can he draw from the ancient armories of the Constitution the rusty weapon of the *veto*, with which the Crown once could check popular encroachments? Why, Sir, if he cannot do this for the Crown, let him beware how he resorts to ancient theories of the Constitution, which can only be partial in their application. The learned Lord, however, asks these questions;—"What can be the danger of intrusting power to that industrious, intelligent, enlightened class of society, to whom the present Bills give the right of voting? Are they incompetent judges of their own interests? Are they disloyal? On the contrary, are not the people of this country distinguished for loyalty, and for almost an undue deference to rank and station?" I answer the noble Lord thus:—When you have once established the overpowering influence of the people over this House—when you have made this House the express organ of the public voice;—what other authority in the State can,—nay, more, what other authority in the State ought—to control its will, or reject its decisions? The people are the judges of their own interests—the people are enlightened and well-affected to the Throne, the House of Commons is the organ of the people—who will presume to check its patriotic course? Let not this question be decided by mere abstract reasoning—by calculations of opposite probabilities:—look at the history of your own country—at the history of all other countries,—and inquire, whether it is not the tendency of every popular assembly to assume power to itself, and to encroach on the authority of other co-existing institutions? The assumption of such power is no necessary evidence of evil intentions; it may commence with patriotic views—it may be compatible with good government;—but the question for us is this,—is it compatible with the good government of this country, and with the maintenance of a limited monarchy? Look at the early history of the National Assembly of France.—I say the early history—for I purposely avoid the reference to the later stages of the French Revolution, because I want not to scare you with the visions of rapine and of blood.—Of whom was the National Assembly composed? Of men of great acquirements—of high moral character—of men who professed the most devoted loyalty to the Crown, and who assured Louis 16th that the only danger he incurred was from the exuberant affection of the people of France. Mark the gradual, but rapid progress, by which all power was absorbed;—and mark the difficulty—the real difficulty, of maintaining in argument—that the National Assembly, deriving its powers immediately from the people, was not competent to exercise, and ought not to exercise, the sovereign power of the State. A question arose, not long after the formation of the assembly, "In what authority ought the prerogative of declaring war and making peace to reside?" Mirabeau, at that time among the warm advocates for popular privilege, contended, notwithstanding, that that special prerogative should continue in the Crown. He was overwhelmed by the reply of Barnave, who asked, naturally and justly, why, if the people understood their interests—why, if the National Assembly was faithful to their constituents, and was the mirror of the popular will—why should they devolve on a single individual (possibly on a child, possibly on a man of weak understanding) the exercise of a prerogative which involved the interests, and might hazard the existence of France? So difficult was it for Mirabeau to resist the popular torrent, that, in his reply to Barnave, he bitterly complained that he had been denounced in the streets of Paris as a traitor to the cause of the people, for maintaining what he thought an essential prerogative of the Crown. I cannot but think that even the discussions in which we are at this moment engaged, afford an example of the probable power which any authority will hereafter possess to control the voice of a House of Commons, much more popular in its origin than the present. Who asks now what course the House of Lords will take with respect to this Bill, should it pass the House of Commons? It seems taken for granted, that it must pass the House of Lords—that it would be vain to oppose a measure that extends popular privileges, and is said to be in conformity with the wishes of the majority of the people. The same impression will exist in a still stronger degree, hereafter, with respect to all popular measures which a reformed House of Commons may offer for the acceptance of the House of Lords. The tendency on the part of this House will be, to gratify their constituents by popular measures, and to increase their own power; and the countervailing influence of any of the authorities in the State will become gradually weaker, and, ultimately, owe its bare existence to its practical disuse. It may be said, that no such consequences follow in the United States of America, and that the Senate of that country can resist, with effect, measures proposed by the popular assembly, of which it disapproves. But let it be remembered, that the Senate of that country is no hereditary aristocracy—that it derives its authority from the same source which confers all authority in that country—the choice of the people; and that the conflict, therefore, between the two branches of the Legislature in the United States is the conflict of one portion of the people with another. "But," says the learned Lord, "the House of Commons will be less democratical in its new form than it now is." "It is a mistake," argues the learned Lord, "to suppose, that because the close boroughs are destroyed, therefore the influence of the aristocracy has ceased. Friendly ties will still continue to exist between the landlord and the tenant, and can it be doubted that the latter will adopt the opinions, and act upon the wishes of the former?" But, Sir, if this be the case, whither has fled all the indignation that has been directed against such influence; and what becomes of the Standing Order, which we have had so often quoted, declaring any interference of Peers in elections unconstitutional? I am afraid that this is one of those cases referred to by the member for Milborne Port, in which "the sarcasm destroys the syllogism, and the argument is lost in the vituperation." It is said, that there is a strange inconsistency among the opponents of the measure,—that some admit that the aristocratical influence may be maintained, and that others assert that it will inevitably be destroyed. It may seem very absurd, but I see no inconsistency in the same person holding nearly a similar doctrine. I cannot deny that, in times of political quiet, the just influence of the landlord will tell upon the tenant—that the influence of gratitude, of interest, of deference to authority, will be felt; but what I fear is, that when the storm rises—when the passions of the people are excited—when the Press is exercising its mighty power, all in one direction, and on that class which has just education enough to be peculiarly liable to its influence—then I fear the same consequences will follow, that have followed in Ireland; excitement and agitation will overbear the weight of gratitude and interest, and all the ordinary motives of action—then, I fear, the remaining barriers you will have left against popular encroachment, will be swept away by some sudden and irresistible influx of the tide. The learned Lord says that, on a former night, I argued unjustly in favour of the maintenance of the small boroughs, by making an unfair selection of the eminent men whom they had returned to Parliament. He says, if I gave the names of the eminent men, I ought also to have given those of the useless and undistinguished Members, and that the number of the latter would have greatly predominated. Of course it would; but this was not the principle of my selection. I took the names of all those persons (without the least reference, in the first instance, to the place by which they were returned) who had been the most eminent in the annals of Parliament. One omission I made, and I rejoice in the opportunity of repairing it—I omitted the name of Mr. Ricardo—a name for which I have true respect. I took twenty men, the most celebrated of the times in which they lived, and I inquired by what means they came into Parliament? Surely, if I found that sixteen or seventeen were returned for the small boroughs, and not more than three or four for the populous districts, it was fair to argue that the total extinction of the small boroughs would probably exclude great talents that would otherwise gain admission to the House. But, said the hon. Gentleman, the member for Milborne Port, many of the eminent men, returned for small boroughs, were advocates for Parliamentary Reform, and were among the most enlightened friends of popular rights. So much the better for my argument. If the Members for the decayed boroughs had been infected by a narrow corporation spirit—if they had, indeed, been *curvæ in terris animæ, ac cœlestium inanes*—then you would have justly demanded the abolition of the system which sent them here; but if you have found among them men of expansive minds, who justly claimed for themselves the privilege of representing, not the decayed borough that sent them here, but the universal people—then, I contend, they reflect a lustre on the humble origin from which they derived the opportunity of personal distinction and the means of public service. Sir, I have referred to the member for Milborne Port (Mr. Sheil);—I heard his speech with great satisfaction. I was consoled by the reflection, that I had contributed, by that measure which cost me so much uneasiness, to wean great talents, great powers of eloquence, from popular agitation, and to find for them a fitter and worthier occasion for their display. I thought, too, I saw an argument in favour of that system which the hon. Gentleman was condemning—when I recollected, that although the popular constituency of an Irish county had rejected the hon. Gentleman—the avenue of a decayed borough had been opened to him—and that Milborne Port had bestowed the distinction which the county of Louth had refused. I asked myself, by what means—when we have made, by this Bill, the mere local interests predominate in every town and district in England,—when we shall have established not one, but 200 Bassetlaws,—by what means will the hon. Gentleman effect his future return to Parliament? Must he, hereafter, have to stoop to agitation, to conciliate the favour of an Irish constituency? or, disdaining to do it, must he retire discomfited, before either the purse of a richer, or the exciting violence of a less scrupulous rival? One word more to the hon. Gentleman. When he stood on that floor, discussing the interests of the mightiest empire of the world, when he was heard with mute attention, or cheered by the animating voice of this assembly,—did he feel it no advantage—no distinction to Ireland,—that an Imperial Parliament was open to her distinguished sons? Never, never, if I were he, would I consent to relinquish that privilege for my country,—never would I consent to banish such talents and acquirements as his from the councils of a great empire; and send them back to the narrow arena of a local Parliament in Dame-street—to the discussion of Dublin Police and Dublin Paving Boards—and all the comparatively petty subjects of mere Irish legislation. Sir, I have been seduced far away from the subject under immediate consideration—the details of the Bill for Irish Reform. I was greatly disappointed by the speech of the right hon. Gentleman who introduced it. I expected a statesmanlike exposition of its principles,—an enlarged view of its probable bearings on all the great interests of property, of establishments, of religion, which it so deeply involves. I have heard nothing but a dry explanation of the clauses of the Bill, which I could just as well have collected from the reading of the marginal notes. I consider it a great mistake, that you propose to disturb the relative proportions of the constituency of the United Kingdom. As if Reform was not a subject difficult enough for the grasp of the Government, they embarrass it with extrinsic difficulties, which every prudent man would be most cautious to avoid, and which it was totally unnecessary to incur. What have you gained by giving five additional Members to Ireland—while you deprived England of sixty-two? Why, that an Irish Member is the first to complain, and tell you, that, if you are to disturb the proportions, you ought to disturb them on some principle. The singular grievance is, not that Ireland gains five additional members, but that she does not gain ten. The hon. member for Kilkenny has another ground of complaint: he says—and really I know not who is to answer him—"While you are about it, why not Reform effectually, and on some intelligible principle? You disregarded charters, you laugh at established usage—then why, as you are unfettered by all such considerations, not give Representation according to the wants of the country?" The hon. Gentleman then observed,—that if you draw a line from Londonderry to Cape Clear, on the east side of that line there is Representation in abundance, on the west side a lamentable want of it—twenty or twenty-five places on the east side; five only on the west. Says the hon. Gentleman, "What is the consequence? Such are the blessings of Representation, that the eastern parts of Ireland are flourishing in prosperity, while the western coast is languishing in decay." What then!—have the small boroughs in Ireland so effectually answered the object of their institution—are their Members such watchful guardians of Irish interests, that the prosperity of Irish provinces varies directly with the amount of Irish Representation? If this be so, it may be a good argument for adding to the number of boroughs in the west of Ireland, but it does not seem a very cogent argument for destroying the system with which the prosperity of the east has been interwoven. The Solicitor General for Ireland has greatly surprised me by attempting to shew, without the shadow of foundation, that the Act of Union with Ireland expressly contemplated a probable future variance in the proportions of the Representation assigned by that Act to the two portions of the United Kingdom. The fourth Article of the Act of Union expressly declares, that 100 Members shall sit and vote in the Imperial Parliament as the Members for Ireland. I appeal, not to lawyers, but to men of common sense, whether the plain meaning and intention of this be not, that so long as 558 Members sit for the rest of the United Kingdom, 100 Members shall sit for Ireland. I do not question the competency of Parliament to vary the proportions; if ten additional Members would really benefit Ireland—would promote her peace and ensure her prosperity, for God's sake let her have them; but this I do deny, that the Act of Union has made any provision for the increase of the Irish Representation, or contains a syllable from which the expectation of such increase, to the disturbance of the proportion fixed at the time of the Union, could be inferred. The member for Boroughbridge was very facetious on the Solicitor General for Ireland; and, because he consents to the destruction of his own borough—the borough of Saltash—compares him to the incendiary of the Temple of Ephesus, who was content, by any means, to secure notoriety for himself. Now, Sir, it appeared to me that the Solicitor General was much more prudent than the incendiary. Three-fourths of his speech was a canvassing speech, addressed to the students of Trinity College, Dublin; and if the learned Gentleman can effect his own return for the additional seat which the College is to acquire by this Bill—what the member for Boroughbridge calls "the spirit of Ephesian destruction" will entail no great sacrifice; he can afford to set fire to the hovels at Saltash, if he can immediately afterwards take refuge in the more splendid edifice which this Bill will construct for his reception. Sir, there is no part of the whole measure of Reform which is pregnant with consequences so important as this remodelling of the constituency and representation of Ireland. I fear the result—and above all—I deprecate the time at which the experiment is made. Two years only have elapsed since that great change in the internal policy of Ireland was effected; and, before there is any sufficient experience of its practical operation, we are called upon to make another change, that puts to imminent hazard the securities we provided against the danger of the first. It is now beyond the control of Parliament to remedy the evils which are, in my opinion, inseparable from the course which the King's Government has pursued. In the completion of their measures, I see the utmost danger; and who is there that can look with satisfaction on the consequences of their rejection? Who does not see, that the moment the King's Ministers have, with the King's sanction, denounced the constitution of this branch of the Legislature —have proclaimed the necessity of an effectual change—have invited great masses of the people to a share in the privileges and authority of Government: who does not see, that, whatever be the abstract merits of the question of Reform, the practical position of that question is materially altered? Still, Sir, I must compare the consequences of passing this measure of Reform, with the consequences of rejecting it. It is with this measure as a whole, with which we have to deal—which we must accept or reject —but which we are not, it seems, at liberty, in any material respect to modify. If that be the alternative, I must reject it; for, with my opinion as to the ultimate effects, in this country and in Ireland, of the measures now under our consideration —I should in the words of Mr. Fox, be "a traitor to my King, to my country, and to my own conscience, if I did not prefer the Constitution to popular favour"—and if I did not protect the rights and interests of the people, when they are threatened by their own delusion and excitement.

Viscount *Palmerston* said, he felt all the disadvantages under which he came forward to reply to what, though made unexpectedly, he was bound to admit was one of the most successful efforts of the right hon. Baronet. Though his right hon. friend had excited his attention, he must confess, that at its close he laboured under great disappointment. His right hon. friend had argued the question with that ability which distinguished him; but he had pressed into his service all the arguments employed by those who were the most uncompromising enemies of Reform. He had argued, not only against Reform in the abstract, but against every species of Reform, and every part of the measure now proposed. On a former occasion, when his right hon. friend addressed the House on this question, he opposed the measure of Ministers, as too extensive, at the same time admitting, that such a change had taken place in public opinion on this subject, that if a more moderate measure of Reform had been brought forward he should have been prepared to support it. After hearing his right hon. friend's arguments, however, he wished to know what was the degree of moderate Reform which his right hon. friend was prepared to propose himself, or to support, if proposed by others? What kind of Reform was it to which all his right hon. friend's arguments of that evening did not apply? Individually, his right hon. friend had adopted the highest view of the case yet taken—he adopted the opinion, thrown out certainly in the course of the debate, that the admission of copyholders to vote gave the proposed measure a revolutionary character. As one of the arguments to prove that the measure was revolutionary, his right hon. friend said, it went to change the constituency in every county. He (Lord Palmerston) did not recollect in what way the proposed measure changed the constituency in every county, but by letting in copyholders and leaseholders, above a certain amount, to vote. If the admission of householders and copyholders to vote was so material a change in the constituency as to render the measure which proposed that change worthy to be deemed revolutionary, he wondered that it had not occurred to his right hon. friend that he himself had introduced a measure changing the franchise in a much more extensive manner. His right hon. friend talked of taking away vested right, in very beautiful language—but language, he must say, better calculated for a former debate. As his right hon. friend, however, made some allusion to a similar subject, he must congratulate him on the prosperous delivery of twin speeches. He could not say much, however, as to the shortness of the period of gestation. His right hon. friend's speech was apparently attached to that of the learned Lord who preceded him; but it appeared to have been rather a fortunate incident for his right hon. friend, that the learned Lord had made that speech. When his right hon. friend, said, that the ancient usage, and even prejudices, ought to be dealt with tenderly, and objected to altering arrangements made in the early periods of our history, he wished to know upon what grounds the right hon. Baronet had proposed to disfranchise 170,000 40*s*. freeholders, many of them *bonâ fide* freeholders, holding land, not by leases, but in their own right? Upon what ground did his right hon. friend ask in that case for the support of the House? His right hon. friend would answer, no doubt, that it was for the public advantage to carry a measure necessary to secure the public tranquillity and to avert the evils arising from national discontent. It was upon those grounds his right hon. friend proposed to disfranchise the Irish 40*s*. freeholders, and to abrogate uses consecrated by the respect of the people. The present Government now proceeded on the same grounds. It proposed to alter arrangements of long standing; but there was this difference in the proposed measure and that to which he alluded—It was now proposed to alter arrangements not consecrated by the respect and veneration of the people. If these matters had the undivided and unalloyed respect of the people, he admitted the argument would be conclusive against the proposed change; but that change was proposed because the people were of opinion, with the Government, that the evil practices which it was proposed to remedy did not belong properly to the institutions of this country; and that they were not in unison with the laws. In his alarm of revolution, his right hon. friend attacked the measure, as going, not only to alter the constituency of counties, but likewise the constituency of cities and boroughs. He enumerated the number of towns and cities to which it was proposed that the power of the Committee of the Privy Council should extend, in order to annex a sufficient number of voters. That was the alteration in cities and boroughs which his right hon. friend considered revolutionary. The revolution, then, was to be effected by the King's Privy Council. If it was from such a quarter that revolution was to come, he should not feel so much alarm at the idea of revolution as he had hitherto done. The argument formerly used against the appointment of the Committee of the Privy Council, was, that it subjected the constituency to the arbitrary will of the Privy Council; but now it was apprehended that the King's Privy Council would work a revolution! But then his right hon. friend said, the measure went to deal with the prerogative of the Crown. Some people chose to consider close boroughs as the props and support of the Crown; but when they talked about the Crown, they meant only the Government of the day. The Representatives of boroughs, however, were not in the habit of voting always for the present or any other Government. He asked any hon. Member whether the Members for close boroughs were not distributed as much on one side of the House as on the other. As many Members for boroughs were to be found in the ranks of those who wanted to force the Crown, as in the ranks of those engaged in its service [*cheers*]. He understood the cheers; but they were applicable to an argument distinct from that to which he adverted. So far as the prerogatives of the Crown went, the presence of Members for close boroughs in that House did not support them; whilst their presence inflicted a deep injury on the interests of the people. His right hon. friend had alluded to the French Convention, and to the insanities of the French Revolution, as arising out of that Convention, as supplying arguments to show that the House of Commons ought not really to represent the people. There was no analogy, however, in the two cases. His right hon. friend really seemed to think, that the theory of the British Constitution not only ought to differ from the practice, but that the only safety for the country was to be found in a continual and practical departure from the theory. There was not the slightest analogy between the French Revolution and the proposed measure. It was like comparing the conduct of a child, or a person ungifted with reason, with the conduct of a person of sound mind and full estate, to say that the people of this country would act in the same way as the people of France had done, if they had real Representatives. The argument drawn from the French Revolution, then, had no weight; for there was no similarity in the two cases. His right hon. friend also argued, that the Bill would destroy the influence of the House of Lords; and then he referred to the resolution which said, that Peers should not interfere in elections. That was a new line of argument against the Bill. The argument hitherto had been, that the Bill went to establish a number of Bassetlaws throughout the country; and the Ministers were charged with not being earnest or sincere in their desire to give the people a real Representation. It was said that they only proposed to give a different kind of influence to the aristocracy. But now it was said that they would destroy the aristocracy. The opponents of the Bill should abandon one or other of those arguments, for they destroyed each other. His right hon. friend, with the good feeling and good taste with which he always addressed the House, adverted to the speech made on a former occasion, by an hon. and learned Gentleman, the member for Milborne Port (Mr. Sheil). He referred to the hon. and learned Gentleman as a proof of the advantages of the system of close boroughs, as, after having been rejected by a county in Ireland, the hon. and learned Gentleman had been enabled to come in for a borough, to delight the House by the display of his eloquence and talent. He (Lord Palmerston.) conceived that his right hon. friend might have also drawn another moral from the presence of the hon. and learned member for Milborne Port. The hon. and learned Member was an instance of the advantages which arose from the concession of rights from which he had been long and unjustly excluded. He had been converted from being an agitator, to which circumstances had driven him, and was permitted, by the change of the laws, to exercise that share of power which naturally belonged to him, to assume the character which the right hon. Baronet had done justice to, and to devote his faculties and talents to their legitimate object—the service of the public. The state of the hon. and learned Gentleman before the change of the law, resembled the state of the middle classes throughout the country at present. They were excluded from a fair exercise of power—from their due share in the government—and were discontented: they were the prey to every factious agitator who chose to pander to their passions, for the gratification of his vanity, or of worse passions. The people of England now were in the same state which the Catholics of Ireland were. Let them deal with the people of England as they did with the Catholics of Ireland, and the result would be the same. As the hon. and learned Gentleman (Mr. Sheil) turned his great faculties to the good of the country, so they would find, upon passing the measure proposed, that the middle classes, now discontented at being deprived of their rights, would become contented. and their satisfaction would tend to attach them to the higher classes, and to strengthen the ties which bind them to the Constitution.

Sir *Robert Peel* complained, that his noble friend had dealt unfairly with his argument as to the admission of copyholders to vote. When he enumerated the changes which the Bill would work in the constituency, he referred to the admission of copy-holders in counties as one element. As to the argument he had used being against all Reform, he should not enter on that question, but he repeated, that, seeing the difference of opinion between that House and the late Ministry on the subject of Reform, for though they were turned out on the Civil List, he believed there would have been an expression of opinion on the subject of Reform, which would have made it very difficult for them to have carried on the Government, as the new Ministry was formed on the principle of some Reform, he (Sir Robert Peel) said, he was prepared, as an individual, to make a compromise on that subject, and to support a measure of moderate Reform, if such had been introduced. After the course taken by the Ministers on this subject, however, the position of every man was changed. [*The right hon. Baronet was here interrupted by cries of* " *Spoke, spoke.*"] He did not mean to trespass further on that courtesy which permitted a Member to explain, than merely to guard against wrong inferences being drawn from what he had said, and to prevent sentiments being ascribed to him which he had never professed.

Mr. *Goulburn* wished to call attention to some points adverted to by the noble Viscount who had just addressed the House. The noble Lord, in reference to the objection which had been made, as to giving power to a Committee of the Privy Council to alter the constituency, asked, who ever heard of a Revolution effected by the King's Privy Council? He would not enter into the question as to whether the measure was revolutionary. He would take the measure in its modified sense, as productive of a great and important change. A Committee of the Privy Council, appointed by the Crown, was to have the power of giving a Member of Parliament to any number of constituents they thought fit, by annexing any adjoining parish or district to a borough or city. This was giving an enormous power, he contended, to the Privy Council, and making a great change in the Constitution, which was unwarranted by any precedent. It was not necessary that the Privy Councillors should confine the exercise of their power to boroughs wanting an increase of constituents, they might go into the City of London, and add to it any adjoining parish, the inhabitants of which would thenceforward share the rights now exercised by the City of London exclusively. Giving such a power to the Crown, through the medium of the Privy Council, was, in his opinion, a great change and deterioration of the Constitution. The noble Lord said, that the Members for boroughs were equally distributed now on each side of the House. The effect of the proposed measure, however, would be to place, if not the Members of all boroughs, the constituents who returned those Members, in the hands of the Government of the day, by giving the Committee of the Privy Council the power of altering the constitution in each particular case. This was, in his opinion, one of the worst parts of the whole arrangement. One ground on which the measure was defended was, that it would prevent future alteration, whereas the principle on which it rested was, that as an alteration was made in the constituency in Ireland, in the passing of the Catholic Question, so a similar alteration might now be made in this country. If any individual hereafter desired to make a further change, he need only quote the argument now adduced, and he would have two precedents instead of one to urge in favour of Vote by Ballot and Universal Suffrage, which were so much desired by many persons. His noble friend seemed to say, that if they had had a Reformed Parliament, they would not have found so much difficulty as had been experienced in carrying the Catholic Question. Now, judging from the petitions presented against that measure, when under the consideration of Parliament, he should say, that it was anything but popular. It was certainly not one of those measures which the great body of the people appeared to be most anxious to see carried; and he therefore felt himself justified in assuming, that if the popular influence in that House at the time mentioned had been greater than it really was, they would probably have that great measure yet to discuss. The fact indisputably was, that Government, in carrying that measure, had to contend against a great amount of popular feeling. It had been charged against his hon. friends, that they were afraid of allowing the practice of the Constitution to be made conformable to its theory. He wished to know at what period the practice of the Constitution had ever resembled the theory which the present Bill went to establish? When was the theory of the Constitution conformable to the present Bill? Amongst other objections to the proposition then under the consideration of the House, it was to be observed, that it would go to change the whole Representative system of Ireland, and it would most probably lead to the further discussion of a subject, that, above all others, it was most desirable to avoid—namely, the Repeal of the Union. There was, in his opinion, nothing more to be avoided than further changes in the Representation of that country; and, least of all, should there be any augmentation made of the Members sent from that part of the United Kingdom, seeing that another measure had been introduced, which would so greatly alter the relation heretofore subsisting between the Irish and English Members. He really, in every point of view, professed himself unable to understand how any hon. Member, opposed to the Repeal of the Union, could advocate the present Bill.

Mr. *Hunt* wished to set himself right with the House respecting an observation which fell from the hon. and learned member for Boroughbridge, to the effect, that he (Mr. Hunt) had spoken of himself as representing the whole people of England and that he had made a bargain for the borough of Preston. That he begged most distinctly to deny. He begged also to state, that neither in nor out of the House had he ever expressed an opinion favourable to the disfranchisement of any man; nor had he on any occasion demanded more for Preston than he was perfectly willing to concede to other places. As an old reformer, and one who had never departed from the principles he had advocated, be they right or wrong, the House might conceive how amusing it must have been to him to hear the hon. and gallant Member on the one side of the House, represent the borough of Boroughbridge as black as the devil, and on the other to hear the hon. and learned member for Boroughbridge represent the rotten boroughs on that side of the House to be still blacker. What would the people of England say when they heard the language which had been used on both sides of the House with respect to these rotten boroughs? Why, they would say, what they say now, "Give us some change; we have been represented in this way for a great length of time, and now his Majesty's Government offer us some change, we, one and all, with one voice accept it." It had been said, that this was a revolutionary measure. The learned Lord, the Lord Advocate, contended, that instead of taking away the powers of the aristocracy of the country, although it would lessen them so far as to prevent the return of certain branches of the Aristocracy for the rotten boroughs, if he understood him rightly, the learned Lord contended it would give as great, if not greater, powers to the aristocracy than at present. He perfectly agreed with the learned Lord, that it would directly place great power in the hands of the great landed interests, and particularly with regard to the county Representation. He could not, however, let that opportunity pass without denying that the measure of Reform, as proposed by his Majesty's Government, was revolutionary. Let the House see how the matter stood, viewing it solely with reference to the population of the United Kingdom, and they would be enabled to judge how far the Bill went to strengthen the hands of the people. The population of England, Ireland, and Scotland, he would take at 22,000,000; of that number 11,000,000 were males, and 3,000,000 were infants, leaving a remainder of 8,000,000 of adults. Under the new Bill there would be only 1,000,000 of electors, and calculating their income at an average of 150*l.* per annum to each, would be 150,000,000*l.* Then taking the 7,000,000 of male adults unrepresented as earning by their industry the sum of 12*s.* 6*d.* a week each, he was entitled to say, there was an annual income of 227,500,000*l.* not represented. Surely a measure which left things in that state, so far from being revolutionary or democratic, was nothing more than very moderate Reform [*much coughing*]. If hon. Members were really labouring under the effects of recent colds, he had some lozenges which he could recommend as very efficacious. He was sure the disturbance was not intentional. As to the general plan of Reform he must be allowed to say, that if it were carried without the protection of the Ballot it would place the country represented in a worse state than before. What were his reasons? The little 10*l.* householders were more open to improper influence than any other class, and it was evident that the proposed change in the Representation of counties would lead to increasing the influence of all the great landholders. There was not one of the persons enfranchised under the new Bill, who would not feel the want of that protection which the Ballot alone could afford. At the same time that he felt bound to thank the Ministry for putting an end to the rotten boroughs, he should rather have the representation in its present state with the Ballot, than Universal Suffrage without it.

Mr. *Thomas Lefroy* entirely disapproved of the principle of the Bill, and thought it would have a bad effect in Ireland.

Mr. *Jephson* said, the present measure would be considered a very great boon in Ireland. He felt assured that it would have the effect of sending into that House men more distinguished for knowledge than for readiness or fluency in debate; by which the real business of the country would be much promoted. He thought that the modification of corporation influence which would result from the Bill would go far to get rid of the Anti-union spirit existing in that country.

Mr. *Gisborne* approved of the measure which had been introduced by his Majesty's Ministers; which, he contended, was not calculated in any way to sever that from the other House of Parliament, or to injure the constitution of the country. For his own part, he could not see any thing of a revolutionary tendency in the measure of the noble Lord. By it fifty-three Members he believed were to be added to the county representation, and could it be said or thought that would lead to a Revolution. One of the effects of the present state of the Representation was, constantly to force an unpopular Government on this country. Even if the right hon. Baronet opposite was called on to create a Government, he was certain that, let him do his utmost, he could not give satisfaction to the popular feeling. He hoped that this great measure would be carried in its present shape, and that by its operation the House would not, in future, be an object of suspicion, not to say of aversion, to the great body of the people.

Mr. *Ruthven* expressed his general approbation of the Bill then before the House. The determination of Ministers to effect a Reform of Parliament was highly gratifying to Ireland, because the people believed that through Reform something would be done for that country. Ireland was at present calm, and he appealed to those who best knew that country, whether that calm was not produced by the expectation of good which the introduction of this measure had produced. Those who were anxious for a Repeal of the Union were quieted, because they believed that a Reformed Parliament would make the Union productive of that benefit which had never yet been derived from it. With respect to the north of Ireland, he could truly state, that great expectations were entertained that much good would be derived from this measure. He hoped that the Bill would go through the House, and if any little alterations were deemed necessary, he trusted that they would be made with good temper and discretion.

Mr. *John Fane* thought the Bill would benefit no man, and he should wish that it might never pass into a law.

Mr. *G. Moore* said, he would reserve his observations on this Bill for a more fitting opportunity. When the proper time arrived, he trusted that he should be able to prove that this Bill, which affected the franchises of every Corporation in Ireland, was illegal, unconstitutional, immoral, and inequitable—that its effect would be, not restoration but destruction, and that it had no constitutional ground whatever for its support.

Bill read a first time.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Friday, March 25, 1831.

MINUTES.] Returns ordered. On the Motion of Lord AUCKLAND, the last Report from the National Vaccine Establishment; summary statements of the number of Persons charged with Criminal Offences, who were committed to the different Gaols of England and Wales for trial at the Assizes and Sessions held for the several Counties, Cities, Towns, and Liberties therein, during the last seven years, distinguishing the number in each year, and shewing the nature of the crimes, respectively, of which they were convicted, acquitted, and with which those were charged, against whom no bills were found, and who were not prosecuted; also, the sentences of those convicted, and the number executed of those who received sentence of death.

Petitions presented. In favour of Reform, by the Duke of GRAFTON, from Suffolk:—By Lord AUCKLAND, from Hereford:—By the Duke of DEVONSHIRE, from Derby, Youghall, and Clapham:—By the Duke of NORFOLK, from Tuam:—By Lord KING, from Miles Platting (a suburb of Manchester), and various places in Scotland:—By the Duke of RICHMOND, from Hailsham:—By Earl GREY, from Hounslow, and other places:—By the Marquis of BUTE, from the County of Glamorgan. By Lord KING, from the Agricultural Associations of South Hams and Teignbridge; and from a Parish in Devonshire, for the Amendment of the Poor-laws. By the Duke of RICHMOND, from the Apprentice Boys of Derry, against a Repeal of the Union:—By Lord PLUNKETT, from Macroom, in the County of Cork, for such a Repeal. By Lord WHARNCLIFFE, from Rothwell, for a Repeal of the Assessed Taxes.

COUNTY OF DOWN PETITION—EXPLANATION.] The Marquis of *Londonderry* believed, that their Lordships were always kindly disposed towards any Member of that House, who was anxious to explain any misconception or mis-statement in the public journals, respecting any thing he might have said. He trusted that the noble Earl (Grey) would be good enough to attend to the explanation he was about to make. It regarded an expression which was alleged to have fallen from him in animadverting last night upon the petition from the County of Down. Some of the public journals, not all of them, had said, that he had described some of the persons who had signed that petition as the lowest rabble in the County of Down. Now he most unequivocally denied, that he had used any such expression, and he was sure their Lordships would feel for him, when he had had attributed to him an expression which, if he had used it, would prove him to be unworthy of that place in the esteem of the county which he and his family had always enjoyed. He had been born in that county, and was naturally much attached to it, and it was quite impossible that he should have cast such an imputation upon any of the freeholders of that county. He had not said that the petition was signed by the lowest rabble. What he had said was, that the petition was signed by the lowest freeholders, and this was very different from what had been attributed to him. Another point which he was anxious to explain, related to a most respectable individual — namely, Colonel Forde. He had not seen the petition, and he could not believe that it had been signed by that gentleman, after having been informed, as he had been, by letters from the County of Down, that the petition was signed by the lowest freeholders. Besides, he had read a speech of Colonel Forde's, in which Colonel Forde opposed the expediency of the meeting at which the petition was agreed to, and also objected to triennial Parliaments as being too short. A third point upon which he wished to explain was this. He held in his hand two requisitions for meetings in the County of Down. One called upon the Sheriff to convene the meeting at which the petition was agreed to, and it was signed, he was bound to say, by nine or ten most respectable individuals. In contradistinction to this, he had a requisition which called upon the High Sheriff to convene a meeting, for the purpose of agreeing upon an Address, congratulating the Lord Lieutenant on the firmness of his administration, and expressing their attachment to the Legislative Union, and to that Constitution under which the empire had enjoyed so many blessings. The signatures to this requisition contained, not the names of nine or ten most respectable persons, like the other requisition, but the name of every man of rank, and wealth, and respectability in the county. Such names not being attached to the other requisition, he had thought himself justified in stating, that the petition did not express the opinion of the rank, the wealth, and the respectability of the county.

Earl *Grey* was sure that their Lordships would always receive, as they had now received the address of the noble Marquis, with the greatest readiness, any statement which was made for the purpose of a noble Lord's relieving himself from the imputation of having used an expression which he might think injurious to him. He was glad the noble Marquis had had an opportunity of disclaiming an expression, which, as the noble Marquis said he had not used it, he (Earl Grey) was bound to conclude that he had laboured under a false impression last night, in attributing it to the noble Marquis. He certainly had repeated it, and, as he supposed, after the noble Marquis; he had answered it also; and yet he had not been corrected by the noble Marquis at the time. He must have laboured under another misapprehension also; for if he had supposed that the noble Marquis had merely said that the petition was signed by the lowest freeholders, he should certainly never have made to their Lordships the observation which he did make,—namely, that the petition was signed by 1,300 persons, every one of whom was either registered, or entitled to be registered, as a freeholder of 10*l.* a year; for such, their Lordships were aware, were the lowest freeholders entitled to vote at elections in Ireland. It must be clear, then, to their Lordships, that he had misconceived what had fallen from the noble Marquis, and that he laboured under a wrong impression. As to the value of the petition, he left it to their Lordships to decide that matter. The noble Marquis had admitted that it was signed by many respectable persons; and as to the other point,—the address to the

Lord Lieutenant,—he could assure the noble Marquis, that no man rejoiced more to hear of it than he did. Allow him, however, to observe, that addressing the Lord Lieutenant upon his wise and spirited administration in Ireland, was by no means inconsistent with the sentiments contained in the petition in favour of Reform; nor did he think, because so many noble and respectable individuals had concurred in such an address, that their Lordships had a right to conceive, that they were opposed to a measure, which seemed to have been received with so much approbation by almost every class of the community. He had only to repeat, that in what he had said last night upon this part of the subject, he was under a misapprehension, which, it appeared by the explanation of the noble Marquis, he had shared in common with those through whose instrumentality the proceedings of that House were communicated to the public.

The Marquis of *Londonderry* said, that the reason he had not explained last night was, that he felt great diffidence in addressing one syllable to their Lordships, after that most able and eloquent speech which they had heard from the noble Earl. He assured their Lordships, that to the best of his belief he had not used the expression "rabble," and if he had, he was most heartily sorry for it. As to the connection between the two requisitions, he took it to be this—the one spoke of the blessings of the Constitution. Now he was much afraid, that if this Reform Bill were to pass, those blessings would be seriously impaired, if not altogether destroyed.

TITHE MODUSES.] Lord *Wharncliffe* gave notice, that he should on Monday next move for the returns which a noble kinsman of his had yesterday given notice for him of his intention to move for. He should at an earlier period have taken this means of bringing under the notice of their Lordships the Reform measure, if he had not been prevented by indisposition.

Earl *Grey* asked, if the noble Lord meant to move for the same Returns which were contained in his former notice; because, if so, it might be convenient to the noble Lord to know that there would be no objection to the Motion.

Lord *Wharncliffe* said, he should move for the same returns as had been before named, and that he had anticipated there would be no objection to his motion. He had now to present to their Lordships a Petition, which he called their attention to with great pain. It was on the subject of tithes, and came from the owners and occupiers of lands of the parish of Cadoxton-juxta-Neath, in the county of Glamorgan. It appeaed from the statement of the petitioners, that a modus had existed for a long period in the parish; that this modus was contested by the Vicar, in the reign of William and Mary, when the Vicar's bill was dismissed as frivolous and vexatious, and himself fixed with the costs of the suit; and that, about twenty years ago, another suit was instituted, when the modus was again confirmed by Sir W. Grant. The petitioners complained that the present Vicar had contested the modus again, and had succeeded in setting it aside as against one person, and the rest of the parish apprehended renewed litigation. Now, he was sure that no one would accuse him of any inclination to infringe the rights of the Church; but when they had cases like the present forced upon their notice, he thought they must all agree that some measure should be introduced on the subject, in order to prevent constant litigation of the worst character. He trusted, therefore, that the bill of the Chief Justice would prove successful. If that bill did not meet the case of the petitioners, he would again bring it under the notice of the House when that bill came into Committee.

The Bishop of *Gloucester* did not, he was sure, need to remind their Lordships, that the petition was an ex-parte statement, and he had no doubt that many of the assertions it contained could be answered or explained.

Petition to lie on the Table.

REFORM—YORK AND DEVON PETITIONS.] The Duke of *Norfolk* presented a Petition from the county of York, in favour of the Reform Bill now before Parliament. The petition had been agreed to at a public meeting, regularly convened upon requisition, by the High Sheriff of the county. The petition was signed only by the gentleman who presided at the meeting, in the absence of the High Sheriff, who had been prevented by indisposition from attending the meeting. The petition, therefore, could, by the forms of the House, be received only as the petition of the individual whose name was attached to it, though it was, in fact, the petition of the meeting.

The Petition read at length.

The Earl of *Carlisle* observed, that he had been credibly informed, that no fewer than 50,000 persons in the county of York had signed petitions in favour of Reform. He was satisfied, that the vast majority of the inhabitants of Yorkshire, including the majority of the wealth and respectability of the county, was in favour of the Ministerial measure.

Lord *King*, said that he had to present a similar Petition, from a county next in importance, perhaps, to that of the great county of York. It was a petition from the county of Devon; and it was something like a proof that the people of that county did not feel that apathy with regard to Reform which a noble Lord had yesterday attributed to them. Before they had heard of the Ministerial plan of Reform, the county of Devon had petitioned for Reform. Now that they had become acquainted with the nature of that measure, they had petitioned in favour of it, as a measure which they believed would be beneficial to the empire, and which they therefore entreated their Lordships to pass.

Lord *Rolle* said, that he had been informed that there were not above 100 or 200 freeholders at the meeting at which this petition was agreed to. Such a meeting could not be called a meeting of the county.

Lord *King* said, he could not tell how many were present at the meeting; but it had been regularly advertised, and the opponents of the measure, if there were any, must have had full notice of it.

PLURALITIES—THE BISHOP OF ELY.] Lord *King* presented a Petition from Barnsley, praying for a Commutation of Tithes. The petitioners stated, that they paid tithes to persons who performed no spiritual duties among them, and whom they never saw; and they mentioned a remarkable instance of a district in which there were twenty-five livings with only two incumbents. The noble Lord also adverted to a remarkable instance, in the diocese of Ely, of the accumulation of Church livings, one of them of the value of 6,000*l.*, and Church dignities, in the hands of one person; namely, a prebend of Ely, the rectory of Bexwell, the rectory of Feltwell St. Mary, the rectory of Feltwell St. Nicholas, the vicarage of Waterbeach, and, lastly, the living of Wisbeach. These were curious instances of non-residence and an abuse of patronage; and it had been said, that the Chancellor was not altogether exempt from blame on this last head, as the patronage of one of the livings was in the Crown.

The *Lord Chancellor* believed that his noble friend alluded to a statement in one of the public journals, in which he had been commented upon in no very measured terms, for having been a party to increasing the pluralities of a clergyman.

Lord *King*.—I do.

The *Lord Chancellor* said, he could assure their Lordships that that statement, so far as he was concerned in it, was erroneous, and that the author of it had misled his noble friend. There was a certain living, the living, he believed, of Wisbeach, or some such name, — the presentation to which was alternately in the Great Seal and the Bishop of Ely. Upon the application of the Bishop of Ely, Lord Eldon had given up his turn to present to the Bishop, who was anxious to provide for a son, or a son-in-law, or some other relative. The consequence of this was, of course, that the next two presentations were in the Great Seal. Shortly after he had the honour of being appointed to the custody of the Great Seal, he received a letter, written in the hand of a person apparently infirm, but certainly not in the hand-writing of the Bishop, which was very different. The letter was signed with the Bishop's name, and the purport of it was a request that he would give up the next presentation—so that then the Great Seal would have had the three subsequent presentations. Recollecting, however, that if he acceded to this request, he should be doing a favour to the present Bishop at the expense of the next Bishop, he thought it right to pause before he did any thing of the kind. He took no notice, therefore, of this letter. About three weeks afterwards he had received another letter, in the same handwriting, and bearing the same signature. He could hardly believe that it was written by the same person. He could not believe that the party, whose signature it bore, knew any thing of it. The letter was an application to him upon totally different grounds, so much so, that it gave him the idea that the presentation was in the Bishop, and not in the Great Seal. The letter stated, that the author of it had written to him (the Lord Chancellor) before; but that he supposed that his letter had not come to hand, from its not having been answered. It requested an answer by return of post, and stated, that if no answer was sent, silence would be taken for consent, and the presentation would be made. In consequence of that letter, he wrote down to the party, whose signature was attached to the letter, desiring that no nomination should be made till he had seen his noble and learned friend Lord Eldon. That noble Lord had given up his turn of presentation, when Lord Chancellor; and he therefore wrote to the right rev. Prelate, informing him that the whole matter must depend upon his noble and learned friend, Lord Eldon. His noble and learned friend gave his consent to the application, and he therefore signed the document, discharging thereby, as their Lordships would see, nothing else than a Ministerial duty. Had the patronage belonged to himself, he should not have done it, but he considered it as a matter of delicacy to Lord Eldon, and therefore acted as if the patronage had not belonged to the Great Seal, but to his noble and learned friend. He repeated, that he should not have done it had it been left to himself, for the succeeding Bishops would lose three turns, as the four next would be in the Great Seal. What the state of health of that rev. Prelate might be, he did not know. He hoped that he was in a good state of health; sure he was that the rev. Prelate ought to be in a good state of health, for he had recently given away a prebend and the valuable living of Wisbeach, which was worth 2,000*l*. a year, to a near relation of his own. He had suspicions—and as a Minister of the Crown he felt bound to state them—that there were persons near that rev. Prelate who disposed of his patronage in a way which he would not sanction if in perfect health. He did not know who was to blame in this business; all he knew was, that he (the Lord Chancellor) was not. Whilst he was a Minister of the Crown, he pledged himself to their Lordships to take care that the patronage of the Crown in this department would not be abused, or, that if it were abused, he would be no party to the abuse.

Petition laid on the Table.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Friday, March 25, 1831.

MINUTES.] Bills. The Tobacco Growth Prohibition (Ireland), the Printed Cottons, was read a second time. The Annual Indemnity, read a first time.

Returns ordered. On the Motion of Mr. GEORGE LAMB, Copies of the Correspondence between the Secretary of State and the Agent for the Colonies of Saint Christopher and Dominica, respecting the abstracts of Slave-laws, referred to in the Resolution of this House, dated on the 24th instant; summary statements of the number of Persons charged with Criminal Offences, who were committed to the different Gaols in England and Wales, for trial at the Assizes and Sessions held for the several Counties, Cities, Towns, and Liberties therein, during the last seven years, distinguishing the number in each year, and shewing the nature of the crimes, respectively, of which they were convicted, acquitted, and with which those were charged, against whom no bills were found, and who were not prosecuted; also, the sentences of those convicted, and the number executed of those who received sentence of death.

REFORM PETITIONS.] Sir *George Clerk* presented a Petition from the Bankers, Merchants, and other inhabitants of Edinburgh, against the plan of Reform which had been brought forward by his Majesty's Ministers for altering the Representation of the country. The petition, he said, was numerously and most respectably signed; he agreed in all its sentiments, and he conceived that it was highly deserving of the attention of the House.

Mr. *Hume* could not allow this petition to be laid on the Table without saying, that he did not think it deserved so much attention as the hon. Baronet claimed for it. He was willing to admit, that the signatures to it were respectable, but he believed that only 600 persons had signed it, out of a population of 140,000 or 150,000, which existed in Edinburgh. This petition, besides, had been agreed to at a private meeting; and when Reporters for the public Press attended, to know what was going on, with a view to communicate it to the public, they were turned out of the room. He (Mr. Hume) understood, that when the first speaker rose to address this private meeting, it was whispered to him, that there were two Reporters in the room. The Reporters stated, that they merely attended to give a correct account of the proceedings, but they were not suffered to remain, and were forthwith turned out of the room. This petition might be taken as representing the opinions of, undoubtedly, a respectable, but a very limited, class of the inhabitants of Edinburgh. Many of those who had signed it were certainly persons of considerable property and influence in

Edinburgh, but they all belonged to one party that had long ruled Scotland, and whose friends had hitherto filled all the official situations in that country. He begged the House to bear in mind, besides, that a petition cordially approving of the plan of Reform had been already presented from Edinburgh, signed by 35,000 inhabitants of that city. He therefore thought it but right to enter his protest against this petition being considered as expressing the opinions of the people of Edinburgh.

Mr. *Pringle* said, that this petition was similar to the one which had been already adopted in the city of London. It was adopted at a meeting which was not called for discussion, and therefore the Reporters were excluded. He denied that it had been signed by persons belonging to only one class or party in Edinburgh. There were many moderate reformers, and many who had supported the present Ministry until they had brought in their Bill of Reform, who had signed this petition.

Sir *G. Staunton* wished to take that opportunity to set himself right with the public with regard to a mis-statement which had gone forth of his sentiments on this important question of Reform. He did not rise to complain of a wilful misrepresentation, for there was no individual in that House who could admire more than he did the great and extraordinary accuracy with which their Debates were given to the public. He was the more anxious to set himself right on this matter, as it appeared to him that if ever there was a question upon which it was of importance that the sentiments of a Member should be accurately known, and the reasons for giving his vote should be correctly stated, it was upon this great and momentous question of Reform. He hoped, therefore, that the House would allow him to explain and correct the misrepresentations of his sentiments which had gone forth to the public. He was reported to have said, in presenting a petition in favour of Reform, that he not only concurred in the prayer of the petition, but that he also gave his unqualified assent to the Bill which was now in progress through that House. What he did say was this,—that he agreed entirely with the first prayer of the petition, but that he regretted that he could not give his concurrence to the second prayer of the petitioners. He added, that he was for a fair and moderate Reform, that he quite agreed with those who thought such a Reform necessary, and that, looking forward to the great alterations which might be made in the Bill when in Committee, he was disposed to support it on the second reading. He was ready to admit that there were some admirable provisions in the Bill, but there were several in it from which he totally dissented. Thinking, however, that the question was one of Reform or no Reform, he had given his vote for the second reading of that Bill, and he trusted that in Committee the Bill would be so modified as to effect a fair and moderate Reform, with safety and security to the interests of the country at large.

Sir *G. Clerk* presented a Petition from the Freeholders of the county of Peebles, and another from the Householders, Commissioners of Supply, and other inhabitants of the same county, praying that it might not be joined to that of Selkirk, for the purpose of having only one Representative.

Mr. *Hodges* presented a Petition from the island of Sheppey, and fifty-nine Petitions from other places in Kent, in favour of the Reform Bill. The hon. Member then presented a Petition from Sandwich, against that part of the Reform Bill which disfranchised non-resident electors.

Mr. *Marryat* said, that he had been requested to support the prayer of the petition by a large out-dwelling constituency, whom it was intended to disfranchise by the Bill now before the House. He conceived, however, that the Isle of Thanet, from its importance and population, was entitled by the principle of the Bill to return a Member; though he could not acquiesce in that part of the petition which, to accomplish that end, assumed the disfranchisement of Sandwich of one of its present Representatives. He would rather draw upon the reserved stock in trade of the noble Paymaster. He considered that he sat in Parliament, not as the representative of Sandwich merely, but as a representative of the people at large; and conscientiously believing that a Reform was imperiously called for, on principle he had voted for the second reading of the Bill. At the same time, he could not neglect the rights and franchises of his constituents, which, as a representative of the Cinque Ports, he had sworn to defend and maintain. He should, therefore, in the details of the Bill, follow their instructions as to opposing those provisions which not merely invaded, but went to extinguish their rights and privileges.

Mr. *Grove Price* complained, that upon a former occasion it had been asserted that Sandwich was a corrupt Admiralty borough; whereas at the last election it had returned a Member against the Admiralty nomination. The voters of Sandwich now exceeded 900, and by the new Bill they would be reduced to between 100 and 200. He deprecated the Reform Bill as exceeding any measure of revolution since that effected by the venal and corrupt satellites of Henry 8th.

Mr. *Hodges* presented the Petition of the county of Kent, in favour of Reform. The hon. Member said, that before he made any observations upon the important meeting which had taken place in the county, he would beg leave to read the petition itself to the House. The hon. Member accordingly read the petition, and then proceeded to say, that he cordially supported the petition, which set forth the sentiments of the great and leading county which he had the honour to represent, in so able a manner as to preclude the necessity of his addressing the House at any length upon the subject. The petition had been agreed to at a full meeting of all classes of the inhabitants of the county, and the public sentiment had been unanimous. He must make one more remark upon this latter point, which was, that although the meeting had been held in the town of Maidstone, amidst the freemen of that borough, who amounted to more than 1,200, and a great proportion of whom would be deprived of their elective franchise by the Reform Bill, yet so strongly were the opinions of all classes in favour of the measure, that not one single dissentient voice was heard in the meeting, and with the exception of the noble Lord, the member for Wootton Basset, not one single hand was raised against the petition. This unanimity amongst all classes of so wealthy and populous a county could not but have a great influence upon the minds of that House; and he anticipated the final triumph of Ministers in carrying the Reform Bill through the House, in accordance with the wishes of the whole nation, as the source of every moral and political improvement.

Mr. *John Jones* complained, that while the Bill professed to lop off all rotten boroughs, it had left one untouched—that of Wiston—which contained but a single house, belonging to Lord Cawdor, a nobleman who always voted with Ministers. It might, too, be convenient for the political interests of the Marquis of Anglesey, that the inhabitants of Criccieth should be excluded from voting in the borough of Carnarvon, but that regulation was assuredly not just to those people. That the interest of these two noble Lords was so well protected seemed to him an extraordinary circumstance.

Lord *John Russell* thought the discussion very irregular at that moment, and said, that he had no intention to enter into a history of the Welsh Representation at that period; but if the hon. Gentleman thought that the Government had consulted Lord Cawdor, or particularly attended to his interests in the framing of the Bill, he was very much mistaken. Neither did he believe that it would be found that Lord Cawdor's tenants woud be particularly benefitted by the provisions of the Bill.

Mr. *George Dawson*, however irregular might be the discussion at that moment, wished to state a few gross inconsistencies in the Bill. He wished to call the attention of the noble Lord to the proposed Representation of the county of Durham, a Representation which, once known to the people of England, could not fail to give them the greatest dissatisfaction. The representation that was to be given to that county was the more worthy of notice, as it was pretty generally understood that the noble Lord who took his title from that county had been instrumental in drawing up the Bill. The county at present had four Members, to these it was proposed to add six more, for Sunderland, South Shields, and the parish of Gateshead. Now, he wanted to know on what principle these places had been selected? Gateshead contained but 11,900 inhabitants, while in Lancashire there were no less than sixteen parishes, all of which were more populous, and were still to remain without Representation; there were twelve parishes in Lancashire larger than South Shields, and four larger than Sunderland, all of which were to remain without Representatives, and there was even one unrepresented parish in Lancashire which was larger than all the three places he had named put together. This, therefore, appeared to him to be a most absurd system of legislation; because, if the whole population of one county was set against another, it would appear that the Representation of Durham was to be one Member to every 20,000 inhabitants, while that of Lancashire was only that of one Member to every 65,000 inhabitants. After such an arrangement as this, he thought some ill-natured persons might say, that all that was intended by Government in this new Bill was, to take away Gatton from its present proprietor, and bestow it on Lord Durham. Nor was this the only thing of which he had to complain; the way in which the public Press was managed by the advocates of the Bill was by no means such as to be of service to the country, or to display the question in a just light, for while the speeches of the hon. Gentlemen opposite were reported at a length to their heart's content, that of his right hon. friend was curtailed even in such a paper as *The Times*.

Sir *G. Warrender* said, that so far from any sacrifice having been made to Lord Cawdor, the Bill annihilated his Lordship's interest in one of the Scotch counties.

Mr. *C. Wood* did not believe that the right hon. Gentleman opposite (Mr. Dawson) thought that his Majesty's Ministers had been actuated by any such unworthy motives as he had imputed to them. There were many discrepancies, such as had been pointed out, in York as well as in Lancashire, but the Bill never pretended even to approximate to the principle of district Representation. The population of a parish and a township was very different.

Sir *J. Sebright* protested against such discussions upon these petitions. If the practice were to be persevered in, Members had better send all their petitions back to their constituents, for there never could be time to present them.

Sir *M. W. Ridley* said, that the Bill, in its relation to Durham, had very properly taken into consideration the great commercial interests of such places as Sunderland and South Shields. It would be found that the Bill favoured the interests of Lord Londondery quite as much as those of Lord Durham, and the idea of partiality to private interests was unfounded.

Lord *Stanley* said, that the views taken by the right hon. member for Harwich had been founded in his confusion of parishes and townships as synonymous terms.

Mr. *Borrodaile* denied, that the Bill gave any undue favour to Lord Durham. There were already three candidates for the Representation of South Shields, one of whom had received nearly the promises of the whole town, and yet he was wholly unconnected with Lord Durham.

Petition to lie on the Table. On the motion that it be printed,

Lord *J. Russell* said, he would be perfectly ready in the Committee to correct the mis-statements that had been made on the subject, and to explain the grounds upon which the Bill had been framed in the particulars alluded to. To enter into them then, was neither more nor less than prematurely going into Committee on the Bill, and he, therefore, did not feel called upon to answer the objections that had been stated by the right hon. Gentleman.

Sir *C. Forbes* said, that as quoting Scriptures was a sign of the times, he should refer to Ministers a passage which directed that every man should take care of his own household, which it seemed the Ministers had obeyed.

Mr. *George Dawson* said, that he cast no personal imputation on Ministers, but merely a parliamentary imputation, arising from the facts before the House, and which imputation must remain until the noble Lord should think proper to give his explanation. As the Committee on the Bill was postponed until the 14th of April, there was no other mode of enlightening the country upon the matter, than by speaking when presenting petitions, and he therefore hoped it would be persevered in.

Mr. *Hunt* said, that the people of England in general, and the people of Lancashire in particular, would be delighted to get such a Member as the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Dawson) to defend their rights. Had the right hon. Member not spoken with so good a face, he might have mistaken him for one of those ill-natured persons whom he described as likely to attribute unworthy motives to the framers of the Bill.

Lord *Morpeth* observed, that this was the first time he had ever known his Majesty's Government censured for bringing forward a measure which was called for by the general voice of the people.

Mr. *Ruthven* took that opportunity of observing, that he saw, in a publication of that morning, expressions attributed to a noble Lord, which he believed and hoped he had never made use of. The Marquis of Londonderry was said to have stated, in a public place, that a certain Reform, or rather Radical, Society, was established in the county of Down, from which society the county of Down petition for Reform emanated. [*Order.*]

The *Speaker* said, that the House of Commons had an undoubted right to deal with a breach of its own orders in a public print, but it did not follow that it had an equal right to interfere with respect to matters which had occurred elsewhere. It was, in fact, disorderly to mention, in that House what had happened in another place.

Mr. *Ruthven* did not think that he had said any thing out of order. He had not named the House of Lords. [*Order.*]

The *Speaker.*—Will the hon. Member give an assurance to the House that he did not refer to the House of Lords?

Mr. *Ruthven* said, he recollected the other evening, when the hon. member for Middlesex wished to state a circumstance, he observed, that it had occurred in a certain place—he believed the hon. Member mentioned Brobdignag. He then would say, there was, in a certain island—[*order !*] If he were not allowed to proceed, as the hon. member for Middlesex had done, then he would say, that he heard that a certain Member. [*Order.*]

The *Speaker* again admonished the hon. Member that he was transgressing the rules of the House.

Mr. *Ruthven.*—Well, then, he understood that it had been asserted, no matter where, that the meeting of freeholders of the county of Down was not of so respectable a character as it had been described to be. Now, in answer to that, he would observe, that it was regularly convened by the High Sheriff, and that the petition, which was agreed to, was signed by a great number of the most respectable persons. Many of them, so far from being of the lowest class, belonged to the highest class of freeholders,—the 50*l.* freeholders. The meeting assembled to petition in favour of Parliamentary Reform; and the questions of Universal Suffrage, Annual Parliaments, and Vote by Ballot, were cautiously avoided at that meeting. This was no ordinary subject; and he felt himself called upon to state these facts in justice to those upright and honourable people, who had assembled on the occasion alluded to. He was glad to see the noble Lord (Castlereagh) in his place, because he, from his connexion with the county, must know many of these petitioners to be persons of property and respectability. Those who called the meeting had no wish to agitate or disturb the county; their only desire was, to speak their sentiments on Parliamentary Reform in a temperate and constitutional manner. He felt it necessary to vindicate the character of the people of the county of Down, for it was of great importance to them that they should stand well in the public mind.

Viscount *Castlereagh* said, the petition was certainly signed by 1,300 freeholders of the county of Down, and he believed the meeting to have been very respectable; but, as he had said in his letter, assigning his reasons for not attending that meeting, he could not consider it as including any thing like all the wealth and intelligence of that county.

Mr. *John Jones* thought, that every Member had, on the presentation of Reform petitions, a right, if he thought fit, to state his sentiments on the Bill introduced by the noble Lord. It appeared to him to be a Bill, to say the least of it, that went to disfranchise all the lower classes of voters, and which drew a distinguishing line between the richer and poorer subjects of the realm, that was never before contemplated. That part of the Bill which related to the Welsh boroughs he had already referred to, was most unjust, and he trusted that it would not pass through a Committee without the obnoxious provisions being altered.

Lord *J. Russell* said, the principle of the Bill was, to give votes to resident, and to disfranchise non-resident voters; but if there were any thing in the constitution of certain Welsh boroughs, which, with respect to residence and non-residence, ought to take them out of the general rule, it would, of course, be considered in the Committee.

Mr. *Philip Howard* had no objection to Gentlemen making speeches on petitions, provided they were not very long ones, and that he understood was the objection of the hon. member for Hertfordshire.

Sir James Graham moved the Order of the Day for the House to resolve itself into a Committe of Supply.

WEST-INDIA QUESTION.] Mr. *K. Douglas*, seeing an hon. Gentleman (Mr. F. Buxton) in his place, wished to put a question to him. The hon. Gentleman had a notice standing on the book relative to the West-Indies, and he was anxious to receive an explanation from him as to the object which he had in view, with reference to that subject. They must all see the inconvenience of having a vague notice of this kind standing on the votes. He, therefore, inquired what was the object of the hon. Gentleman's intended motion? And he also called on him to fix on some positive day for bringing it forward.

Mr. *F. Buxton* said, his object was, to move a Resolution of that House, for the extinction of slavery. That Resolution, which he had not with him at the present moment, he had framed, with the assistance of a number of his friends. Little had been done by the colonial authorities, and he expected that little would be done by them. It was necessary, therefore, that the House should interfere, and that interference ought to have in view the abolition of slavery. He would most readily leave the matter in the hands of Government, if Government would take it up. If the House would allow him, he would bring on the Question on Tuesday next.

THE REFORM BILL.] Sir *William Rae* asked whether the second reading of the Scotch Reform Bill would come on that night, or whether any definite arrangement concerning it had been made?

Lord *Althorp* said, that it would be brought on in the course of the evening; but it was impossible to say at what hour.

On the Motion that the Speaker leave the Chair,

Sir *R. Peel* took the liberty of calling the attention of the noble Lord opposite to matters of detail connected with the Reform Bill, which involved considerations of very great importance. For the purpose of his argument in this case he would assume, that the principle was perfectly correct, and he would assume that it was expedient, to disfranchise sixty boroughs, and take away the privilege of returning one Member from forty-seven, that the right might hereafter be transferred to places of greater population. But, supposing that he admitted the principle to be a proper one in itself, he was sure the noble Lord would agree with him that the principle ought to be applied in a manner conformable to justice, and he thought it was of extreme importance, before the House went into a Committee, that they should guard against doing an injustice, which manifestly would be done, if the disfranchisement were made to fall on places of a larger population than others that were not disfranchised. He was sure that the position which he had laid down would be acquiesced in, both by the friends and opponents of the Bill. One of the Returns on the Table contained an account of the population in the different cities and boroughs in England, and, amongst others, of those which it was intended wholly to disfranchise, and of those from which one Member was to be withdrawn. The Return professed to be a Return of the population in each city and borough; but he apprehended that it was not. In some cases it was a Return of the population of the parish in which the borough was situated; and in other cases it was a Return of the population, not in the parish, but in the borough. It was quite clear that the House ought either to take the population in the parish or in the borough, and apply the rule indiscriminately to all places. He need not demonstrate the inconveniences of applying the principle in one case, and not applying it in the other. Take the case of the borough which he represented, with respect to which it was evidently a duty he owed to his constituents, to prevent the application of an unjust principle towards them. The parish in which Tamworth was situated contained 7,500 inhabitants. That part of the parish within the jurisdiction of the borough did not, in 1821, contain more than 3,500 inhabitants; therefore, according to the schedule of the Bill, Tamworth would be deprived of one of its Representatives.—Take the case of the borough of Bridgewater, or take the case of the borough of Calne. Calne appeared to contain a population of 5,600 inhabitants; and if the limits of the borough were identical with the limits of the parish, Calne ought not to be disfranchised; but if the limits of the borough were smaller than those of the parish and it contained less than 4,000 inhabitants it did not contain more than 3,500—there was no just principle upon which Calne should be protected and Tamworth disfranchised. Without himself moving for any returns, he would suggest to the noble Lord opposite, that the application of the principle should be made consistently with perfect justice, and he would therefore advise the noble Lord immediately to procure returns which would show what the population was in each parish and each borough. It appeared on the face of the return, that the parish of Bridgewater was co-extensive with the borough, but that only one-third part of the parish was entitled to vote for Representatives. Thus, although Bridgewater had 5,000 inhabitants, as far as the parish was concerned, yet, as far as the borough was concerned, he strongly suspected there would not be found 4,000 inhabitants within its limits. If this principle were applied to every borough, it would be found that in many there was no cause for disfranchisement.

Lord *Althorp* said, that he had taken the liberty of saying, last night, in answer to the member for Boroughbridge, that it was his intention to abide by the resolution of disfranchising the boroughs coming within the rules; but he at the same time stated, that if any mistake were made in the population returns, certainly it was not his intention to do anything unjust, as the hon. Gentleman had stated, and he had not the least objection to attend to suggestions of that nature. It was impossible, previous to bringing in the Bill, to ask for returns more specific than the population returns.

Mr. *F. Lewis* wished to know what rule had been followed in framing the proposition at present before the House. He would suggest the propriety of laying before the House the answers which had been returned to the inquiries respecting the population of each borough, in every case where a detailed answer had been given. He had seen a detailed answer from the borough of Radnor. That information had not been laid before the House. It was however in the power of the Home Office at once to lay it before the House, and it would supply a great mass of information which it would be extremely desirable to have.

Lord *John Russell* said, that it was obvious that the rule which applied to England did not apply to Wales, the systems being totally distinct. As to the information given to the Home Office, he had no hesitation in saying, that he was quite ready to lay the whole of that before the House. If the rule which had been laid down was favourable to a borough, it ought to be extended to Tamworth, or any other borough in a similar situation. He would see in what manner the information might best be laid before the House.

Mr. *Balfour* observed, that perhaps the noble Lord would say, that the Representation of Scotland should also receive a different rule from that of England. The boroughs of East Fife, the two Anstruthers, Crail, and others, which were to be disfranchised, contained a population of 6,000 inhabitants. These, therefore, taken together, ought not to be disfranchised. In this district the houses were more numerous than the houses in the two boroughs which still returned two Members, and more numerous than in the boroughs where the 8*l.* houses were still to return one Member.

Lord *Encombe* said, that he was anxious, as every individual was, to support the body which he represented, and, therefore, he would observe, with respect to Truro, that it appeared, according to the population returns, that there were 2,712 inhabitants in the parish of St. Mary; but there was also a note to this effect:—"The parishes of St. Clement and St. Mary, extending to the town of Truro, are supposed to have three times the population of the borough." He had received a paper which had not this note appended to it. In the year 1821 Truro actually had about 7,000 inhabitants, and it had now considerably more. He thought that the returns on which the Bill had proceeded were too incomplete to serve as the basis of Legislation, and he hoped the information promised by the noble Lord, would supply means of correcting them.

Mr. *Home Drummond* also complained of the inaccuracy of the returns, and expressed his wish to have more precise and certain information. This observation applied particularly to Scotland, for which the returns as to the houses rated at 10*l.* were very imperfect.

Mr. *G. Moore* said, that if every 10*l.* a year inhabitant within the limits of Dublin was to have a vote, it would actually amount to universal suffrage. There was not a single householder, holding a tenement of his own, who did not pay a rent of 10*l.* He hoped Government would take some steps to have the necessary information laid before the House as to the rates and cesses on houses in Ireland.

Mr. *Stanley* said, that if the hon. Member would suggest any returns which he could move for, which would throw greater light upon this subject as to the 10*l.* householders, Government would be happy to furnish him with the information. As to Dublin, there was a paper which would supply the hon. Member with what information he required: viz. the Returns of the Commissioners, who, having divided the houses into twenty different classes, had furnished an abstract, giving full information as to the 10*l.* householders in Dublin. There were 17,000 houses of the value of 10*l.* and upwards.

Mr. *O'Connell* suggested that the limits of the parishes should be taken as the limits of the boroughs.

Mr. *Stanley* thought there would be much greater inconvenience in that than leaving a discretionary power as to the limits of the borough.

Sir *Charles Forbes* said, with reference to the borough he represented (Malmesbury), that the population of that beautiful and thriving place was upwards of 7,000. Now, with every respect for the noble Lord, he would ask him whether it would not be the best way, at once for him to withdraw this Bill, for really and truly there were so many objections urged against it from all sides of the House, and objections so formidable, that if the noble Lord should succeed so far as to get it into Committee, which, however, he sincerely hoped would not be the case, it would be then plucked to pieces, feather by feather, and ultimately kicked out a mere skeleton.

An Hon. *Member* hoped, that as information was to be given with respect to the English boroughs, the same would be afforded with respect to the towns in Scotland.

Sir *R. H. Inglis* asked, whether it would not be better to wait for the new population returns, for, from what now appeared, if they were to legislate on the returns of 1821, the measure would be most inconsequent.

Lord *John Russell* was sorry to be obliged again to trespass on the House, but, with regard to the suggestion of the hon. member for the University, it would be impossible to comply with that. The new census was beginning at the present moment, but it would not be finished until July or August, and, were he to wait until then, let the House only consider the effect that would probably result as to the new returns. Something had already been said about Malton and its 4,005 inhabitants in 1821, and he wished the House to remember what a temptation it would afford to make false returns, when, by the addition of five persons, a borough might be secured from disfranchisement. With respect to the observations of the hon. member for Malmesbury, he admitted that there were some doubts as to the population of certain boroughs; and Malmesbury was one, Buckingham was another; and there were about six in all. Having admitted that, he could assure the hon. Gentleman, that he had too much respect for the decision of the House of Commons, which had permitted the second reading of the Bill, not to make his stand upon that ground, and endeavour to carry the Bill to a successful and triumphant conclusion.

Sir *Wm. Rae* said, he could not suppose that the same advantage of correct information would be denied to Scotland. Information was in its case doubly necessary, because there were now two returns inconsistent with each other.

Sir *G. Clerk* wished to know, whether the learned Lord had yet any accurate return of the 10*l.* householders in Scotland? If the principle of allowing them to vote were carried into effect, the Representation of all the counties in Scotland would, he believed, pass out of the hands of the landed interest, and become vested in the inhabitants of towns.

The *Lord Advocate* said, that independent of the reasons given by the noble Lord against delay, there was still less reason to require returns for Scotland, as the Bill for that country proceeded on the same data as that for England. It would be better to legislate on the census of 1821, inasmuch as it was the latest made of an unimpeachable character, and a new one now for this purpose would probably lead to great partiality. Besides, there were now upon the Table returns up to the present year of the inhabited houses rated at a rent of 10*l.* The apprehensions of the right hon. Baronet, as to the county Representation, were, in his opinion, unfounded.

An Hon. *Member* complained, that these returns were by no means in the best shape; and he must repeat the statement, that the present plan of Representation would throw the Representation of Scotland into the hands of the inhabitants of the manufacturing towns. There was no question, that when a great number of boroughs were to be disfranchised, many applications would be made to alter the determination taken with respect to them; but if they found such accidents as the passing over Tavistock and Calne, and the disfranchising of Tamworth, then it became necessary that the House should exercise more than usual vigilance.

The *Lord Advocate* said, in consequence of the time which the Reform Bill for England was likely to occupy in Committee, he should be obliged to postpone the second reading of the Reform Bill for Scotland until the 22nd of April.

Sir *Alexander Hope* could not allow the question to be disposed of without asking, whether it was the intention of the framers of the Bill, that the Scotch Clergy should remain in the same condition as they had been, or whether it was proposed that they should mingle the poison of politics with the discharge of their sacred duties, and, abandoning that course which had hitherto proved so eminently conducive to the moral health of the community, become again political partisans.

Colonel *Lindsay* said, he believed that the people of Scotland generally were averse from the details of the Bill, although some hon. Members had been at such pains to represent them as unanimous on that subject. He objected, however, to the delay which must take place, before the Bill could again come before the House for discussion, and observed, that great anxiety would be felt in Scotland during the intermediate period, from their ignorance of what was to be done.

Mr. *Hume* denied, that the people of Scotland were adverse to the Bill. From the one end of that country to the other they had expressed themselves in favour of it; and after the miserable minority—after the miserable minority, he repeated, on the question of Reform, he believed they could feel little anxiety on the subject. There were, to be sure, a few Gentlemen who got returned for Scotch counties, and fancied that they represented the opinions of all Scotland, who might, from feeling that it would affect their interests, oppose the Bill; but the great mass of the people were in its favour, as the petition from Renfrew, signed in a short time by 5,000 persons, sufficiently showed.

Mr. *Scott* denied, that the great mass of the respectable portion of the people of Scotland were in favour of this plan of Reform. On the contrary, it was chiefly supported by those who expected to gain from it. A good deal of the agitation about Reform proceeded, indeed, from the exertions of the hon. member for Middlesex, to whom, as he had heard many of the persons who petitioned in favour of Reform applied for instructions. And he was told that the hon. Member, in conveying those instructions, expressly enjoined all applicants to make no objections to the plan of Reform, but to take it as it was, so that there might be no doubt of its success. He had heard, indeed, that the hon. member for Middlesex actually made a tour through the South of Scotland, to forward the cause of Reform, and in order to make his progress the more effective, threw petitions for Reform from the windows of a mail-coach.

Mr. *Hume* said, the hon. Member charged him with being the agitator of Scotland. He denied that he had done or said anything to induce any part of the people of Scotland to petition in favour of Reform, until he received letters, begging him to point out the course which was fittest to be pursued. He believed that the opponents of Reform were mortified at the extent of agreement which prevailed among all parties on the subject of the Bill. They were pained to find the member for Waterford, the member for Preston, the members for Westminster, and men of all parties and degrees, uniting in favour of the Bill; and that seemed to him to be their greatest grievance. He supported the Bill because it was good for the present—yes, for the present—and if he found it did not produce all the good he expected, he certainly was not precluded from coming again to ask for more.

Mr. *Cutlar Ferguson* bore testimony to the popularity of the Reform Question in Scotland; but he thought that the details of the Bill, with respect to the increased power given to the manufacturing class, and the inhabitants of towns, in stifling and overcoming the votes of the agricultural portion of the community in the counties, required very serious consideration.

Sir *G. Murray*, without denying that a great portion of the people of Scotland were in favour of Reform, said, that he believed the county he had the honour to represent felt very little interest in the question. He agreed in the statements made by the hon. member for Kircudbright (Mr. C. Ferguson) as to the defects in the details of the Bill, but he wished to repeat the question of the hon. member for Linlithgowshire (Sir A. Hope) with respect to the Scotch clergy. If they were to be mingled up with politics, it would be most injurious. The Scotch clergy were enabled to preserve morality the more effectually for not interfering in politics, and were a connecting link between the great proprietors and the humbler classes of the community. He must contend, too, that the result of the change in Scotland would be, to compel the landlords to divide their land into small farms, that they might continue to exercise an influence over the elections. This, to be sure, the member for Middlesex would say called for the Ballot—and the Ballot he was ready to apply to it.—but he apprehended that the promoters of the Bill were not disposed to go so far, and that they would consider well before they produced that state of circumstances which would place the people of Scotland in such a situation.

The *Lord Advocate*, in reply to the questions of the hon. Members, said, it was the intention of the framers of the Bill to leave the Scotch clergy in the same condition as they found them. At the present moment a Clergyman, if he possessed the necessary qualification, could vote for a Member for a county, like any other person, and under the Bill he would retain the same power if he had the qualification prescribed by the Bill. The framers of it were not, however, wedded to this part of its provisions, and it was in the power of any Member in the Committee to exclude Clergymen from voting, if they thought fit. He had no wish to elude discussion on the Bill, but the details of the English Reform Bill would probably occupy so much of the time of the House, as to preclude him from bringing this measure on at an earlier day than the one he had already announced.

Captain *Wemyss* said, as he did not trouble the House often, he hoped to be indulged with a short hearing on this question. With regard to the English Bill, he concurred in the propriety of disfranchising the out-voters, and cutting off a certain number of boroughs. He also thought that the Representation in Scotland was not fit for the growing population, but he cautioned Ministers against going the length they proposed to go. He thought that every person possessing real property ought to have a vote. He was afraid, however, that the plan of Ministers would place the agricultural and manufacturing classes in opposition, and thereby cause a political warfare. He objected also to the franchise being given to the tenantry, because, if that were the case, the vote, in fact, would be given to the landlord, and the tenant would, in the long run, become his vassal. He approved of the principle on the whole as to the boroughs, though he could not see the propriety of disfranchising the district of burghs in Fife. If that was to be done because they were corrupt or rotten, he believed the remedy, in order to be effectual, ought to be more general. The hon. member for Middlesex had said, that all Scotland was alive to the measure, and he would not deny that there was a silent feeling on the subject, but at the same time he must say, that many had petitioned for the measure whom it could not affect. He knew one manufacturer on his own estate, who called his people together, and made them sign the petition, though none of them would have a vote. He had received a petition to present on the subject from the burgh of Auchtermuchty, and found that some time after, a duplicate of the petition had been presented by another Member, with only the addition of a few words in praise of Ministers. As far as the Fife tenantry were concerned, he knew they were alarmed on the subject.

An Hon. *Member* for Scotland bore testimony to the strong feeling in favour of the measure in that country, and was glad to see that the opposition petitions got up in the two capitals, London and Edinburgh, had turned out such failures.

SUPPLY. NAVY ESTIMATES.] The House resolved itself into a Committee of Supply.

The sums of 75,110*l.* for paying the wages of Ship-keepers, &c. on board Ships in Ordinary; 40,365*l.* for the Officers of the Admiralty; 30,929*l.* for defraying the expenses of the Navy Pay Office; 49,299*l.* 2*s.* to defray the expenses of the salaries of Officers, and contingent expenses, of the Navy-office, were voted. On the Resolution that there be granted the sum of 20,162*l.* 6*s.* to defray the salaries of Officers employed, and the contingent expenses of the scientific departments of the Navy,

Sir *Joseph Yorke* wished to take that opportunity of inquiring if the *Thetis* was supplied with a time-piece. That vessel was lost after a run of only twelve leagues.

Mr. *Hume* complained that, considering the magnitude of our military and civil marine, too little had been done by Great

Britain for the encouragement of scientific discovery.

Mr. *Warburton* suggested, that all small vessels should be provided with chronometers, and also, that the whole of the earth's surface should be surveyed and mapped, as a surveyor mapped a small district of country. At least during peace our vessels could make accurate surveys of the great ports and headlands, and fix their relative distances from each other.

Sir *Joseph Yorke* was really surprised to hear the two great economists and guardians of the public purse, like two Kings of Brentford—one of them elected too at Brentford—join in complaining of the inadequate expenditure of our funds on experimental science. It was enough that Government gave two chronometers to Officers who were willing to find one, so as to give the Officers a chance of taking correct mean time by the medium of three chronometers. More had been done by the scientific men of our country and our day than by those of other nations in any similar period in extent. The North-west and North-east coast of America had been very nearly completely explored and defined, by Captains Parry, Beachy, and Franklin. Had the hon. Members ever heard of that poor man, Captain Ross, who saw the Croker Mountains stretching across the bottom of Lancaster Sound, where no mountains ever existed, as it had since appeared? or of the late expense of a voyage straight through the body of the ice, by boats, sledges, and ponies, to the Pole itself; and the charge of writing the plan out, and supporting it in the *Quarterly Review*, by Mr. Secretary Barrow? Or did the member for Bridport wish the Admiralty to send out vessels all over the seas to make observations, stuffed with chronometers, as turkeys are stuffed full with chestnuts? Enough had been done, in his mind, to secure the high character for science of this country, and to protect her civil and military marine, during the late Administration.

Sir *James Graham* informed the hon. Members, that at present there were various expeditions afloat for surveying the Adriatic and Grecian Archipelago, Cape Horn and the neighbouring coasts, New Zealand and the mouths of the River St. Lawrence. Three vessels also were now surveying the coasts of Great Britain, of which, even within these five or six years, there were no accurate surveys extant.

Resolution agreed to.

A grant was next proposed of 82,249*l.* 10*s.*, to defray the salaries of Officers, and the contingent expenses of the Dock-yards.

Mr. *Hume* expressed his wish that the Government would turn their immediate and particular attention to the very large establishments that were kept up in this department. The expenses of seven dock-yards fell very heavily upon the public.

Sir *James Graham* assured the hon. Gentleman, that his Majesty's Government had the subject under consideration. Material reductions had been already made, and they would continue to study economy in every instance in which it was practicable.

Sir *George Clerk* complained, that the Government did not adopt the true course in the retrenchments which they made. The reductions took place in those salaries which were already small in amount, while those upon a large scale were left untouched.

Sir *Joseph Yorke* approved of the general course pursued by the First Lord of the Admiralty, but wished to see a more equal system of reduction. The salary of the right hon. Baronet had been reduced from 5,000*l.* to 4,500*l.*, which was certainly not too much for the efficient performance of the duties, and he thought that salaries of 500*l.* or 600*l.* ought to undergo a similar diminution.

Mr. *Hume* observed, that at Chatham dock-yard there were twenty clerks employed, at an expense of 4,100*l.*; at Portsmouth, thirty-one, at 6,426*l.*; and at Plymouth thirty, at 5,900*l*; while in private dock-yards, where 300 or 400 men were employed, two clerks were found sufficient. This proved that abuses must exist. But the case was still worse in the foreign dock-yards, where 21,200*l.* yearly was paid to clerks and overseers, while the wages of the workmen did not exceed 38,000*l.*

Sir *James Graham* again stated, that all the reductions had been made which were at present found practicable, but he would still have the same object in view, and would neglect no opportunity of acting upon a system of economy.

Sir *Byam Martin* said, in proof of the extensive reductions which had taken place, that it was a daily complaint with the Commissioners, that they could not get through the business so rapidly as they wished, owing to the small number of their hands, In answer to a question from Lord Granville Somerset,

Sir *James Graham* said, that the Government had under their consideration a plan in reference to the coast blockade, which he trusted would be satisfactory, both in the saving of expense and other important points of view.

Vote agreed to; as was a vote of 608,200*l.* for the pay of 32,000 men, for one year, at 29*s.* per man, per month. The right hon. Baronet stated that this sum was 3*s.* per month less than was taken last year for the same purpose.

UNAUTHORISED APPLICATION OF SUPPLIES.] On the question that the Chairman leave the Chair,

Sir *Byam Martin* said, he wished to call the attention of the Committee to a matter involving the credit of the King's Service. He did not intend to trouble the House for a long time on the subject, but he thought the matter was of sufficient importance to call on him to bring it under consideration. It had been publicly asserted, and the assertion had been studiously put abroad, that the late Board of Admiralty, and himself among the number, had made an improper use of the public money. A more scandalous and slanderous falsehood had never been uttered. He now called on the right hon. Baronet, the First Lord of the Admiralty, to state, whether, in the late Board of Admiralty, the Navy Pay-office or the Victualling Board, one shilling, or even one farthing, had ever been applied otherwise than for the public service? He called upon the right hon. Baronet to state, with that frankness and candour which always distinguished him, his opinion on this subject, formed as that opinion was upon an examination made by the right hon. Baronet himself. He was sure that a feeling of regard for the credit of the King's Service, and for the honour of the individuals concerned, some of whom now served under the right hon. Baronet, would induce him to give an explicit answer to the question, and to say whether they had ever improperly expended the public money. It was a matter of importance to all the parties concerned, and he asked not only for himself, but for the late First Lord of the Admiralty, and for all the persons connected with all the Navy departments, from the highest officer down to the meanest messenger or servant in them, whether by any one of these persons, any one single farthing of public money had ever been expended except in the public service?

Sir *J. Graham* did not hesitate at once to answer the question. The hon. Baronet asked whether he (Sir J. Graham) was of opinion, after the investigation of the subject that had been carried on under his direction, whether in the Admiralty, the Navy Board, of which the hon. Baronet was at the head, and the Victualling Office, any portion of the money voted by that House for the public service had been applied to other uses? He answered at once, that decidedly no money had been so appropriated by the members of the different departments referred to. The hon. Baronet then went a step further, and asked him whether he thought any of the public money had been improperly expended by these Boards? With that frankness and candour for which the hon. Baronet had the kindness to give him credit, he would state—he was bound to state—his real opinion, which was, that he did think an improper use had been made of the money, inasmuch as some of the sums voted by that House, to be applied to particular purposes, had been applied to purposes of an entirely different kind. He thought that such an application of the public money opened a door to great abuses, and that if great abuses had not been committed, at least, the system was liable to produce them. He, having discovered this practice, had thought it his duty to bring the matter under the notice of that House. He did not mean to inculpate any one. He repeated, that these monies had not been applied to the use of any one individual, that he had not accused any one of malversation, but of misappropriation of these monies, proceeding from an error of judgment; and from the usages of ancient practices, which had long continued unchecked, but which became daily more and more dangerous, from the excess to which these applications might be carried. Certainly, without any pretence for saying there had been any malversation, there had been an extensive misappropriation of the public money; he had, therefore, thought it his duty to put a check upon the practice at present, and to take ample precautions against its future recurrence. If he had not decidedly entertained the opinion he had just expressed, it would have been hardly possible that he, in his situation, could have had to answer the hon. Baronet in his situation, who was still one of his colleagues in the Navy Department, and who was at this moment still holding the office of Comptroller of the Navy.

Sir *B. Martin* admitted fully the truth of what had been stated by the right hon. Baronet, as to the expenditure of the public money on objects for which it had not been specifically voted; but he wished to observe, that that had been the practice of the service for a long time past, and that the custom had always been to keep up a greater number of men than had been voted. It had also been the practice to take the sums stated in the Estimate as the gross sum that would be applicable to all the purposes of the Navy Department. That practice had received the sanction and support of Grenville, of Fox, of North, and of Welbore Ellis; and he would venture to say, that, do what they might, the practice must still continue, unless that House voted such ample sums as would be sufficient to meet all exigencies. He had proofs in his possession to establish the truth of his opinion on that point, but he would not trouble the House with them at that moment. He repeated, that though a different practice might be now adopted, it could not long continue. The House might make the Appropriation Act one day, and a gale the next might blow it into atoms. He would only add, that what had been done by the late First Lord of the Admiralty, had been done by all preceding First Lords of the Admiralty, whether Whig or Tory.

Sir *J. Graham* thought this was not a convenient opportunity for discussion upon measures he had adopted with reference to this subject; and it was hardly decorous for him to enter into the discussion with the gallant Admiral, who certainly had produced the authority of great names, but who in his statement had omitted one most important feature of the case, namely, that with respect to this subject there had been a complete change of the law in the year 1798, when a new form of the Appropriation Act was adopted, so that all the practice and all the authorities of previous Lords of the Admiralty went for nothing. He did admit, that with respect to the repair of ships, an estimate was still but an estimate, and might fail in being correct; but he contended, that when through particular circumstances, it did fail in correctness, it was due to the Commons of England, that there should be no concealment; that nothing should be kept back, but that, foreseeing the necessity of making a heavier charge than before, that necessity should be frankly and truly stated. They might make the best of the matter, but he repeated, that it was due to the Commons of England to let them know the exact appropriation of the money they had voted, and that had not been the practice for the last four or five years. He had before mentioned the unauthorised expenditure of public money at Weovel, and at other places, and he would now refer to two other cases of the same sort that he had recently discovered. The first of these was the erection of the mills at Deptford, which were connected with the manufactures going on in the Victualing Yards there. The erection of these mills was commenced in the year 1826, and was finished in 1827, and the cost was 76,237*l.* The whole sum voted by Parliament for these buildings was 8,000*l.* The other case was that of the Naval Hospital at Chatham, which was likewise commenced in 1826, and finished in 1827. That erection cost 61,659*l.*, and only 7,000*l.* had been voted for it. He was prepared at the proper time to go into the discussion of this subject upon all the grounds connected with it; and when he did so—he was sure if that House was not lost to all sense of what was due to its own dignity—he was sure that they would take care that such practices as those to which he had referred should not be repeated.

Sir *G. Clerk* said, it had always been the wish of the Lords of the Admiralty so to frame the Estimates that they should not be likely to exceed the sums that might be wanted. It was impossible to check the expenditure in the manner supposed by the right hon. Baronet, for, after it had been ordered, the details of that expenditure never came again under the notice of the Board of Admiralty, nor had they till very lately the means of knowing how the money had been expended. Ships were generally three years on a foreign station; they were then ordered home, and others were sent out to relieve them. Between the time of the home ships getting out and the ships on the foreign station coming home, a double expense of wages arose, and as the number of ships thus relieved was not the same in every year, it became impossible always to be aware of the exact amount that would be required for that branch of the service. He was not a little astonished when he heard the hon. members for Middlesex and the Queen's County express their surprise at the discovery that the money voted for the purchase of timber should have been applied in the payment of wages. That application took place in 1827, and under peculiar circumstances. The expenses of that year were greater than had been anticipated. A number of men were sent in ships to the Tagus; and as it was impossible to leave the coasts of Kent and Sussex unprotected, a greater number of men was employed, and the amount of money required for wages was greater than had been anticipated. Up to the year 1829, the rate of wages had been fixed at 2*l.* 9*s.* per month. The amount too was increased by the length of time our squadron was obliged to remain abroad. That was not the amount of wages of particular men, but it was the average. In the year 1829, however, on account of the deficiency of the sum voted for wages in the preceding years, the Government were compelled to apply to the House for a Vote, calculated at 2*l.* 12*s.* per month. He (Sir G. Clerk) then stated that on a former occasion the deficiency of wages was made up from the surplus arising from the sale of stores. The recent surprise of the hon. Members was therefore not easily to be accounted for. What was the result of the increase of the estimate of the wages for 1829? Why, this; that in that year the difference between the estimate and the expenditure only amounted to 25*l.* In 1827 there was 33,000 men employed, and the wages amounted to 191,000*l.* more than the sum voted for them. The aggregate of the excess of the expenditure over the estimate in that and the two following years, owing to the peculiar circumstances he had stated, amounted to 404,000*l.*; but, during the same period, the money expended in timber was nearly 1,000,000*l.* less than had been voted. So that in the end the country lost nothing through the system to which the right hon. Baronet objected. Besides this, the Admiralty had nothing to do with the payment of wages, which was under the immediate control of the Navy Board. With respect to the direction of expenditure upon public works connected with the Victualling Board, he believed it would be found that, having surplus money in their hands, they expended that money on works which the Admiralty and that House had successively sanctioned. After any works had received the sanction of the Admiralty and of Parliament, it was left to the particular department to which they related to carry them into execution, and on that department depended the question of how soon the works were to be finished, or how long they were to be delayed. The Government, anxious as much as possible to keep down the annual expenditure, desired that no works which were not absolutely necessary might be pressed forward; and some public works had therefore gone on slowly, in order that the expenditure for the particular year might be kept down. It would frequently be consistent with good economy to proceed more rapidly with these works; but the wish of the Government, he had before stated, restrained the particular department from proceeding with them very rapidly. With respect to the works at Weovel, he would just mention one circumstance. When it was stated to the Treasury that the new buildings required at that place might be erected by the money that would be obtained from the sale of the materials of the old and useless buildings there, authority was given for the department to go on with those works. The whole of the expenditure stated to be necessary was 50,000*l.*; and the old buildings when sold produced nearly that sum. He found that a sum of 80,000*l.* had been paid for the wharf wall, and other works and repairs, since the right hon. Baronet had come into office. Surely, if the right hon. Baronet wished to claim the merit of consistency, he ought to have refused to pay the money which had been expended on works undertaken without authority of Parliament. He was prepared to admit, that that caution, which the right hon. Baronet wished to introduce into the department with which he was connected, might in, some instances, be beneficial. As far as the late Board of Admiralty was concerned, he could assure the House that the members of that Board desired nothing more than that the strictest scrutiny should be instituted into the manner in which the public money had been expended. He should consider it a personal obligation to any hon. Member who would move for papers that would lead to a full inquiry.

Lord *Althorp* suggested that the hour was passed which had been fixed for entering upon the subject of the Civil List. As the hon. Baronet had had the opportunity of making his explanation, perhaps the House would consider that sufficient.

The House resumed.

Outfit for the Queen.] Lord Althorp moved the Order of the Day for the House to resolve itself into a Committee on the Civil List.

Sir *T. Freemantle* said, that before the Speaker left the Chair, he wished to call the attention of the House to a subject immediately connected with the Civil List. It had been the original intention of the late Ministers to propose the grant of 50,000*l.* to her present Majesty for her outfit; but it seemed, that in a communication on the subject with the King, his Majesty had expressed his gracious determination not to accept that or any other sum for such a purpose. He could not think it right that the House should acquiesce in any such arrangement; and the country was not come to such a pass, that it was not able to make her Majesty the same allowance that had been given to other Queens. Since the date when it was said that his Majesty had refused a sum for the outfit of the Queen, it had been stated on competent authority, that the Revenue had increased so much, that there could be no objection to the grant on the ground of financial difficulty. He was, however of opinion, that if Ministers were obliged to borrow the money, they ought to press the grant upon his Majesty. The sum of 50,000*l.* had been given to Queen Charlotte—100,000*l.* to the late Queen—and a very large sum to the Princess of Wales—and it was not fit that her Majesty should be placed in a situation where she must incur debts. In twelve months the House might be called upon to make good the deficiencies it had itself occasioned by ill-judged parsimony. He threw out these remarks for the consideration of the House, and, if he were supported, he was ready to take its sense upon the question. He begged to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, whether he was disposed, under the altered circumstances, to alter his views regarding the vote for the outfit of the Queen?

Lord *Althorp* observed, that the sum proposed to his Majesty had been 50,000*l.* but even 25,000*l.* had been refused, with that consideration and generosity which distinguished the present King, and endeared him to all his subjects. Her Majesty wished that no proposition of the kind should be made to the House, and he did not, therefore, feel himself justified in deviating from the course he had already adopted.

An Hon. *Member* expressed his opinion that it ill became the Representatives of a great nation not to make a grant which he was persuaded was necessary almost for the personal comfort of her Majesty. It was impossible to go too far in supplicating his Majesty to accept the grant.

Mr. *Hunt* thought, that the King had done himself the highest honour in the course he had taken, and he was sure that he had raised himself in the opinion and established himself in the affections of his people. He could not conceive why this question was now renewed, unless the hon. Members who revived it were desirous of withdrawing from the King and Queen some portion of the just popularity they had acquired. If the Aristocracy was disposed to give the Queen a large sum, he should of course not object; but he never would consent that the money should be taken from the pockets of the people.

Mr. *Littleton* was sure that this question, on which there was a strong feeling, would not be made a party matter. The country felt the deepest gratitude to her Majesty, for the admirable character she had maintained; and he agreed that it did not become the Representatives of a great, and he would say an opulent country, to refuse 25,000*l.*; particularly as he thought that her Majesty must have already incurred debts to that amount.

Mr. *Hume* could not refrain from expressing his utter surprise at the introduction of this subject. He must say, that he thought it looked very like bidding for the Royal favour, as if the hon. Members had been set on. He did not assert that it was so, but that it looked like it. [*no, no.*] Surely he might be allowed to think, and to state what he thought. The question seemed brought forward only to embarrass the King's Ministers. If not, why was it not introduced when the Chancellor of the Exchequer brought forward the Civil List without any such item? He was sorry that the hon. member for Staffordshire had lent himself to such an attempt.

Mr. *O'Connell* fully concurred with the hon. member for Middlesex, and most decidedly objected to the grant of one shilling more of the public money than even the last Administration thought necessary.

Mr. *Curteis* expressed his utter astonishment at the proposition of forcing public money upon their Majesties; in the name of his constituents and of the country at large, he protested against such an outrageous proposition. He had at that moment, in his hand a Petition from between 400 and 500 persons, complaining of the bitterest distress. Surely the present was a time when Ministers ought to be backed whenever they were inclined to make reductions, and in that course he would do his utmost, not only to back them, but to urge them forward. The country was indebted to his Majesty for making the sacrifice, and he was confident that Ministers knew too well what they owed to the country to listen to such a proposition.

The House resolved itself into a Committee.

Civil List.] Lord *Althorp* said, that before he proceeded with the subject to which the Order of that Day referred, he could not help adverting to the short discussion which had just taken place. The fact was, that in refusing the proposition for an outfit for her Majesty, his Majesty had only acted in accordance with that generous line of conduct which he had followed since his accession to the Throne; that in doing so he had manifested that kind attention which he had always paid to the wants and wishes of his people, and it might be truly said, that his Majesty had proved himself by that, as well as by every other act of his life, entitled to their gratitude and affection. It was to his Majesty solely that the obligation for the sacrifice which had been made in this instance was due. He wished to state distinctly, that it was to his Majesty's generosity and kindness that the people were indebted for the refusal of the proposition for an outfit. He thought it necessary to state distinctly, in consequence of what had fallen from the hon. member for Sussex, that neither to the right hon. Gentleman opposite, nor to his Majesty's present Ministers, belonged any of the merit of that part of the arrangement; it was solely and entirely attributable to his Majesty himself. To render the Resolution intelligible which he was about to propose, he would first state the alterations which he had suggested in the plan of the Civil List. The first alteration was one of principle: it was the withdrawing from the account of the Civil List all expenses not immediately applicable to the dignity of the Crown, and to the household of his Majesty. In former times the Civil List had applied to the whole of the Civil expenditure of the country. By degrees, and even before the time of Mr. Burke, but especially in the year 1782, a large proportion of the regular public expenditure had been withdrawn from the Civil List, and carried to other heads of the public account. It was his opinion, that none of the regular expenses of the State ought ever to appear upon the Civil List, inasmuch as they ought to be under the constant and vigilant control of Parliament, and ought not to be voted permanently at the commencement of each reign. The other alterations of the Civil List which he had had the honour of proposing in the month of November last, consisted principally in a reduction of the amount of the pensions, and in a different mode of stating them. The amount of the pensions upon the Civil List, chargeable upon England, Scotland, and Ireland, had been 154,000*l.*, and an attempt had been made to reduce them to 140,000*l.* He had thought it his duty to propose a reduction of the total amount of these pensions to 75,000*l.* and this sum was to include all pensions payable upon the Civil List voted in lieu of the hereditary revenues of the Crown. In making up to the Crown a grant in lieu of its hereditary revenue, it was necessary to explain, that the Crown would have felt itself called upon to pay these pensions out of its hereditary revenue had they not been otherwise provided for by a vote of Parliament. It would be difficult for the House to give separate pensions to every individual to whom the Crown might wish to show its favours. Upon this ground alone, even if there were no others, he should hold that it was right and proper that a certain class and amount of pensions should be placed upon the Civil List. There had, however, been different modes suggested of doing this. One proposition had been, to make a large addition to the Privy Purse, which would enable the Crown to bestow pensions without the advice or concurrence of its confidential servants. He had always thought this to be a most unconstitutional and inexpedient proposition, and one that might lead and probably would frequently lead to great inconvenience, and to much public mischief; for nothing could be so essential to the good Government of the country as that the Crown should not act in such matters but through the medium of its constitutional and responsible advisers. Times had existed in which the Crown had not acted quite cordially with its Ministers and if this power of granting pensions were left entirely to the Crown, it might possibly be delegated to irresponsible and bad persons. All such pensions ought to be given upon the advice of responsible persons, in accordance with the great doctrine of the Constitution, that no Sovereign ought to do any thing but upon the advice of a known and responsible Minister. Such were the points in which the Civil List, as he had originally proposed it, differed from all former Civil Lists. This Civil List had been referred to a Select Committee of that House, and in the consideration which the committee had given to it, it was necessary to state, that the committee had not been invested with any power to call upon persons to give their evidence before it, or to require the production of papers. He apprehended that the cause of this had been, that the House was not willing that the expenses of his Majesty should be examined into in detail, and certainly he would say, it was not consistent with the respect due to his Majesty to examine into the detail of those expenses of his household which applied to him in his character as an individual. Though the Committee had not been invested with the power to examine witnesses or call for papers, questions were asked by it to a certain extent, and to that extent, in giving the answers, he had felt himself responsible. The questions which had been put could be answered only by him, and only to the extent that he thought they should be answered; therefore he was in every respect responsible upon this point. He should take it upon himself to say, that although there had been no objection to the Committee's inquiring into that part of the expenditure which applied to the Officers of State, and to the Officers of the Household, there was decidedly an objection to its going into any examination of that part of it which related to the immediate service of his Majesty. The Committee did examine into different offices of the household. In the first class, the Committee took up the subject of the Privy Purse, and especially of that of her Majesty the Queen. They had no means of estimating what these expenses actually were. It was absolutely impossible for the Committee to go into the details of such a subject, and all, therefore, that the Committee could do was, to proceed carefully upon the ground of precedents. They found that the sum of 60,000*l.* had been granted to his Majesty for so long a period as the expenses of the Privy Purse, that it was a precedent to be followed with propriety. They found likewise that 50,000*l.* per annum had been granted for the Privy purse of the Queen Consort of George 2nd, and that the same sum had been granted to the Queen of George 3rd, in the second year after her marriage, and that at a later period the vote had been increased to the amount of 58,000*l.* The Committee therefore had decided, that it would be expedient to recommend that the House should grant to their Majesties, for the Privy Purse, the sum of 110,000*l.* In the second class the Committee went into the examination of the different offices of the Household, and here some reductions had been thought proper by the Committee. The proposition was for the grant of 130,300*l.* and the Committee had reported that 119,344*l.* 10*s.* would be sufficient—making a diminution of 10,955*l.* 10*s.* It was proposed that a few offices should be reduced. The salary of the Lord Chamberlain was to be lowered from 3,085*l.* to 2,000*l.* and reductions of various amounts were to be made in the amounts annually given to the Vice-Chamberlain, the Groom of the Stole, the Lords and Grooms of the Bed Chamber, the Captain and Board of Gentlemen Pensioners, the Captain and Yeomen of the Guard, four Physicians, two Surgeons, and the Usher of the Black Rod; those reductions amounted, in the whole, to 7,426*l.* In the Lord Steward's Department the reductions only amounted to 1,494*l.* 10*s.* including the Lord Steward, the Treasurer of the Household, the Comptroller of the Household, and the Secretary to the Lord Steward. In the department of the Master of the Horse, the reductions recommended amounted to 2,035*l.* including the salary of the Master of the Horse, which was to be lowered from 3,350*l.* to 2,500*l.* a year, with other diminutions in payments to the Chief Equerry, the four Equerries, four Pages of Honour, the Veterinary Surgeon, and the Equerry of the Crown Stables. The third class applied to the expenses of the departments of the Household, which included all money laid out in the purchase of different necessaries and the Committee having considered the estimates of the right hon. Gentleman opposite (Mr. Goulburn), as well as those which he (Lord Althorp) had laid before them, and having given to both the closest examination, they did not think it possible for the King to live, as his Majesty was now living, in the hospitality in which he was pleased to indulge, and which every man in the country must wish him to continue, under the sum that had hitherto been granted. No reduction in this respect could be made without the danger, and even the certainty, of the Civil List getting into debt. Under the fourth class of the Civil List, the Committee had recommended that the small sum of 500*l.* should be deducted from the Royal Bounty for the reward of special services, and that the sum of 74*l.*, paid to the Arabic Professor should not appear upon the Civil List. The fifth class included the head of Pensions which were recommended to be reduced from 140,000*l.* to 75,000*l.* per annum. These were the total of the Estimates that were proposed, by command of his Majesty, to be granted in lieu of the hereditary revenue of the Crown. The Government had recommended a total sum of 510,000*l.* to be given as the amount of the Civil List; but the Committee, thinking that a small reduction might be made, had thought proper to recommend a grant of 498,470*l.* 10*s.* per annum. The reductions which the Committee had recommended were of a very trifling amount, indeed of so trifling an amount, that they could not form any saving to be of service to the country. He confessed that he thought that the making of such reductions as these would be treating his Majesty in a way that he did not think that the country wished his Majesty to be treated in. He had not felt himself justified in proposing to the House the reductions which the Committee had recommended. He took the responsibility upon himself, for from the mode in which his Majesty had conducted himself, the people did not wish to have reductions made from the Civil List which could be of no benefit to the country. He should therefore propose a vote of 510,000*l.* Upon the grounds that he had stated, he should feel himself fully justified in putting that vote to the House. The noble Lord concluded by moving, "That it is the opinion of this Committee that, for the support of the dignity of the Crown, and to defray the expenses of his Majesty's Household, there be granted to his Majesty the nett yearly revenue of 510,000*l.* commencing from the day of the demise of his late Majesty, and that the said sum be paid out of the Consolidated Fund.

Mr. *Hume* concurred with the noble Lord, that whatever was necessary for the support of the comfort of his Majesty, and of the dignity of his Crown, the House ought to be prepared to grant. Although the noble Lord seemed to consider 10,000*l.* or 12,000*l.* a saving of no importance, he should say, that in point of principle, it was a saving of great consequence to the country, and to the character of his Majesty's Government. Although he had not agreed with the Committee upon many principal points, he hoped that no Gentleman could say that he was not disposed to accede to whatever was likely to conduce to the comfort of his Majesty, and to the honour and dignity of his Crown. But upon this subject he had drawn a line, and upon this he was anxious that the House should decide. He was willing that the House should give all that was necessary, but nothing more. In a sum of half a million, the saving of 12,000*l.* might be considered as immaterial; but he should maintain, that if only 10*l.* could be saved, the principle ought to regulate the proceedings of that House. No sovereign had a right to expect to be treated more liberally by the public than his present Majesty. Whilst he was manifesting his generous sympathy with the wants and wishes of his subjects, they were bound to yield their opinions, and to meet what might appear to him to be necessary to support the comfort and uphold the dignity of the situation in which he was placed. He, however, felt anxious to take from the Civil List what, by the unanimous opinion, or at least the opinion of a very considerable majority, of the Committee, was thought to be superfluous, after ten or fifteen days' deliberation. As regarded the sum of 110,000*l.* for the Privy Purse, he felt quite satisfied that less than such an amount could not meet the fair and reasonable wants of his Majesty. Although this might appear to be a very large sum when compared to small incomes, yet when reference was made to the situation of their Majesties, he was quite prepared to say, that the sum of 110,000*l.* was nothing more than their Majesties were entitled to receive from the Commons of England.

The next division of the Civil List amounted to 130,300*l.*, and the Committee proposed to take off 11,000*l.* This class comprised the salaries of the Lord Chamberlain, the Lord Steward, the Master of the Horse, and other great officers of the Household. In deducting from this fund, nothing would be taken from the comfort of his Majesty, but only from the receipts of the high-bred Officers of State. In a case where economy was to be promoted, he had a right to ask the House to attend to what the Committees had done. The Lord Steward received a salary of 2,436*l.* per annum, and it was proposed to reduce it to 2,000*l.* a year. The Committee proposed to reduce the salaries of the Treasurer and Comptroller from 904*l.* a year each, to 500*l.*, and the Secretary from 1,000*l.* to 750*l.* The Lord Chamberlain was an officer of rank, and his duties were important, but he possessed great honours, and enjoyed extensive patronage, and the Committee had thought that his salary should be reduced from 3,085*l.* to 2,000*l.* a year. As these officers were subject to expenses in the performance of their duty, it was right that the public should pay them. In no other part of the world than England did such dignified officers of State receive salaries, but they performed their duties as honorary distinctions. The Committee had acted liberally towards the officers, and with due economy towards the public. The Committee had reduced the Vice-chamberlain's salary from 2,000*l.* to 1,500*l.* a year, and that of the Master of the Horse from 3,300*l.* to 2,500*l.* per annum. The Chief Equerries were proposed to be reduced from 1,000*l.* each to 750*l.* These deductions, which amounted to 11,000*l.*, were not upon the half million, the total amount of the Civil List, but from the salaries of certain officers, and it made a difference equal to twenty per cent. He regretted that the noble Lord should treat a deduction of twenty per cent upon one head of service as a trifle unworthy his notice. The example of taking 20*l.* per cent from the salaries of the higher officers ought to be followed with respect to inferior officers, who were receiving remuneration at the full war price of every thing. A sum of 8,229*l.* would fall into the Civil List at the death of certain officers, whose services were already dispensed with. The sum of 13,450*l.*, the superannuation payments to the servants of his late Majesty, would fall in, and prove another acquisition to the officers of his Majesty's establishment. These sums would amount in all to 130,300*l.*, and he agreed that this sum, as it fell in, should revert to his Majesty. Ministers had said that they were anxious that a general review should take place of all salaries, so as to enable them to judge of how far their own salaries might be reduced, and from this to form a scale of reduction from the salaries of inferior persons. When the Committee upon Salaries made their report to the House, he supposed that the noble Lord would treat their economy as of little consequence, and advise the House not to attend to it. After accounts had been laid before a Committee, was the House to be told to pay no attention to the report of that Committee? He begged the noble Lord not to place the House in so awkward a situation. The Committee had decided upon the tradesmen's bills without going into any detail. Upon the fourth class he had differed very much from the Committee, for he could not conceive why any secret-service money should be placed at the disposal of his Majesty, when there was another annual vote of secret-service money to the extent of 50,000*l.* He next objected to the charities upon the Civil List, for in disposing of these his Majesty knew no more about them than he did: they were disposed of by Ministers, and the effect was, to swell out the Civil List, and make it appear that his Majesty was receiving a larger sum than he actually did receive. Many of these charities he knew to be of the most exceptionable nature. Neither he nor the hon. member for Queen's County were present at the drawing up the report of the Committee, as neither of them concurred in it. Now he would ask any man, whether the charge for pensions added anything to the support of the dignity of the Crown? Certainly not; for that charge held out to the people, that a much greater sum than was necessary was wanted for the support of the dignity of the Crown. The sum taken was greater by 75,000*l.* than the sum that was necessary. He was not called upon to state individual instances of abuses in the Pension List; but he took the matter upon the broad principle, which he defied any man to defend. On this ground it was his intention to propose a motion, the purport of which would be, that these pensions should not be borne on this Civil List, but that they should be transferred to some other fund. If this were granted, he had no hesitation in stating, that it was his intention to propose, further, that no money should be paid on account of these pensions, until it was pointed out for what public services they had been granted. There could be no harm in this, for he was sure that it could not be considered that these pensions had been granted for a longer period than the life of the late King. Out of a sum of 1,937,836*l.* which had been paid in Pensions, no less than 1,900,000*l.* had been granted to individuals who had performed no public services whatever. The Pension List amounted to 150,000*l.*, and yet all that the noble Lord proposed to raise by the steam-tax was 75,000*l.*; so that if the Pension List was removed, the noble Lord might get rid of any necessity to impose this tax, and save 75,000*l.* into the bargain. However, he did not propose that the whole of the Pension List should be removed. If half of it were taken off, the noble Lord might withdraw his proposal for a very unpopular tax. Now, in this view of the case, how could it be said that the people had been relieved as much as it was possible to relieve them? He was sorry to have detained the House so long, but he thought that he should not have performed his duty as a member of the Committee, if he had not made this statement. He should propose, as an Amendment, that there be voted for his Majesty's Civil List the sum of 423,470*l.* instead of 510,000*l.* This Amendment would deduct from the vote proposed by the noble Lord, 75,000*l.* for Pensions, and the 12,000*l.* which the Committee had proposed to take off. These reductions would not be inconsistent with the terms of the vote proposed, for the sums which he wished to take off were not necessary for the personal comfort of the King, or for the support of the dignity of the Crown.

Sir *Joseph Yorke* said, that he would not detain the House two minutes. He protested against the hon. member for Middlesex using the name of the Sovereign in the way in which he had used it. The hon. Member, when he thought that the Sovereign had behaved like a good boy, declared that he had no objection to the grant; but when the hon. Member thought the King was a bad boy, he objected to the grant. Now he thought that this was very unfair. The grant was made to the Crown, not to the individual. He could not help feeling, that the Committee was placed in the most inconsistent situation in which Gentlemen had ever yet found themselves. This Government came in with the pledge of the most unflinching economy, and the last Government went out because they were thought somewhat too prodigal. The Civil List was the particular point on which they went out. Then came the present Government, who referred the Civil List to a Committee; that Committee had made a report, and now down came the noble Lord, and, like all other Ministers, he had said to them—"I don't care two straws about the recommendations of the Committee." For his own part, he should vote for the recommendations of the Committee.

Sir *G. Warrender* did expect that the proposition of the Committee would have been agreed to, as the reductions suggested by the Committee took away nothing of what was necessary for the support of the dignity of the Crown, or the maintenance of the personal comfort of his Majesty. If this course were not adopted, he must say that the time and labour of the Committee would have been absolutely thrown away; and he, as one of the Committee, could not help feeling so. He was a friend to reduction, but he could not, on principle, bring his mind to say, that the pensions ought to be taken away; because he was sure, that custom had justified the opinion that those pensions were granted for the lives of the holders of them. He had no objection, however, to see the pensions removed from the Civil List.

Mr. *Hume.*—Well, that is all I ask.

Sir *G. Warrender* begged his hon. friend's pardon. His hon. friend's demand went much further. In a word, he was prepared to agree in the recommendations of the Committee, although, at the same time, he could not conceal his fear that the somewhat more than inconvenient consequence—namely, the Crown incurring debt—might result from those recommendations being carried into effect.

Mr. *Phillpotts* was understood to say, that he did not think that any Minister, however honest, could do full justice to the country without endangering some of the leading interests upon which his Administration must depend. He thought that the Pension List was within this principle. To the Pension List many noble families had been in the habit of resorting, to obtain support for their needy families and connexions,—and no Minister, unaided by the declared sense of that House, would be found bold enough to encounter the hostility of those noble personages, by voluntarily surrendering a power on which so great an influence necessarily depended. The pensions hitherto charged on the Civil List might be divided into two classes—the one consisting of rewards or remunerations to individuals for services performed; the other, of provisions for favoured or distressed individuals. Against the first of the classes it was far from his wish to raise an objection. Whenever services had been rendered to the country by any individual, the people were ready to evince their gratitude, and no reward which could be suggested, within the bounds of reason, was ever deemed excessive. Whether the names of the individuals who had distinguished themselves should be privately placed on the Pension List, as an act of mere Ministerial arrangement, or should be publicly recorded in the Votes of this House, in pursuance of a Message from his Majesty, was the only question as to pensions of that description. For himself he greatly preferred the latter mode, as more honourable to the individuals by whom services had been rendered, as well as infinitely more satisfactory to the feelings of the people. On this ground, and on this ground alone, he begged leave to suggest, that pensions for services performed should hereafter be granted only under the authority of a vote of that House, founded on a Message from the King, and that they should be charged on the Consolidated Fund, without being mixed up or blended as they had been with the expenses of the Civil List. With respect to the other class of pensions, to favoured or distressed individuals, the system which had hitherto prevailed appeared to him so open to abuse, that he trusted the House would pardon him for entering into a few details. Though the pensions were charged on a fund which always expired on the demise of the Crown, yet the uniform course had been, to continue them during the lives of the respective grantees. Such a system had led to the greatest enormities. Many of the persons whose names were placed on the Pension List, might have been extremely proper objects of compassion at the time when their pensions were granted, but had since acceded to large possessions and abundant wealth. To continue to persons so circumstanced pensions originally intended as a relief to distressed objects, was, in his view, alike disgraceful to the Legislature who connived at so glaring an impropriety, and to the individuals who availed themselves of so unreasonable an indulgence. Yet they saw the wealthy heads of some of our most illustrious families condescend to receive, or suffer their nearest relatives to retain, the pittances so granted. The widows and daughters of many needy Peers who were generously relieved with pensions while objects of distress, still continued to claim their pensions, though they were now become the wives of some of our most wealthy commoners. It would be invidious to select names, but there was no hon. Gentleman who heard him who would feel difficulty in pointing out individuals by whom the bounty of their Sovereign was thus grossly abused. The hon. Member concluded by moving "That all existing Pensions heretofore charged on the Civil List, shall be transferred to the Consolidated Fund. "That no Pensions shall hereafter be charged on the Civil List; and that in lieu of the power to charge Pensions on the Civil List, heretofore exercised by the Crown, the annual sum of 10,000*l.* shall be added to his Majesty's Privy Purse, to be applied in such manner as his Majesty shall, from time to time, be pleased to direct, without any control." On the Chairman intimating to the hon. Member that his Motion was premature while there was another Amendment undisposed of, he withdrew it.

Mr. *Bankes* said, it was with extreme regret that he found the vote now proposed was not in accordance with the recommendation of the Committee. He admitted that the saving proposed by the Committee was small in amount; but he would ask, was it small in principle? Surely, when the great principle which it recognized was considered, it ought not to be despised? If the Committee could not bring large savings before the House, assuredly they could appeal to the candour of the House to allow them the merit of having occupied themselves laboriously with this subject. At this time, when the public were taught to look upon that House with suspicion, when they were described, however falsely, as having no feeling for the interests of the people,—it was their duty not to accede to any suggestion which might tend to support that delusion. For himself, he would plainly say, that the House, as it was at present constituted, appeared to him to be perfectly adequate to the discharge of all the duties which devolved upon it. He was by no means opposed to a just economical Reform; and he would not object to take the sense of the House with respect to the reduction from this grant of 12,000*l.*

Lord *Althorp* was a good deal surprised at the effort which was made to reduce so very small a sum in the vote which was proposed for the first class of his Majesty's expenditure. The hon. member for Middlesex had gone through all the different items on which he conceived a total amount of reduction ought to be made. It was argued, as if the object of the Committee was to continue all the salaries at the rate at which they stood. That, however, was not the proposition before the House. The proposition simply was, "Will you give 510,000*l.* for the support of the King's Household?" and those who made that proposition were called on to reduce that sum by 12,000*l.* Now, it should be observed, when this principle of reduction was in this instance advocated, that there was an evident distinction between public officers who were examined before the Committee, and those officers who were connected with the Household of his Majesty. It was for his Majesty, in the latter case, acting under the advice of his Ministers, to say what provision he would make for his servants. It did not follow that that provision would be the same as at present, if the grant were allowed. They were not now, it ought to be observed, considering the amount of salary that should be granted to individual officers; but they were deliberating on the amount of the Civil List to be granted to his Majesty. When they considered the duties of the Lord Chamberlain, as compared with the duties of other officers, they might perhaps think that the Lord Chamberlain's salary stood too high. But the question was, whether, on that account, they would think it proper and fitting to call for a reduction on the gross sum of 510,000*l.* of so trifling a portion of it as 12,000*l.* Such a course, on such an occasion, was, he believed never taken before. If, after the great and strenuous efforts which had been made by the Committee to examine into the whole of the Civil List, it had been found possible that any very large amount of saving could have been effected, then, undoubtedly, this proposition would not have been brought forward. But, when the amount of saving there proposed was so very small, he hardly thought it worth while to introduce it. With respect to the reduction of the salaries paid to officers of the Crown, which had been recommended by the Committee, a reduction would take place. He did not know whether the salaries of the Lord Chamberlain and of the Lord Steward would be reduced to the sums proposed by the Committee, nor did he mean to say, that they would not be reduced to that extent; but the proposition would be laid before his Majesty, and he would state what he conceived those salaries ought to be. It did not, as he had before observed, follow, because 510,000*l.*, was voted for the Civil List, that therefore those salaries should continue. As to the sum of 75,000*l.* for pensions, he did not consider that it was by any means too much. He had conceived it to be his duty, consistently with what he owed to the country and to the Crown, to lay the whole proposition before the House.

Mr. *Goulburn* supported the proposition of Lord Althorp. He contended, that that was not the time for opposing the grant. The more regular way would be, at the proper period, to object to any of the separate items, instead of opposing the gross sum called for as necessary for the support of his Majesty's Household. With respect to the sum of 75,000*l.* for pensions, it appeared that the sum itself was not objected to; but the question was, whether it should be placed on one fund or another? As to the effort made for the reduction of salaries in the Committee, it had nothing to do with the present question. The proposition was not now, to continue salaries to the Lord Chamberlain or the Lord Steward—it was, to grant a certain allowance to his Majesty; and, doubtless, when the salaries referred to came to be examined, they would be reduced as others were. It should be observed, that on all former occasions, when the maintenance of the royal establishment was brought before Parliament, the Crown had great hereditary revenues to meet its expenses: but this was the first instance in which the Crown had deprived itself of the necessary aids; and it became the duty of Parliament to the Monarchy, and to the country, to make good that deficit, and to provide for the extraordinary expenditure of the Crown.

Mr. *R. Gordon* was happy to find the

right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Goulburn) returning good for evil, in his support of this Motion, since it was upon a proposition closely connected with the present question that he had been obliged to quit office. He was of opinion, however, that the argument of the right hon. Gentleman was not a good one, for he seemed to think that the sum proposed to be deducted should be allowed to remain, as a sort of contingent fund. The hon. Gentleman referred to several passages from the report of the Committee, and argued, that various propositions for reductions which were made in the Committee ought to have been carried. He thought that the House ought not to increase the revenue of the Crown, because the King had granted the great question of Reform, a question which he had as much at heart as any man,—ay, even as his Majesty's Ministers, who had brought it forward.

Mr. *Baring* said, that he was inclined to place his confidence in his noble friend the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and, placing that confidence in him, he must say, that he did not think it prudent to make the reduction which had been recommended by the Committee. When he took into his consideration the amount of this sum, he could not help feeling that it was not incumbent to make this reduction, especially when it was to trench upon the revenue of a Sovereign who was the object of admiration of all his subjects, from one end of the country to the other. He felt that it would be most ungracious in the House to accede to the retrenchment which was now proposed.

Mr. *Hunt* said, that the Government, in supporting this amount of Civil List, was acting in direct contradiction to the principles of economy upon which they had come into office. If this reduction of 12,000*l.* were likely to affect the comforts of his Majesty in the slightest degree, he would be one of the last men in the House to vote for it; but it would do no such thing. It would only reduce the salaries of the Lord Chamberlain, and of other high Officers of State, who did not, or at least who ought not, to require any such emoluments. This sum of 12,000*l.* was twice the amount of the salary paid to the President of the United States of America [*cries of* "*Oh, oh.*"]. Gentlemen might cry Oh! oh! as long as they pleased, but the fact which he had just stated was undeniable. He appealed to the members of his Majesty's Government personally, and asked them, whether they would oppose the recommendation of a Select Committee which they had themselves appointed, and which they had gained by a vote of the House which had turned their predecessors out of office [*loud coughing*]. He heard one Gentleman coughing most loudly; it was clear that he had gone far beyond his lozenge-box. He hoped that the Chancellor of the Exchequer would not accede to the proposition of the right hon. Gentleman (the ex-Chancellor of the Exchequer), who merely wished to get him into the same scrape which had turned his colleagues out of power.

Colonel *Davies* stated, that it was his intention to support the proposition for the retrenchment.

Sir *G. Warrender* was of opinion, that the sum which it was now proposed to vote was not too much, but too little, for the just support of his Majesty's dignity.

Mr. *R. Palmer* thought, that the Committee had sat for very little purpose, if the House would not second the recommendation which it had made. He suggested that this sum of 10,500*l.* should be added to the third class of expenses in the Civil List.

Mr. *Stanley* rose for the purpose of noticing an observation which had fallen from the hon. member for Preston. The hon. Member had asked, what was the principle on which the present Ministry had come into office, and had wished to have it understood, that the question then before the House was, whether a Republican or Monarchical form of Government was the cheapest.

Mr. *Hunt* denied, that he had put the question in anything like that shape to the House.

Mr. *Stanley* wished to know, if that was not the meaning of the hon. member for Preston, what was his meaning when he was talking about this sum, 12,000*l.*, being twice the amount of the salary paid to the President of the United States. God forbid that they should ever come to discuss in that House, whether they should have a Monarchical or a Republican form of Government, on the mere consideration of pounds, shillings, and pence. The blessings which we enjoyed under our Monarchical Government would be cheaply purchased, even by paying annually the difference between 6,000*l.* and 510,000*l.*

He admitted that the question on which the late Administration had been turned out was a question as to the appointment of a Select Committee. But what was that Select Committee for? The members of his Majesty's present Government had, when in Opposition, objected to having a million of money granted to the Crown, and placed beyond the control of Parliament; and it was upon the propriety of that objection, that the House had divided, when the late Government refused to refer the Estimates of the Civil List to the investigation of a Select Committee. The present Government had acted up to the principles which its members had professed when in Opposition. They had withdrawn a large sum from the hands of the Crown, and had placed it under the direct control of Parliament; and by so doing had taken the best and most effectual mode of reducing the amount of the Civil List. Besides, when it was said that the present Government had made no reduction in the amount of the Civil List, he would ask the House whether they had not made some diminution in the Pension List? Had there not been a saving of nearly half the amount of that List? Was it to be said, that when there was a contingent reduction of 75,000*l.* a-year in pensions, that no reduction had been made or contemplated? The late Administration had proposed a Civil List on as low an Estimate as they well could, if credit were to be given to their professions. The present Administration had proposed a Civil List on an Estimate still lower, and the Committee now came forward with a Report, telling the House that the utmost reduction which they could make upon that Estimate, without leaving a Contingency Fund, was 12,000*l.* When so poor a modification as 12,000*l.* was made on so large a sum as 510,000*l.*, he could not help thinking that it would be an insult to his Majesty to agree to such a modification.

Mr. *Goulburn* observed, that in the speech which he had just made, he had waived all allusion to questions which were in controversy between the Chancellor of the Exchequer and himself; but when he took that line of argument, he did expect that the noble Lord and the right hon. Gentleman would have equally avoided all controversial questions. He denied that any large saving had been made by the present Government in the Civil List Estimates. Indeed, the noble Chancellor of the Exchequer had, with his usual candour, admitted, on a former occasion, that all the saving which he had been able to make was not more than 20,000*l.* He put it to the right hon. Gentleman, whether it was fair to say that the Civil List of the late Government was 1,000,000*l.*, and that the Civil List of the present Government was only 500,000*l.*? He was prepared to contend, that the difference of amount between the noble Lord's estimate of the Civil List and his own was very trifling indeed.

Mr. *Rice* contended, that his hon. friend (Mr. Goulburn) had fallen into very considerable mistakes on this subject. He denied, that the proposition now brought forward by the present Government was the same as that which had been brought forward by the late Government. He considered the question of money to be a mere secondary consideration, compared with the important point of bringing the amount of the Civil List under the control of Parliament.

Colonel *Davies* said, he should continue to oppose the proposed increase of 10,000*l.*, which he conceived would only go into the pocket of the Duke of Devonshire.

Mr. *Warburton* said, that allusion having been made, in the course of the discussion, to the member for Queen's County (Sir Henry Parnell), he had that hon. Baronet's authority to state, that he had taken no part in the drawing up of the Report of the Committee.

Mr. *O'Connell* considered the whole matter a mystification; and he called on the right hon. Baronet (Sir J. Graham) to state how he could justify the vote of 10,000*l.*, which was to be considered as a contingent sum, and not applicable to any specific purpose.

Sir *J. Graham* considered it highly necessary to vote this contingent sum, if it was so to be called; because, if the allowance to the Crown was pared down to the lowest possible rate, the Crown might get into debt, which would lead to the worst thing that could happen—the dependence of the Sovereign on that House.

Colonel *Sibthorp* considered the conduct of Ministers, with regard to the Civil List, perfectly consistent with the course they had pursued respecting the memorable Budget. He could not vote for the proposed contingent fund, unless he had a guarantee that it would not be applied in payment of the salaries of the household officers.

Sir *R. Inglis* said, the subject ought not to be considered as a political or party one, but as a compact between the House and the Crown. He believed, that if the amount of hereditary revenue sacrificed by the Sovereign were compared with the amount of the Civil List, it would be found that the nation had greatly benefitted by the proceeding.

Mr. *Holme Sumner* would vote for the sum recommended by the Committee.

Lord *John Russell* thought it best to agree to the whole vote, as proposed by the Government. He thought that so much confidence was due to the Sovereign on the Throne. There was a great difference between a Sovereign disposed to make every economical arrangement that was necessary, and to renounce any sum that might be considered improper, and a Sovereign who directed his Ministers to propose extravagant sums, which were beyond the means of the people to pay.

Sir *M. W. Ridley* did not consider the House bound by the decision of the Committee; and considering the sum of 510,000*l.* not too much for the Civil List, he should vote for the grant proposed by Ministers.

Mr. *Hume* stated, that all he had heard induced him to persevere in his Motion. He would not, however, at that late hour of the night, press the question to a division; but would reserve to himself the right to do so on bringing up the Report.

The Resolution agreed to, without a division. The other Resolutions were postponed at the suggestion of Mr. Hume, and the House resumed.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Monday, March 28, 1831.

MINUTES.] Bills. Colonial Trade, Canadian Revenues, read a second time.

Petitions presented. By the Earl of ELDON, from Dublin, for compensation, should Slavery be abolished in the West Indies. By the Earl of ROSSLYN, from Edinburgh, against the East-India monopoly. In favour of Reform, by the Marquis of CLEVELAND, from the Merchants and Inhabitants of the Town of South Shields:—By the Duke of ARGYLL, from the Merchants and Inhabitants of Camperdown:—By the Earl of YARBOROUGH, from the County of Hants:—By Lord DURHAM, from Edmonton and Swindon:—By the Duke of DEVONSHIRE, from a place in Devonshire:—By Lord KING, from the Town of Guildford;

[The Petitioners stated, that in that borough, which at present returned two Members, and from which it was proposed to take one, the main street of the town was not included, and that if it had been included, the population would have been more than 4,000.]

from Tewkesbury, Aberystwith, Smarden; from Newton, and another place in Lancashire; and from the Town of Killcomer, in Ireland:—By the Marquis of LANSDOWN, from the Ward of Coleman-street, from a place in Fifeshire, and a place in Buckinghamshire. Against certain parts of the Reform Bill, by the Earl of ROSSLYN, from the County of Roxburgh:—By Lord MONTAGUE, from the Counties of Dumfries and Peebles:—By the Duke of NEWCASTLE, from the Corporation of New Romney:—By the Marquis of BUTE, from Cowbridge. Against the Registry of Deeds Bill, by the Marquis of CLEVELAND, from Staindrop and Cockfield. For a Revision of the Poor-laws, by the Duke of BUCKINGHAM, from Olney. For facilitating the Building and Endowing Churches, by the Earl of WINCHILSEA, from Hatherleigh. Against the Contribution to Greenwich Hospital, by Lord WHARNCLIFFE, from the Seamen of Newcastle.

CLASSIFICATION OF REFORM PETITIONS.] The Duke of *Buckingham* said, on the presentation of some Petitions from Buckinghamshire, that it would be material to know whether the petitions presented on this subject prayed for Reform generally, or for a specific measure? or whether they prayed for the Ballot, for a reduction of taxes, and other matters. As it would be inconvenient to read at length all these petitions to their Lordships, he would suggest that a Committee should be appointed, as had been done in the other House, for the purpose of making a classification of them.

The Marquis of *Cleveland* said, that all the petitions which he had presented that evening were in favour of the specific measure which had been brought forward in the other House.

The Marquis of *Lansdown* was understood to say, that several of the petitions which he had presented were in favour of the Ministerial plan of Reform, while some of them prayed for Reform generally.

The Duke of *Buckingham* supposed that the noble Earl opposite would have no objection to the course of proceeding which he had suggested, with a view to ascertain how many of the petitions prayed for the plan of Reform which had been brought forward by Government, and how many of them prayed for other objects. He had read over some of the petitions which had been presented, and while many of them were in favour of the Bill now before the other House, many of them also prayed for a reduction of tithes and taxes, and for other objects.

Earl *Grey* said, he should not have the slightest objection to the course of proceeding which the noble Duke had recommended, but he believed that sufficient means had been already provided to make their Lordships acquainted with the prayers of the petitions presented on this subject. He held in his hand a paper which had been prepared by the Clerk, and which would be laid upon their Lordships' Table, stating the number of petitions which had been presented on this subject, and likewise stating their objects; and it appeared from that paper, that 479 petitions, praying for Reform, had been presented to their Lordships prior to the introduction of the Bill now before the other House of Parliament, and that since that time 448 petitions in favour of the Ministerial plan of Reform had been presented to their Lordships. Having stated that fact, he begged to repeat that he should have no objection to the appointment of the Committee recommended by the noble Duke, but he did not see the necessity for such a Committee; for it appeared to him, that if they left the arrangement he had mentioned as it had commenced, in the hands of the Clerk, all the information which their Lordships might require as to the specific objects for which the petitions prayed, would be furnished to them.

The Duke of *Buckingham* said, that having been in the country, he was not aware of the paper, the preparation of which had been mentioned by the noble Earl.

SUBLETTING ACT—IRELAND.] Lord *Melbourne* moved that the Order of the Day for the Second Reading of the Subletting Act (Ireland) be discharged; which having been agreed to, the noble Lord gave notice that he should move the second reading of the Bill on the first open day after the Recess.

The Earl of *Wicklow* said, that as the Bill had been printed, and had gone forth, as well as the speech of the noble Lord, amongst those persons in Ireland who were seriously interested in the measure, it would be desirable that the noble Lord should now state the alterations which he proposed to make in the Bill, in order that they might, during the Recess, be under the consideration of the parties in Ireland who would be affected by the measure.

Lord *Plunkett* observed, that his noble friend had postponed the second reading of the Bill, in order to consider what alterations might be made in it, and that he would no doubt be happy to attend to any suggestions which the noble Earl, or any of the parties interested in the subject, might offer in reference to it.

LUNATICS.] The *Lord Chancellor* said, that he also wished to postpone a Bill which at present stood for committal, and which he had already postponed on a former occasion, as he was anxious that his noble friend, the Lord Chief Baron, should be able to attend when it should go through that stage. He had received a letter from his noble friend that morning, requesting him to postpone it again, as he should not be able to be in town. In complying with his noble friend's request to postpone proceeding further with the Bill, he begged he might not be at all understood as withdrawing the measure.—Committee postponed till the 18th of April.

REFORM PETITIONS.] Earl *Cawdor*, in presenting a Petition from Prendergast, praying that that town might be included in the borough of Haverfordwest, said, he wished to take that opportunity of observing, in relation to that borough that if the Reform Bill had taken care of his interest, as had been asserted in another place, it was without his knowledge and participation. He was willing to bear any responsibility that justly attached to him, but he must say, that he knew nothing whatever of the provisions of the Bill till they were explained in the other House of Parliament. The noble Lord added, in reference to that Bill, that he was ready to make any sacrifice which that measure might require; that he was determined to support that measure, not from the love of change, or for ulterior objects, but because he hoped and trusted that the certain effect of that Bill would be, to render impossible any ulterior objects which any person might have in view ever being effected.

The Earl of *Winchilsea* rose to present a Petition from the county of Kent, signed by the High Sheriff, on behalf of the meeting at which it had been unanimously adopted, praying that their Lordships might pass the Bill which had been introduced in the other House of Parliament, for effecting a Reform in the Representation of the people. As the petition was exceedingly short, and in order to meet the objection which had been started by the noble Duke opposite, he would move that the prayer of it be read to their Lordships. The petition, which prayed that their Lordships would pass the Bill in all its parts, having been accordingly read by the Clerk, the noble Earl proceeded to state, that it had been unanimously adopted at a most respectable meeting of the freeholders of the county of Kent, and the signature of the High Sheriff to it was a sufficient proof that it had been adopted unanimously; for if a single voice or a single hand had been raised against it at the meeting, that officer could not have signed it, as he had done, on behalf of the meeting. He remembered himself, on the occasion of a public meeting in the county of Kent, having raised his hand against the petition which was proposed, and thus having prevented the Sheriff from signing it on behalf of the meeting, as it had not been adopted unanimously. But in this instance the petition had been adopted unanimously, not a single voice had been raised against it, and it had therefore been signed by the High Sheriff, and it might be justly taken by their Lordships as expressing the sentiments of the people of Kent in favour of the measure of Reform which had been introduced into the other House. He was aware of the inconvenience of the practice of discussing that subject on the presentation of petitions; he should therefore refrain from going into that discussion until the proper occasion should arrive for it, which he sincerely hoped and trusted would soon be the case, when the Bill now in the other House would be laid upon their Lordships' Table. He could not, however, avoid expressing his cordial concurrence in the prayer of this petition, and he was convinced that the feelings and sentiments embodied in that petition, adopted at a public meeting of the county of Kent, convened by the highest constitutional authority, for the purpose of considering this subject, were the sentiments and feelings entertained by the great body of the people at large. The people of Kent, as well as the people of this country at large, did not support this measure, because they considered it a revolutionary measure, as it had been unfoundedly denominated by its opponents; but they supported it because they wished well to the constitution of the country. He concurred with the great majority of the people of this country in giving his cordial support to this measure of Reform: that it was revolutionary he totally and entirely denied, and he contended that it was a measure which was supported by persons as much attached to the institutions of the country as those individuals could possibly be who had brought forward such a charge against this measure, and who had adduced no arguments to prove that such a charge was well founded. In what single respect, he would ask, did that measure go to take from the prerogative of the Crown, or from the privileges of that House, or what did it do more than restore to the people those rights and privileges to which they were justly entitled? He should not proceed further on this occasion, as he hoped that the opportunity would soon be afforded to him for expressing his opinions more clearly and fully on this momentous question.

The Marquis *Camden* said, that he was one of those who thought that that House was the most befitting place for a peer of the realm to express his sentiments upon that or any other public question. Acting upon that principle, he had not attended the meeting from which this petition had emanated. Although, however, he had not attended this meeting, he could state, from the connexion which he had with the county of Kent, that a great portion of the inhabitants of that county were not in favour of the Reform Bill now in progress in the other House.

The Earl of *Winchilsea* said, that the noble Lord seemed to object to his attending a public meeting of the people [*"No, no," from the Marquis Camden.*] He attended there as a freeholder of the county of Kent; and he would say, that, attending there in that character, he felt as proud of it as the highest honour to which he was entitled. The noble Lord had asserted that there was a great diversity of opinion on this subject in the county of Kent. He was sure that if the noble Lord had attended the public meeting of the county at which this petition had been unanimously adopted, he would have come to a different conclusion as to the opinion of the people of Kent on this subject.

The Marquis *Camden* said, that he did not at all object to the noble Lord's attending the meeting in question. All he said was, that he thought that that House was the best place for a noble Lord to discuss such matters.

Petition laid on the Table.

MINISTERIAL PLAN OF PARLIAMENTARY REFORM.] Lord *Wharncliffe* said, that he rose now to move for certain papers connected with the subject which had engrossed so much of the attention of the other House, but which had not yet occupied the attention of their Lordships, at least not in any regular way. He had thought it his duty, early after the introduction of the subject in the other House, to give notice of his intention to move for certain papers, with the view of bringing under the notice of their Lordships the nature of the proposed measure. At the time he gave that notice, the House of Commons had been in debate upon the subject for three nights, and he thought that on the evening on which he gave the notice the House of Commons would have come to a decision upon it. In this he was deceived. The House of Commons went on debating for several days without coming to a division; and he had thought it right to defer his notice of motion until, by the decision of the House of Commons, he should be enabled to see how far it was likely that the measure would ever come up to their Lordships' House. The measure now stood under the circumstances which he had waited for. He confessed that he had objections to the discussion of such a measure upon the presentation of petitions. Many inconveniences resulted from that course; and, in his opinion, if a measure of such vast magnitude and importance was to be discussed at all, it was the duty of some Peer to bring it as fairly as it could be brought under the notice of their Lordships, with the clear understanding that it was his intention so to bring it before them. He had said thus much, because he had thought it his duty to apologize, in a certain degree, for having given notice of a motion for having withdrawn that notice without fixing it for any other day, and for having again revived that notice. There was another point, too, upon which he wished to touch before he came to the object of his motion, and that was a point of a personal nature,—the same point, indeed, which a noble friend of his had already that evening touched upon. His noble friend had said, that he was interested in some place not to be disfranchised, and complained that allusions had been made to that, as though the Bill had been so framed as to save his interest. Now he was quite sure that the Government would acquit him of all disposition to impute such unworthy motives to them; and he did think that the best way of dealing with such accusations was, to put them by with the contempt they deserved. He had himself some connexion with one of the boroughs which was to be disfranchised. He had no wish nor reason to conceal that influence. It arose from the possession of property in land, and had continued in his family for nearly 100 years. Neither had he any wish to conceal the use which had been made of that influence by his family. It had always been used, with one exception only, he believed, to return members of the family to Parliament. Having stated this without reserve, he repeated, that he was not ashamed either of that influence, or of the way in which that influence had been exercised. The reason that he mentioned it was, that elsewhere, and particularly by the public Press, every one who possessed such influence was held up, if he differed from those who supported the Reform Bill, as a person who was not acting upon those principles which ought to influence the conduct of every man, but as being swayed by base and interested motives. Any one who was personally acquainted with him would, he was assured, acquit him of being influenced by any considerations of personal interest; and as for those who had not a a personal knowledge of his character, he only asked them to look narrowly at the whole of his public life, and if they could point out one single instance in which he had acted as his interest, not his duty, prescribed, he was ready to submit to the condemnation of being unfit to have any share in legislating upon this, or indeed upon any other subject. His noble friend (Earl Cawdor) had said, that if this measure was right, he was perfectly ready to sacrifice any personal interest of his in favour of it. So, allow him to assure their Lordships, was he; but he must be convinced that it was right—he must be satisfied that it was for the good of the country: and when they were once shown that such was the character of the measure, then, in God's name, let all such influence be destroyed; or, if any of it was to be reserved, he would much rather that his did not form any part of the reservation. Personal interest ought not to be allowed to weigh for one single moment against a public good. The public good, however,

—the propriety of the measure,—must, he contended, be first made out. He stated these things because there were circumstances of his life which might induce some to think otherwise of him. One of the circumstances to which he alluded was the fact of his having a seat in that House. But if he were there among their Lordships, it was not in consequence of any parliamentary influence that he had ever possessed, but solely by the personal favour of the King. As a Member of the other House he had sat for the greatest county of England; and he believed his parliamentary influence had not had the slightest weight in procuring him the honour which had been conferred upon him. He begged pardon of their Lordships for detaining them with these matters; but he alluded to them because there was a disposition among many persons out of doors to hold up all who were situated as he was, as traitors to their country, and altogether unfit to vote upon the subject of Reform. To that, he for one would not subscribe. He was as fit to give a vote, and to exercise his judgment impartially, as any man who heard him. Having dealt with these points, he would pass on to the subject which he wished in making this Motion to bring under the attention of their Lordships. The circumstances under which they entered upon the discussion of this subject, ought to teach their Lordships, and the House of Commons, and the country, a great and important lesson; for in those circumstances was apparent the progress which Parliamentary Reform had made in consequence of what had passed within the walls of that and of the other House of Parliament. So far from denying what had been stated over and over again, in both Houses of Parliament, and also out of doors, namely, that there was a strong feeling among the people in favour of Reform—so far, he said, from denying this, he fully admitted it to be quite true. In fact, that feeling was more than strong —it was irresistible. It was impossible for any man, who was not absolutely blind, not to see that an administration which should be appointed upon the principle of withstanding all Reform, could no longer maintain its ground, but would be left night after night in constant minorities. There had been times of excitement in which the cry of Reform had been loudly raised; ever since he had entered public life, there had been a party which, for their own purposes, had taken advantage of every opportunity of pressing that subject upon the public; but until a few years ago, it had never been taken up generally by the people—had never been brought forward and approved of at public meetings, where the opinions in favour of it were recorded in resolutions and petitions almost without opposition. The people, in fact, had taken upon themselves to reform the Parliament. He had always been ready to fight the battle of anti-reform while there was a party out of doors to back him; and let not those who had shrunk from the contest while there was a prospect of success, now come forward and complain that he and others, who had fought the battle while there was any use in fighting it, had now ceased to engage in so hopeless a contest. Above all, let not their Lordships wonder or complain at the progress which the question of Reform had made. At all times when the House of Commons had found a delinquent borough, they had endeavoured to punish it. They had passed bills, and sent them up to their Lordships; their Lordships refused to act upon the evidence taken below; and very rightly, for he admitted that it was at once the province and the duty of their Lordships to inquire for themselves; but then, what he complained of was this,—namely, that their Lordships insisted upon corruption being proved against a certain proportion of individuals, and upon evidence that the corruption had been practised for a considerable length of time. This was in every case very difficult, and in most cases absolutely impossible. He could not concur in the propriety of this course which their Lordships had persisted in following. He could not agree that the right of voting was a right of the same character with the right by which a man held his estate, but that it was a right mixed up with a trust; and, in this view, he could not see how it was necessary to prove general corruption in order to take away such a right. Now the first proceeding of this kind to which he wished to call the attention and the recollection of their Lordships was that in the case of the borough of Grampound; the first borough upon which, if he might be allowed the expression, sentence had been passed. The House of Commons disfranchised Grampound, transferred the franchise to Leeds, and sent the bill up to their Lordships. Previous to entering upon this statement, he should have remarked, that there had been growing up for some time before in the manufacturing towns, and not only in the manufacturing, but in all the large towns, a feeling, and consequently a complaint, that they had no direct Representation in the House of Commons. The answer to this, undoubtedly, was, that although they had no direct Representatives in the House of Commons, yet that there were always found in that House persons who were ready to take care of their interests, to advance them, and to protect them. Up to a certain time that answer was thought satisfactory, but at length it was deemed one that ought not to content them, and the feeling, that large towns ought to be directly represented gained ground day by day. Under these circumstances it was, that the House of Commons sent up to their Lordships the Grampound Disfranchisement bill, which transferred the franchise of that borough to Leeds, one of the greatest manufacturing towns in the kingdom. Upon the bill coming up, their Lordships directed the usual inquiry, and found that they must disfranchise the borough. What course did their Lordships pursue then? Why their Lordships transferred the franchise, not to Leeds,—not to a large town,—but to the county of York. He would not then debate the circumstances and the reasons of that change in the destination of the franchise which had been resolved upon by the House of Commons, but he must say, that if the franchise had been given to Leeds, it would have been the beginning of a system which would have satisfied, in a great measure, that description of persons who were now among the most anxious for a more extensive Reform. The next case was that of Penryn. After a tedious and expensive inquiry, the House of Commons resolved upon disfranchising that borough, and transferring the franchise to Manchester. The bill was sent up to their Lordships, but, unfortunately, it was lost in that House for want of that particular species of evidence which their Lordships required. Next came that unfortunate case which he did in his conscience believe had done more to raise that feeling which now pervaded the country on the subject of Reform, than any circumstance, or measure, or occurrence whatsoever,—he meant the case of East Retford. It was proposed to disfranchise that borough, and to give the franchise to Birmingham; but a gentleman in the House of Commons, connected with the landed interest, and representing a county in the neighbourhood of London, thought that the land was not sufficiently represented, and persuaded the House of Commons, under circumstances which he would not repeat, to change the direction of the transfer, and to throw it into a neighbouring hundred, and, in fact, to create another little county within the county of Nottingham; but in that case their Lordships had an opportunity of doing, in the "eleventh hour" what had so long been desired, and what it would have been so prudent, as their Lordships must now at least see, to have done. He attempted to persuade their Lordships, when the bill came up to that House, to give the franchise to Birmingham. Unfortunately he failed, and from that moment he believed the country had been convinced that all attempts to transfer franchises to large towns were made only to deceive them, and had looked with the utmost jealousy at the proceedings of the two Houses. Thus had arisen the feeling, that a general and efficient Reform was necessary. Again, let them look at the Session of Parliament in 1821. The noble Lord who had introduced the present measure, then moved for leave to bring in a bill to extend the elective franchise to three large towns—Manchester, Leeds and Birmingham; and he must say, that on that occasion a hint was given to the House of Commons, which it would have been well if the Legislature had taken. There were 140 for the Motion, and 188 against it. The majority against it was only forty-eight. When it was found that 140 Members of the House of Commons had voted in favour of such a Motion, that ought to have been taken as an indication of the feeling of the country; and if it had been so taken, the feeling would never have arisen to its present height. There was afterwards another proposition of the noble Lord's, which was, that a certain number of boroughs should be disfranchised,—but the division upon that was not so good. Any man, however, who saw this disposition in the House of Commons, ought to have been assured that the disposition out of doors proceeded to a much greater extent. This, too, had been apparent from the general elections, at which it was made a test, in all populous places, in a candidate, whether he would support Parliamentary Reform. He was sure, that a man who was prepared to say that he was against all Reform in Parliament would have found it very difficult to come forward in any such place. The inquiry was met by saying, that they were not against a proper system of Reform, and by the observation—"Let us see the plan before you call upon us to decide:" but it was never answered to any large body of constituents, "No, I am opposed to all Reform in the state of the Representation." This, he contended, ought to have opened the eyes of the then existing Government, and should have made the Ministers take into their consideration the proper way of meeting the feelings of the people, without raising that excitement which now pervaded the country. He need not remind their Lordships of what occurred after the meeting of Parliament,—of the memorable declaration of the noble Duke (Wellington) behind him. They all recollected what passed then; none of them could forget that the noble Duke expressed himself adverse to all Reform. Need he remind their Lordships of the effect of that declaration? He need not; neither was it necessary for him to argue, what must have been obvious to them all, —namely, that from that moment it was clearly and avowedly impossible for the noble Duke to remain in office. Then they who had been anti-reformers all their lives,—they who had done all they could to stave off Reform,—saw a Government appointed on the very principle of Parliamentary Reform, saw his Majesty receiving the noble Earl opposite as his Minister, and allowing him to undertake the Government with a pledge of introducing Reform in Parliament. This was a situation in which he and the anti-reformers had never before been placed, for, under such circumstances, it became morally impossible to resist Reform any longer. He said that he must *per force*,—that he must, however reluctantly—become a Reformer. He believed that the House of Commons, under the existing system, to use the language of a Minister of the Crown, had been "the noblest assembly of free men in the world, and that they could not get men who would uphold the safety, the honour, and the dignity of the country with more virtue and talent than this abused assembly, which, up to this hour, had been the admiration of the world." They were now however, openly told, that there was, that there had been, no good in it, and that they must place the constituent body and the Representatives on a totally different footing. But what did it matter what he believed, when he could not persuade those out of doors to think with him? If he could get, as he had formerly got, a party out of doors to back him, he would still fight the battle of anti-reform: but where was such a party to be found? He declared to God that he knew not where to look for it. Under these circumstances, then, all that there remained for him to do, was to endeavour that as little as possible more than was absolutely necessary should be done. He agreed that much must be done, but he denied that it was absolutely necessary to throw every thing away, and lay themselves open to the most extravagant demands. He would then call the attention of their Lordships to what had taken place on this subject in that House since the present Administration came into office. The noble Earl at the head of the Administration had told them, that in the early part of his life he had been a Reformer to a great extent, but that time had moderated his feelings, and all he now looked for was a moderate, but at the same time an efficient Reform. He should be sorry to misrepresent the noble Earl, but he had understood the noble Earl to say, that time had abated his notions of Reform to a great extent.

Earl *Grey* begged to be allowed to set the noble Lord right. He had not stated that he had altered his views on this subject. What he had said was, that, looking to a moderate Reform, he also looked to an effectual Reform, and that he felt that nothing but a considerable Reform would satisfy the expectations of the people, and enable the Government to carry on the business of the State by means of the House of Commons. To this he had added, that in the Reform brought forward in the other House of Parliament, his Majesty's Ministers had kept in view the known principles of the Constitution, at the same time that they offered to Parliament an efficient measure.

Lord *Wharncliffe* resumed—His statements of the noble Earl's expressions were not materially different from those which the noble Earl now used; and in every sentiment which the noble Earl had uttered, on the occasion he had already referred to, he fully acquiesced. The noble Earl would, perhaps, bear in mind that he had risen in his place at that time, and stated that he was ready to promise, that if the plan of Reform about to be introduced by his Majesty's Government was such as the noble Earl had stated, it should not meet his opposition. He had also stated, that if the plan of Reform should not meet his approbation, he should not give it any thing like a factious opposition, and his noble friends opposite would do him the justice to say, that to that extent he had kept his word. The measure of Reform that had been brought forward, however effective it might be, was not, in his opinion, moderate, but put in danger all the institutions of the country, and therefore he now stood up to oppose it. He confessed there were other reasons which induced him to think that his Majesty's present Ministers would not have proposed a measure of the description which they had brought forward. The noble and learned Lord on the Woolsack, a short time before his elevation to the office he now filled, was returned by acclamation for one of the greatest counties in the kingdom. It was the custom in that county for a candidate to state freely and publicly his sentiments on all great political questions, and the noble and learned Lord had gratified his constituents by specimens of his eloquence at various places, in which he had unfolded the plan of Reform which he should bring forward upon the sitting of Parliament, and that plan was nothing like that now proposed. It was a matter of great surprise, therefore, to him, when he recollected the plan unfolded by the noble and learned Lord, to find that noble and learned Lord now proposing, or, at all events, as one of his Majesty's Ministers consenting to a plan of Reform so different in its nature and degree from that he had expressed his intention of bringing forward. There was another cause which operated also in bringing his mind to a conviction that no such measure would have been proposed by his Majesty's Government as that brought forward in the other House. When he looked at the composition of the present Ministry, and at the bench opposite, he saw it was in a great part composed of men with whom he had acted for a considerable portion of his political life. Those men were the disciples of a great Statesman, compared with whom all those men seemed, in his day, as but pigmies. His voice had often been heard on this question, and his eloquence was of so commanding a character, that there was no one in the House of Commons who could touch with effect any subject he had handled. The right hon. person to whom he had alluded (Mr. Canning) had spent his whole life in opposition to the principle laid down in the Bill now brought forward. Many of those who had brought forward that Bill, however, had looked up to Mr. Canning as one older in years, superior in ability, and in every way capable of being their guide. He was surprised to find those persons bringing down a Bill, therefore the object of which was to overthrow that Constitution which the great Statesman, to whom he had alluded had made such persevering efforts to sustain. He should not allude to the many bright pages in which what Mr. Canning had spoken and written on this subject might be found, as he trusted the eloquent observations of that statesman were known to most of their Lordships. There was one point in the present Bill to which Mr. Canning's numerous speeches had been particularly directed; he meant the existence of close boroughs. This was one of the points in the present system of Representation which Mr. Canning particularly defended; and recollecting that circumstance, and looking to the Bill now before the other House, he declared that he could not have believed it if he had not seen it,—though God knew that those who lived long in political life saw strange things—that any friends of Mr. Canning should have supported such a measure. He had seen wonderful changes in his time, but they had only convinced him more of the necessity there was that public men should see their way clearly, and endeavour to guide their politics by fixed rules and principles. The circumstances he had alluded to, undoubtedly gave him great confidence as to the nature of the measure to be proposed. He expected a great deal—he looked for a great deal to be done. He knew that no paltry measure would do; but when he was informed of the particulars of the plan to be brought forward, he was thunderstruck. He should not go so far as to say that the pledge to bring forward a moderate measure had been broken, neither would he say that the measure brought forward was revolutionary, as it seemed that there was a great objection to that word. If by the term revolutionary was meant a measure of anarchy, spoliation, and violence, he admitted that the proposed measure was nothing of that sort. It was a quiet change, but the change would not be the less complete because it might be effected quietly. Not to mince the matter, it was a radical change; and he said radical, because it did go to tear up by the roots one great influence in the other House of Parliament. If the measure was carried into effect, the House of Commons would be an entirely popular elective assembly, without any great check. That, in his judgment, would be a change dangerous to the Monarchy. Another fault he found with this great change was, that it would not only be a dangerous change, but one that was totally unnecessary. He begged not to be mistaken. It was quite necessary that there should be an effective and proper measure of Reform, but not such a one as had been introduced. He would shortly state what was proposed. In the first place it was proposed that sixty boroughs should be disfranchised; that forty-seven boroughs should lose one Member; and that all the boroughs in the kingdom should be opened to householders rated at 10*l.* Not only that, but a Committee of the Privy Council were to have the power of annexing parishes and districts to any borough which had not above 300 voters. Every thing, therefore, tended to make the elections in those boroughs depend on the popular voice. This great change was defended on the ground that it was a return to old principles. He did not believe, however, that it was a return to old principles. He had endeavoured, by reference to the "History of England" since the days of Edward 3rd, to satisfy himself on that point. Many of the boroughs now returning Members exercised the privilege since the time of Edward 6th, and others since the reigns of Mary and Elizabeth. He believed that, since the beginning of Parliaments in this country, small bodies had the right of returning Representatives. One of the great merits of the House of Commons, as at present constituted, was, that it represented various classes and descriptions of persons. For some boroughs the qualification was high, in others very low; in a third description the franchise was confined to freemen, and so on. Thus every particular class was, in some degree, represented. It had been thus ever since the beginning of Parliaments; and, therefore, the proposed change did not stand upon any old principle. But it was further said, that those boroughs in former times were considerable places, and had a great population, and that, therefore, it was only returning to the old principle to take away the franchise from decayed boroughs, and give it to large towns. The facts in this instance also he (Lord Wharncliffe) much doubted. He doubted whether the population of the boroughs was ever considerably greater or less than at this particular time. He could not find out, that the population of that borough, with which he was particularly connected had ever been greater than at present. He believed the right of returning Members in ancient times was given to boroughs upon quite different grounds from that of population. He believed that the privilege was granted by the Crown to particular places at the requisition of great noblemen and persons of influence. The franchise and the charters were accordingly given to many places having a very small population. Another ground urged in support of the measure was, that the people were insulted by the nomination boroughs, and that they could no longer see without disgust persons sitting in the House of Commons nominated by an individual, or representing only a small number of persons. On that point he might quote numberless passages from the speeches and writings of Mr. Canning and others, but he should not trespass on their Lordships' attention. He must be allowed, however, to read one extract from a living authority—the noble Lord who had introduced the Reform Bill into the other House of Parliament. That noble person (Lord J. Russell) had not only spoken on this subject, but he had written a book on it which he (Lord Wharncliffe) had read with great pleasure. In that work published in 1823, and entitled "An Essay on the History of the English Government and Constitution," his Lordship spoke thus at page 341:—"It is not to be denied that a body of 10,000 farmers or tradesmen will choose no man who is not known to them, either by his station in the country, or by a course of popular harangues. If, then, you make none but elections by large bodies, you either shut out the aristocracy of talent from your assembly, and constitute them into a body hostile to your institutions, or else you oblige them to become demagogues by profession."—"In that," continued Lord Wharncliffe, "I agree with his Lordship: that is exactly my view: but the noble Lord now comes down with a plan, which, according to his own shewing, must be dangerous. His Lordship added in reference to men of talents being either excluded from the House of

Commons or converted into demagogues; that "these are things both of them very dangerous and very pernicious to the State. It is useful, therefore, to have some elections by persons who, from their station in society, are acquainted with the characters of the men of talent of the day. This may be done either by forming some elective bodies of a few persons with high qualifications, or by giving to property a commanding influence in the return of a proportion of Members." At page 344 his Lordship continues,—"Enlightened Englishmen of every class find their way into the House of Commons. Those who have property in land are candidates for their respective counties:—those who have made their fortune by commerce or manufactures may easily establish an interest in cities with which they have some connexion; or in towns (there are many such) where without bribery, the inhabitants require a man of fortune to support their public institutions, and give them his custom in laying out his income. There remains the aristocracy of talent, who arrive at the House of Commons by means of close boroughs, where they are nominated by Peers or Commoners, who have the property of these boroughs in their hands. In this manner the greater part of our distinguished Statesmen have entered Parliament, and some of them, perhaps, would never have found admittance by any other way. The use of such Members to the House itself, and to the country, is incalculable. Their knowledge and talent give a weight to the deliberations, and inspire a respect for parliamentary discussion, which in these times it is difficult for any assembly to obtain. The speeches, too, of able and eloquent men produce an effect in the country, which is reflected back again on Parliament, and thus the speech of one Member for a close borough is often of more benefit to the cause of truth and justice than the votes of twenty silent Senators. Some danger as well as anxiety, it may be thought, arises from the power of nomination to a seat in a Representative body. Theoretically, it would be better if the Members sent by single persons were elected by a body of such constituents; but in practice it is not found that the borough proprietors combine together to sell their influence; on the contrary, they are firm to their several party connexions, and oftentimes they preserve to the House a great orator, whom the clamour of the day or a fortuitous circumstance, has thrown out." Such was on one occasion the case with Mr. Fox. He had been told that the question had been put in this manner in another place—"Supposing a foreigner were to come into your country, and were to go into your populous and opulent manufacturing districts, and were to be informed that such places sent no Representatives to the House of Commons, and supposing him to go afterwards to some of your decayed boroughs, and to find that those places sent two Representatives to guard their interests, would not that foreigner consider it as a great anomaly?" Undoubtedly it was an anomaly; but supposing that he were to tell that same foreigner, "Here is an able man, who sat himself calmly down in his room, without any excitement, to write his thoughts and to give them to the world when written, on the British Constitution, and who told us that these close boroughs had done most great and excellent things for us, and yet who rose up in seven years afterwards in his place in Parliament, and told us that all he had said before was nonsense, that we ought to get rid of the boroughs, and that we ought to let talent get into Parliament as it could,"—would not that foreigner consider that circumstance also as a great anomaly? The noble Lord, as it appeared to him, had no excuse for the change, for he had told the public, in the extract which he had just read, not only why, but also how, the boroughs were of use to the country. He had no occasion to do more on the present occasion than say that he had learnt the lesson which he was now repeating from the noble Lord; but he would go further, and would say that he had heard all the great men of our times say precisely the same thing. Indeed he needed not go further than the other side of the House to illustrate the advantages which the country derived from these close boroughs. In the noble and learned Lord then on the Woolsack he saw a great and striking proof of their utility. He would ask that noble and learned Lord,—he would ask all the noble Lords opposite,—whether they were prepared to cut off from the Constitution at one blow those boroughs by which they had all first entered Parliament, and to which the country was indebted for the means of ascertaining their talents? He begged pardon; he ought not to have said all, for he believed that his noble friend (the Lord Privy Seal) did, from his first entrance into public life represent a large and independent county. But his noble relative near him (Earl Grey) had, he believed, commenced his political career in a close borough. It was true, that he had afterwards represented the large county of Northumberland; but when, for some reasons into which it was immaterial then to enter, it became inconvenient to the noble Earl to represent that county, he did not disdain to take shelter in a small borough. The Lord President, if he recollected rightly, had begun his career as a Member for a small borough, and had afterwards been elected member for the University of Cambridge. He would next proceed to the noble Secretary for the Colonial Department, for it appeared that all the Ministers hung together upon this subject. His noble friend had been Member for a poor rotten borough. [Lord *Goderich*; No, no—for a Corporation.] Be it so; but then the Corporation was under the influence of a powerful individual. Then there was his noble friend the Secretary of State for the Home Department. He was aware that his noble friend had represented the county of Hertford; but as, for some reason or other, he could not continue to represent that county, his noble friend had not been ashamed to sit for a close borough. He next came to his noble and learned friend on the Woolsack. If ever there had been a man whose ability had shone forth prominently from a rotten borough, it was the ability of his noble and learned friend. Whilst the electors of England chose to be represented by talent and ability, there was no man whom he had ever seen in his life—and he spoke it with the utmost sincerity—who was more worthy of their choice. His noble and learned friend had, for a time, sat for a close borough—he was then a candidate for Liverpool, a very populous place—but there he failed. He had twice, he believed, perhaps it might be thrice—[The *Lord Chancellor*: Three times.]—I contested a great county. [The *Lord Chancellor*: A small county.]—Well, it might be a small county—but he had failed, and upon every failure he had fallen back on his close borough. At last, when, by the possession of a seat for a close borough he had displayed his superior talents to his country, and the commanding influence which those superior talents gave him over the minds of men, he was returned as their Representative by one of the largest, and most populous, and most intelligen districts in England. Now, after all this, he could not help thinking that Ministers had been ungrateful in a great degree to those unfortunate boroughs. He would not pursue this subject further; there could be no doubt that this description of constituency had afforded the country the means of employing and retaining in its service all the great talents which had appeared for many years. He doubted—nay he would venture to deny—that a similar amount of talent would be introduced into Parliament under this new Bill. What Lord John Russell had said was undoubtedly true, that if these close boroughs were abolished, young men of talents would be compelled to become demagogues in order to make themselves sufficiently known to the people. He would ask, could such a system be accompanied with good? Under the present system, there were also plenty of persons ready to excite the passions of the people; but he should be sorry to see the day come when a candidate must go about the country making inflammatory speeches, exciting the passions of the people as the only means of obtaining a seat in Parliament. Having said thus much on the principle of the Bill, before he adverted to the details, he would say, that though he was much surprised when this Bill was first introduced into Parliament, he was still more surprised when he saw that it was received with greater unanimity of approbation than any bill which he had ever known in the course of his experience. He confessed such to be the fact, and the more he grieved at it the more was he surprised that such should have been its effects; for he believed that never had there been a greater delusion offered to the people than this Bill would turn out to be. That the Bill was cleverly drawn he did not mean to deny—the great characteristic of it was, that it appeared to give all classes a little peculiar advantage, whilst it glossed over the great disadvantages which it would inflict upon them all collectively. It was with the most unfeigned astonishment that he saw the landed interest promoting it, under the notion that it would be of benefit to them. The bait held out to the landed interest wast his—that twenty-seven counties, which at present only returned two, should in future return each four Members to Parliament, and that a wonderful emanation from the Privy Council should go about the country and divide the counties into such districts as should seem best to their collective wisdom. If their Lordships would only look at these twenty-seven counties, they would see that there were many of them which contained large manufacturing districts, and his learned friend on the Woolsack and himself knew that in such counties members of the landed interest did not possess the same weight which they did possess in other counties of England. Now, a word as to the advantages to be derived from this new system of county Representation. They had been told that many of the voters for counties came from towns, and that such voters, when the right of Representation was given to the towns which they inhabited, would be excluded from voting for Representatives for the county. Now this Bill established no such exclusion. All that the Bill said was, that the voter should not vote for the county in right of that freehold which gave him a vote in his town or borough. But what did that amount to? Persons who lived in boroughs would not vote in right of the freehold houses which they possessed within it; but if they had freeholds at all, they would in all probability have a little land or a little garden, worth 40*s.* a-year out of the town; and that would give them a vote for the county. Nay more, if they had a warehouse, or even a stable, out of the town, it would give them a vote. Though householders of 10*l.* a-year would only be entitled to vote in the boroughs, it was a fallacy to state that householders under that amount would not be entitled to vote for the County Representation. Many of them would. Then came another alleged and fallacious advantage. The Bill gave a right of voting in counties to copyholders of 10*l.* a-year. He did not believe that there would be a large body of those voters, but if there were, they would not be of any benefit to the landed interest. In what did copyholds consist? Of houses generally,—of large farms seldom. In copyholds there was a strong tendency not to bring the copyholder and the Lord of the Manor together, but to keep them apart. To confer the privilege of voting on copyholders would not, therefore, be of any advantage to landlords. Then the suffrage was to be extended to leaseholders for terms of twenty-one years, and this was also described as an advantage to the landed interest. There might be in Northumberland, and in Scotland, many such leases, but they were of rare occurrence in the more southern districts of England. He knew of none, save in the neighbourhood of large manufacturing towns, where individuals wishing to lay out their capital would not take the lease of buildings, or of ground, for manufacturing purposes, for a less period of years. He knew of no farms that were let in England for the same long period. He did not, therefore, look on that provision of the Bill as one calculated to strengthen the interest of the landlord. He therefore wished to be informed how the landed interest was to derive any benefit from this Bill. Nominally, indeed, they got fifty-four additional Members; but of what description? His valued friend, the noble Duke at the head of the Post-office, had often told him, both in public and in private, that he (Lord Wharncliffe) had lost all feeling for the landed interest—that he was swayed by his connexion with the manufacturing interests, and that he had given a strong proof of it in the opinions which he had taken up with respect to wool. Undoubtedly there was a bias in the minds of Members returned for large manufacturing counties to lean to the manufacturing rather than to the agricultural interest, and when he looked at the counties which were to receive two Members in addition, he must say, that he looked upon that addition to be rather more for the advantage of the manufacturing and commercial than the landed interests. Besides, it ought not to be forgotten that in addition to such Members, many great towns would have to send Representatives to the House of Commons, elected by an enormously extended popular body of constituents. The proposition was, that all householders of 10*l.* and upwards should have votes. Now, how was the amount of voters thus added to the constituency to be ascertained? His Majesty's Ministers had referred to the returns of the tax collectors; but was the number of these voters to be found in the tax papers? Under the present system, it was the desire of every man to keep his house out of the tax paper. It was a difficult matter for the tax-gatherer to get an account of the real value of any house, as all kinds of attempts were now made to reduce their value. It would, however, be found, as soon as this Bill passed, that the number of houses rated at 10*l.* would far exceed the number of houses now rated at that amount in the tax-gatherer's books. The moment that it was ascertained that a house rent of 10*l.* a year gave the elective franchise, means would be found between the landlord and tenant to raise the rent to that amount. All their Lordships knew the mode in which rents were sometimes raised for the purpose of obtaining settlements. The barrister would have to go round the country pretty frequently, otherwise the amount of the constituent body would never be known. He contended that by this provision of the Bill the body of electors would be much larger than any person had at this moment an idea of. He had made an inquiry into the rent of houses in the neighbourhood of London, from which eight additional Members were to be sent to a reformed Parliament. In some of the parishes of London, and he believed that he might even add, that in many of the neighbouring villages, there were few houses at so low a rent as 10*l.* a year. He happened to have a gardener, to whom he paid 14*s.* a week. He asked this gardener how much he paid a year for house rent. The man replied, 12*l.* He then said to the gardener, "Perhaps your house is better than that of most of your neighbours?" The man replied, "No; I know of but very few houses in our parish which do not pay 10*l.* a year rent." If to the 10*l.* householders in the sixteen villages in the neighbourhood of the metropolis, the same class of householders in the extensive villages of Greenwich and Woolwich were added, it would be seen that the metropolis and its neighbourhood would have a constituency enormous beyond all calculation. There appeared to be a fondness on the part of the framers of this Bill for an enormously large constituency; for even in places where the constituency might have been reduced, they have proposed to save the elective franchise to the existing freemen for their lives. The borough of Liverpool, for example, contained, he believed, 6,000 freemen. A great number of these freemen must therefore be added to the number of householders in that place, which he was told amounted to 25,000; and this number of voters, according to the provisions of this Bill, were to be polled in two days. He had no hesitation in saying that this could not be done. The grounds, therefore, upon which this Bill was supported, failed, and no such advantage would be derived from it as its advocates expected. He would say one word as to the check which it would be on bribery, and as to its effects in diminishing the expense of contested elections. He knew something about that expense. and he was of opinion, that though this Bill might diminish the cost of elections in some respects, as in the expense of conveying voters to the poll, it would not diminish it at all in some other respects, which were not less material. In great counties, the expense was not so much in conducting voters to the poll, as in the canvassing and the agency. This latter head of expenditure would not be, he believed, at all diminished by the Bill. Undoubtedly, as the poll was to be taken in different places simultaneously, there would be in that respect a diminution of expense; but it would be worth while to consider how far that would be counteracted by the additional expense to which the candidate would be exposed in canvassing in all those different places. There would be an expense constantly going on for the reception and registration of votes. A barrister, it appeared, was to go round the country annually, registering votes, but if a conflict between the different interests of a county were expected, would it not be necessary for each candidate on the opposing interests to have an agent to go regularly round the county every year, with the registering barrister, in order to prevent any of his influence from being lost from want of registration on the part of his voters? He would not go further into the particulars of this Bill at present. If it should ever come up to their Lordships,—and he hoped that it never would,—he should be prepared to discuss it point by point. All he would say of it at present was, that upon the most careful examination which he had been able to give to its details, it did appear to him to be as complete a delusion as had ever been offered to the country; for instead of increasing the weight of the landed interest in Parliament, it would diminish it, and would therefore lessen and ultimately destroy the due power of the aristocracy. Nothing was so common—indeed it was so common as to have become an adage—nothing was so common, he observed, as the remark, that the landed interest and the manufacturing interest of the country were one and indivisible—that they must fall or thrive together; and that whatever was good for the one must of necessity be good for the other also. It did, however, happen, somehow or other, that whenever any thing arose which touched the separate advantages of those two great classes of society, the manufacturing were ready enough to range themselves against the agricultural classes. He believed that when once this Bill was passed, the landed interest would find, when it was too late, that an opening was made for the total repeal of the Corn-laws; and that the additional number of electors added to the close boroughs and to the large towns, would give the manufacturers a preponderance in the House of Commons which would be destructive of their interests. He believed that such an object had been avowed by many of the inhabitants of towns as one of the principal reasons which they had for pressing forward this Bill. He asked those who contended that this Bill was to be a permanent measure, and who affirmed that the demands of the people were to be completely satisfied by it, what course they were prepared to pursue upon the Corn-laws? Supposing that the people should ask for the total repeal of those laws, and that their petitions should be unsuccessful, as on that point he hoped they always would be, did they expect that the people would acquiesce in such a decision of Parliament against them? They would say, "This state of things cannot be permitted to endure—we will have"—for that was now the language of the people—"we will have the Corn-laws repealed, and to obtain that consummation, we must have the House of Commons rendered even still more popular in its constitution." If noble Lords would take the trouble of looking, as he had done, through the numbers likely to be returned from the different counties and boroughs under this new Bill, they would see, that whenever a vote was to be taken, on a question on which the agricultural and the manufacturing interests differed, the landed interest would lose that weight which now belonged, and as he believed properly belonged, to it. He had now, stated generally the faults which he had to find with the Bill, but if he had reason to find fault with the Bill itself, he had still greater reason to find fault with the mode in which it had been introduced to the consideration of Parliament. It had been brought forward by a member of his Majesty's Government, and with a most extraordinary use of his Majesty's name. He did not mean to say that his Majesty's name had been used improperly, but it had been used in a way which had given a hint to all the press of the country to fix on the King as being personally desirous to promote a Reform in the Commons House of Parliament. Now, he was of opinion, that that was a situation in which the King of these realms ought not to be placed. It had been said, that the very same thing had been done in the discussions which preceded the last Catholic bill. He was aware that this Reform Bill was brought in by the consent of the Cabinet. The very fact of its being so introduced into Parliament was enough to show that the King had officially given it his sanction. Now in the case of the Catholic bill a doubt had been very sedulously excited as to whether the King was not adverse to the measure, although he had officially sanctioned its introduction. The noble Duke then at the head of the Government was questioned explicitly on the point, and it was not till that question was put to him, that he answered, that the King had given his entire sanction to the bill. Here, however, of their own accord, it was stated by Ministers, that his Majesty had given his most decided approbation to the Bill; and shortly after that expression had been used in that House of Parliament, an expression was dropped in the other, that if the measure did not succeed there, Parliament would be dissolved. Now, if ever there was a subject which required calm and mature deliberation, it was this measure. It was not a reform, but a re-construction of Parliament. No measure, since the Revolution of 1688, had equalled it in importance; and there was no want of the aid of the King's name, or of the King's interference, to promote this, as he thought, frightful change. The feelings of the people in all parts of the country were so strong upon it, that he believed that if the question were to be decided by ballot, there would be very few balls except on one side. For his own part, he quarrelled greatly with the extent to which this Reform was to be carried; for it appeared to him, that instead of being asked for by the people, the disfranchisement of the close boroughs was thrown down at their feet, uselessly and voluntarily, by the Ministers. He need scarcely refer their Lordships to the sensation which had pervaded the metropolis the day after this plan of Reform was propounded. Every man whom you met, —no matter whether he was Whig, or

Tory, or Radical,—held up his hands in surprise on hearing that so much was conceded. If noble Lords would, in their love of novelty, take the pains of inquiring into the feelings of certain classes of the community, they would find that there was among them a desire of Reform, but not to the extent to which they proposed to carry it. Their plan of Reform was inconsiderate,—was rash; but now that they had proposed it, it had excited a torrent of popular feeling in its behalf, which it was almost impossible to stop. It was said, that in this state of excitement his Majesty's Government were determined to take the sense of the country, and to dissolve the Parliament; and why? Already had the House of Commons affirmed the extent of the proposed disfranchisement. ["*No.*"] He thought that he could convince his noble friend who denied his statement, that the principle and extent of disfranchisement had been sanctioned, when, upon a division in the largest House of Commons that was ever known, there was a majority of one in favour of the second reading of the Bill. That, however, would not prevent the House of Commons from being dissolved. Any one who knew any thing of the House of Commons, knew that many Members had voted for the second reading of the Bill, and were prepared to vote for the disfranchisement of the boroughs to a certain extent, who were not ready to vote for the subsequent details of the Bill, or carry it as it at present stood through a Committee. ["*No.*"] He was stating what he believed to be the fact; and he hoped that their Lordships would give him credit for doing so upon all occasions, whether it made against his arguments or not. The chief hope of many of those who had voted, and as he thought foolishly voted, for the second reading of this measure was, that they should be able to modify it in the committee. In this hope he was afraid they would be disappointed, and therefore he thought, that they would have acted more wisely had they opposed it altogether. He had heard it said, that noble Lords on the other side of the House had introduced this Bill because they wanted to obtain a permanent resting-place against the future demands of the people. He had already stated one instance in which a cry was almost certain to be speedily raised against the landed interest, in which it would be said, that its power was too great in the House of Commons, and in which it would be insisted that its power ought to be diminished in order to obtain the repeal of the Corn-laws. Questions of a similar description would arise over and over again in the course of years, and therefore, strong, imprudent, and blameable, as this measure was, it would not even have the merit of effecting the consummation which its proposers professed to have most strongly at heart. The thing was quite impossible. There was no taking a final stand against the demands of the people on this Bill; for they would also state that they were not sufficiently represented. Besides, if this Bill were to pass, it would not be long before they would be compelled to give the colonial interests of the country some direct interest in the Representation of the House of Commons. They would not be satisfied with having no Members to represent them, even indirectly, in that assembly. There was another glaring defect in this Bill. He contended that, if ever it passed into a law, it would be quite impossible for the Government to go on. In times of excitement it would be quite impossible for all the members of the Government to be so popular as to be certain of obtaining seats in the House of Commons. Indeed it was the duty of Ministers to counteract popular opinion sometimes, and God forbid that a Government should exist in this country determined to be guided on all occasions by the popular voice. The present question was not a question like the Catohlic question, which was a pure and simple question of right and justice. The Catholics had certain rights, from which we had debarred them. We gave them their rights, and thus an end was put to that question. At present they were giving rights to some and taking them from others, and still leaving great masses of men without Representation, and without the rights they claimed. It was therefore absurd to talk to him of this Bill serving as a resting-place from which to oppose the future demands of the people. He must condemn, too, in strong terms the irresponsible system of Representation which this Bill was calculated to introduce. He had seen the time when the salvation of the country was effected by carrying questions contrary to the popular feeling. Look, for instance, at the decisions respecting Currency and Free

Trade. He had had a considerable connexion with several large manufacturing towns, and he knew that a strong feeling had existed in them against those decisions. He knew that the Parliament had been right, and the manufacturers wrong; but what must be done on such questions in future, when a Reformed Parliament was returned, elected by, and dependent on, a large popular constituency? If the popular feeling were resisted by the House of Commons, all the questions which this Bill was intended to close would open again, and they would soon have something to do in their attempts to reclose them. There were other persons in the State, who bore him out in that assertion. He alluded to those who, during the whole course of his parliamentary life, had been in the habit of attacking the institutions of the country, and who preferred to them a republic, or such a government as was now established in France—a monarchy based on republican institutions. Let their Lordships attend to the language used by persons of that description. On Sunday, the 6th of March, 1831, there appeared in the *Examiner*, a paper written with the greatest ability on the side which it espoused, the following remarks:—"Ministers have far exceeded our expectations. The plan of Reform, though short of Radical Reform, tends to the utter destruction of boroughmongery, and will prepare the way for a complete improvement. The ground, limited as it is, which it is proposed to clear and open to the popular influence, will suffice, as the spot desired by Archimedes, for the plant of the power that must ultimately govern the whole system. Without Reform, convulsion is inevitable. Upon any Reform further improvement is inevitably consequent, and the settlement of the Government on the democratical basis certain. If we supposed that the plan before us could be permanent, we should declare it insufficient; but we have no such apprehension in an age of onward movement, and we hail it as a first step to a greater good, and as a first stept to abandoning an odious vice. It does not give the people all they want, but it takes the arms from their enemies. Like Sinbad, we have first to dash from our shoulders the old man of the island, and afterwards to complete our deliverance." Could any thing, he would ask, be fairer or more explicit than such language? Was it possible for any man to mistake its meaning? and, being forewarned, ought they not to be forearmed against it? But he was told, that when this Bill was passed, we should have so many with us that we need not fear those who might be against us. He wished sincerely, and from the bottom of his heart, that such hopes might be realized, but a great part of those hopes appeared to him to rest upon grounds which were in themselves untenable. But whether they were so or not, he wished their Lordships to remark one point, that the way in which the writer in the *Examiner* expected that this plan of Reform would work was this,—that in the first instance the people would work on the House of Commons; and that in the second, the House of Commons would operate on the other branches of the Legislature. That consideration brought him to reflect upon the situation in which that House might eventually be placed; and he asked their Lordships seriously, whether, when a popular House of Commons, backed by a powerful popular Press, should pass this Bill, they could think of resisting it? It might be their duty to resist? were they prepared to perform it? They were placed in that House to stand between the Commons and the Throne. He wished that they might be able to perform their duty effectually, but he was afraid that they would be made tools of, to advance the power of the people against the Crown. In what a situation were their Lordships placed by this Bill of Reform; If Parliament were to be dissolved in the present juncture of affairs, and if Members were to be returned to the House of Commons under the present excitement, the country would have a Convention Parliament,—a mere House of Delegates to vote as the people ordered; for there would be no return made to the House from a popular place in which the Member would not be pledged and bound down to vote for the Bill, and nothing but the Bill. Then when the Bill came to them from the other House, thus backed by the demands of the people, would their Lordships refuse it? He said, that it was not fair to place the House of Lords in such a predicament; and if he could make his voice heard from that place by the King upon the Throne, he would say, that if Parliament should now be dissolved by his Majesty's proclamation, it would place the House of Lords in a most dangerous situation. If they could be convinced that the disfranchisement of these boroughs was required by the interests and exigences of the State, in God's name, let their Lordships, acting upon their convictions, make the Reform demanded of them calmly and deliberately; but do not let their Lordships be placed in a situation where they had no chance for calm deliberation, no alternative but open resistance or instant compliance with the wishes of the people. He called upon them to reflect, over and over again, that if Parliament should now be dissolved, they would have nothing but a House of Delegates in the next House of Commons, for they would get no man in his senses to stand the expense of a contested popular election who was certain to be sent to the right-about immediately afterwards; and sent to the right-about he must be within three months after his election, if this Bill passed. When the House of Commons should be nothing more than a House of Delegates to pass this Bill, the House of Lords might deliberate upon the Bill when it came before them, but it would scarcely be able to alter or reject it. For a Whig Ministry, and a liberal Ministry, to act as Ministers had acted upon this question, was, he confessed, a matter which had indeed surprised him. He had now gone through the different arguments which he had intended to employ against this Bill. He hoped that his noble friends would give him credit for the sincerity of his belief, when he stated, that he considered it to be a measure which, if passed, would be fatal to the Crown, would prevent the due and proper action of the different branches of the State, and which tended, if not to destroy the Monarchy, to base it on a government of republican institutions. He had been born under a Monarchy, he had lived under a Monarchy, and he wished to see that Monarchy last as a protection not only to his children, but to his children's children, and their still more remote descendants; and with these feelings he must say, that to such a Bill as this he never could bring his reason to consent. The noble Lord concluded by submitting the following Motion: "That an humble Address be presented to his Majesty, to request that his Majesty will be graciously pleased to order that there be laid before this House, accounts of the population (taken from the census of 1821) of each City, Borough, and Town in England and Wales, now returning Members to Parliament; of each not now returning Members; and of the population of each county in England Wales, and Scotland, and of each Royal Burgh in Scotland. Also, accounts of the number of houses in each city, borough and county in England and Wales, and of each county, royal burgh, and town in Scotland, now returning Members to Parliament, and of those not now returning Members to Parliament; distinguishing the number of houses assessed to the inhabited house duty from 10*l.* to 19*l.* inclusive; and from 20*l.* to 39*l.* inclusive, and at 40*l.* and upwards. Also, a statement of the population of each borough in England and Wales returning Members to Parliament, of which the population in 1821 did not exceed 2,000; the number of houses; the greatest number of electors polled within the last thirty years; and the number of houses in each borough rated to the inhabited house duty in the year 1830, at and above 10*l.* a-year. Also, a similar statement with respect to all cities and boroughs exceeding 4,000 inhabitants: and also, a similar statement with respect to all cities and royal burghs in Scotland."

Lords Durham and Viscount Sidmouth rose together, but the call of the House was in favour of the former noble Lord, who was proceeding to address their Lordships, when,

Lord *Kenyon* rose to order. The noble Lord observed, that he had been a Member of that House for twenty-nine years, and had never before known so gross a breach of privilege as that which had been committed by the noble Lord who had just sat down ["*order, order*".] He begged to observe, that he rose to order, and to say, that, in his opinion, the noble Lord who had just sat down had been out of order during the greater part of the time that he had been occupied in addressing their Lordships, by discussing the details of a Bill which was not yet before their Lordships, and which it was by no means certain would ever come before them.

Viscount Sidmouth again rose.

Earl *Grey* inquired, Is it on a point of order that the noble Viscount has risen to address your Lordships? If so, my noble friend will of course give way; if not, he will, with the consent of your Lordships, persist in his right to reply to the noble Baron who has just addressed you.

Viscount *Sidmouth* said, that it was on a point of order, and not to enter upon a discussion of the measure on which the noble Baron had just expatiated at such length that he had risen to address their Lordships. Had he yielded to his feelings,—and never were they more painfully excited than when listening to the noble Lord,—he should have at once risen to order, and called upon their Lordships to put an end to a discussion so irregular in itself, and so contrary to the usages of Parliament. He had heard the noble Lord's first notice of his Motion with uneasiness, and his subsequent declaration to not persist in it, with satisfaction; for he could not but be apprehensive of the inconveniences, to say the least, of a premature and most anomalous discussion of a Bill not yet on the Table of the House, and with the provisions of which they could not be acquainted. He trusted the House would not persist in sanctioning so irregular a discussion as that which the noble Baron had just most informally provoked, on a Bill of which all they could know was, that it had been read a first and second time in the House of Commons, and had been ordered to be committed, and with the detailed provisions of which even that House could not be yet acquainted.

Lord *Wharncliffe*.—I also must rise to order. If the noble Viscount thus goes on descanting on the informality of my speech and Motion, I must claim the right of replying to him.

Lord *Sidmouth* had nothing more to say than to conjure their Lordships to at once check a discussion, not only opposed to the usage of Parliament, but which might lead to the most mischievous consequences.

Earl *Grey* was bound to testify to the perfect fairness with which his noble friend (Wharncliffe) had brought forward his Motion. When his noble friend had given notice of his Motion, he had candidly stated that he would make it the occasion of expressing his views with respect to the general question of Parliamentary Reform, and not merely confine himself to moving for returns, which might throw light on that measure now in progress in the other House of Parliament. Still, however, it was a question for their Lordships to decide, how far that discussion should extend to the provisions of a Bill not yet before their Lordships, and which, for aught they knew, might never come before them. It was not for him to pronounce a decided opinion upon that question, and stop the noble Baron. All he would say was, that it appeared to him, that after having attentively listened to the elaborate statement of his noble friend, they could not with propriety stop at that stage of the discussion. While he stated this, he agreed perfectly with the noble Viscount (Sidmouth) opposite, as to the inconvenience of pronouncing a decided opinion on a Bill not yet before them, and which, as he had said, might not come before them at all, and he therefore hoped that subsequent discussion would be confined as much as possible to the general principles of Parliamentary Reform, without any inconvenient reference to details with which they could not yet be acquainted.

The Earl of *Eldon* took great blame to himself for not having sooner, after his long experience of nearly thirty years, in that House, risen to order. He had expected from the wording of the noble Lord's Motion, that it would be confined to procuring the means of throwing light on the great question which was then in the other House of Parliament, but not that it should have been merely an occasion for entering on the details of a Bill not yet before their Lordships. The noble Lord might, without violating the usages of Parliament, have given expression to his opinions on the principles of the general measure of Reform; but in pronouncing an opinion on the provisions of a Bill not yet, as he had said, before them, and which, for aught they knew, or were bound to know, might not come before them, he was acting directly contrary to the usages of Parliament. Indeed, he took shame to himself for not having sooner risen, and endeavoured to put an end to a discussion not only so opposed, as he had said, to every usage of that House, but which also might be productive of the most serious inconveniences. The noble Lord had not contented himself with expressing his view of the general measure of Reform, but had ventured to specify the grounds on which it had received the support of hon. Members individually in the other House of Parliament, than which discussion he need not say, nothing could be more irregular, or more opposed to the rules which regulated the proceedings in that House. He therefore must express a hope that a discussion so irregular would not be persisted in. He was anxious that so irregular a discussion should not receive the countenance of their Lordships, and particularly concerning a measure the most revolutionary in its principle and details that had ever come under his notice.

The *Lord Chancellor* felt it right to caution their Lordships against too implicitly yielding to the suggestions of the noble and learned Earl. That noble and learned Lord had, with great candour and self-accusation, told them he took shame to himself for not having sooner risen to put an end to the irregular discussion in which, according to him, they were then engaged; but it was not till the noble and learned Lord, in common with their Lordships, had listened to every single argument that had been urged with great skill and ability by the noble Baron against the principle of the great measure of Reform now in progress in the other House of Parliament,—and to not only every argument and objection that might be urged against the provisions of that measure, but many objections which would not bear examination,—that the noble and learned Lord had made the discovery, that they had been all the while engaged in an informal and anomalous discussion, and that he called upon them not to sanction a continuance of the discussion. Was this fair to the Bill? Would it not go forth to the public, who awaited, with breathless expectation, the progress of the debates touching that Bill, that they had listened to all that could be said against the Bill, and would not hear what might be said by its advocates in its favour? After listening with deep attention to a speech of upwards of two hours' length, studded with objections and cavils against every the minutest provision of the Bill, and just as a noble Lord, one of its authors, had risen to reply to those objections, and to vindicate the policy on which Ministers had felt it to be their duty to bring it before Parliament,—after thus calmly and listeningly, and, he might add, favourably attending to all that might be urged on the one side,—all the while none of the approvers of the objections thus urged ever dreaming of any informality in the line the noble objector was pursuing,—never suspecting the remotest violation of the order of that House,—the noble and learned Earl just now, for the first time, discovers that they were quite disorderly, and that they could not too soon put an end to this contrary-to-order-and-usage discussion. Since a quarter to six o'clock it appeared they were acting thus disorderly; and now a light broke in upon them, and the noble and learned Earl cries out, "Gods! how disorderly we have been all these two hours; let us be so no longer: let us amend, and not sanction the irregular discussion,—no, not two minutes longer." It would appear that they had, during these two hours of oblivion of the usages of parliament, for which the noble and learned Earl had so mournfully reproached himself, exhausted all their disorderliness, and that therefore they could not for the souls of them continue so for a short time longer. It had been said that every person in his life-time eats and consumes a quantity of noxious matter, which at one meal would be fatal—and so with the present disorderly proceedings. It seemed as if the noble and learned Earl, and those who supported him, had resolved thus:—"Let us eat all at once our whole stock of irregularity, and in God's name let us not hear a word which would imply that all had not been exhausted." But he trusted the House would not be thus led away by the noble and learned Earl; and that an opportunity would be afforded of hearing something on the other side of the question. In saying this, however, he agreed with his noble friend, and the noble Viscount (Sidmouth,) as to the inconveniences of a premature and out-of-place discussion on a Bill not yet before the House, and he hoped with them, that in the subsequent discussion they would refrain as much as possible from entering into the details of that Bill, and only by way of illustration of their views of its general principles. It was but due to the noble Baron who had at such length departed from the usages of parliament in his speech, to state that he had, on giving notice of his Motion, candidly and good-humouredly, though not very logically, stated that he would not wait till the Bill was formally before their Lordships, but should, on moving for the present returns, express his opinion on its principle and provisions.

Lord *Durham*.*—My Lords, I can assure the noble Viscount (Sidmouth) that I should not have persisted, under ordinary circumstances, in claiming to be heard before him; but under the peculiar circumstances of the case, connected, as I am, with the Administration which has originated the measure of Reform now before the other

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* Printed from the corrected speech published by Ridgway.

House of Parliament, I feel called upon to reply to my noble friend; otherwise, I would most readily have given way to a Member of your Lordships' House, of much less experience, and of less character than the noble Viscount. I am glad, however, that an opportunity has been afforded to my noble and learned friend (the Lord Chancellor) to show that the noble Viscount was much more out of order in adopting the line of conduct which he did than my noble friend, whose speech he declared to be so disorderly; for, I would ask, what can be more irregular—what more contrary to justice—what more opposed to fairness and impartiality of debate—than, after hearing a long and able speech against a certain measure, to stand up and declare that, to listen to a reply in defence of that measure, would be disorderly, and contrary to all the usages and customs of Parliament? But my noble and learned friend on the Woolsack has so ably exposed the inconsistency—nay, the gross injustice of this attempt to induce your Lordships to stop at the present stage of the proceedings, and the general sense of the House has been so strongly marked on the occasion, that I need say no more on the subject. Now, with regard to the speech of my noble friend opposite, I certainly shall not attempt to answer in detail all the points on which he dwelt, as I have neither health nor inclination to do so now. I am delighted, however, that an opportunity has been afforded me of disabusing the mind of my noble friend, and of many of your Lordships, with respect to certain misrepresentations and misconceptions which have been so industriously propagated. Before I enter on the consideration of the principle and details of the Bill, against which my noble friend, with so much zeal and ability, has raised his voice, I feel myself bound to declare that I believe my noble friend to be actuated in his opposition by nothing approaching either to factious or party motives. I have known my noble friend too long, not to be well aware that he is only actuated by a sense of public duty for the promotion of what he conceives to be the public interest. The noble Lord and myself have long served together in parliament, and from the experience of him, which I have had an opportunity of acquiring during our intercourse, I am satisfied that whatever interest he may have in supporting the present system, as proprietor of the borough of Bossiney, it is impossible to attribute the conduct which the noble Lord may pursue to any motive of a personal nature. The noble lord has complained of the language used by the public Press, and of the violence and zeal with which the writers of it have advocated the great measure of Reform which Ministers have brought before the other House. My noble friend complains of the inflammatory nature of that language, but he was not aware that this is only a warning of the strength of public opinion, and of the consequent folly of an obstinate resistance to it? He must know, that the Press is but the echo of public opinion, deriving nearly all its strength from it, and that by means of it a Statesman can judge with tolerable accuracy of the force and current of the public mind. The public Press is a most useful guide of the strength and a direction of the voice of the people, on questions of great interest. When it is general in its advocacy of any great measure, it is so because the feelings of the public are deeply interested in its success; and so it is with the great measure of Reform, and the manner in which it has been treated by the Press. If a proof be wanting of the sentiments of the nation with respect to this measure, your Lordships may discover it in what my noble friend complains of—the general unanimity—for the exceptions are too few, and of too low a character, to be taken into account—the unanimity with which every journal distinguished for talent, extensive circulation, or character, has advocated, not merely the principle of a Reform of Parliament, but the particular plan brought forward by his Majesty's Ministers. Why does this unanimity exist, I repeat, unless public opinion is directly in favour of it? Even my noble friend has admitted, that the irresistible force of public feeling has compelled him—the enemy of every species of Parliamentary Reform all his life—to admit that some measure of Reform is necessary, and can no longer be withheld. Here let me refer to the charges brought by my noble friend, against the advocates of this Bill, of having sanctioned an unfair use of the King's name. This has been made a ground of serious complaint, but I think that very little is necessary to show how extravagant such a charge is. If the name of the sovereign has been so introduced, it has not been by his Ministers—nor was it even necessary that we should.

The fact of the king's approbation of the measure was evident when we proposed it to Parliament, which we could not have done without his consent. If the name of the king was introduced at all by other advocates of the measure, it was only in consequence of the attempts made with such industry, by its opponents, to excite a belief that his Majesty was opposed to Reform. The introduction of the king's name at all was not our act, and I most distinctly deny, on the part of the Government, that we ever sanctioned or used that sacred name with a view to influence the conduct of any individual. The present Ministry accepted office on the condition of bringing forward a measure of Reform, of which they received his Majesty's sanction and support; the importance of which sanction my noble friend has fully recognised, by admitting, that, after his Majesty allowed my noble relation to form an Administration on the principle of Reform, the question could no longer be resisted. Now, let me remind your Lordships of the peculiar circumstances under which the present Administration accepted the seals of office. The late Government of the noble Duke opposite fell, not from a want of inclination to retain the reins of power—not from any factious opposition or party combination on the part of those who had been for years excluded from office—not in consequence of the division on the Civil List—but from a want of confidence in the public in its capability to manage the affairs of the country—a want of confidence loudly expressed at the general election, and increased by the emphatic declaration of the noble Duke against all Reform whatever. This declaration it was, more than any thing else, that led to the fall of the noble Duke's Government, by depriving it of the support of the public. I heard the noble Duke make that declaration—I heard him say, also, that he not only thought Parliamentary Reform unnecessary, but that if he had himself to frame a Constitution, he could not organize one more perfect than that now in existence; and never shall I forget the impression which it made on my mind, and on the mind of the nation at large. It was on account of this declaration of the noble Duke, I repeat, and not in consequence of any party hostility—it was not his defeat on the Civil List—it was not in consequence of any particular vote of this or the other House of Parliament, but because many, I believe all, of the colleagues of the noble Duke were anxious to resign their places, as they saw that the Government could not be safely carried on after the declaration of his opinion on the subject of Reform, that his Administration was dissolved. Never was a Ministry less exposed to the attacks of the party out of power, than the late Ministry was—never did an Administration fall so completely from a want of confidence in itself, arising from the absence of public support. I am sure that neither the noble Duke, nor your Lordships, can forget the conduct of my noble relative near me, and his colleagues now in office, when the Catholic Relief Bill was brought forward. The advocacy of that great measure had excluded us from political power—the just object of every Englishman's ambition—their opposition to it had enabled our political adversaries to retain office for a long series of years. And yet, what did we do when the noble Duke, avowedly through intimidation and fear, brought forward the very measure for advocating which, on the sound principle of political justice, we were excluded from office? We not only suffered him to carry away all the credit of the measure at the very last moment, but we did so when we and he knew, that unless he succeeded in carrying it, his Administration was at an end. Nay more; had we been actuated by any motives of party or factious hostility to the Government, we might have taken a stand on the proposition to disfranchise the 40*s.* freeholders; for it is well known that many of us entertained strong feelings against the propriety of that measure—but consulting only the public interest and the welfare of the country, which we knew would be promoted by the success of that great question, of which we had been the early and zealous advocates—we did not oppose the Disfranchisement Bill, knowing that, if we did, the great Relief Bill would be defeated. This conduct shows how little the fall of the noble Duke's Government was influenced by party hostility, and how wholly it was owing to the effect of the withdrawal of public confidence, consequent upon his declaration against Parliamentary Reform. Now, my Lords, let me take the liberty of replying to the charge of precipitate rashness, urged by my noble friend, against my noble relation, for having brought forward this question so soon after his acceptance of office. I would ask him to recollect the state the country was in at that period. We found several districts seriously disturbed—the public mind in a ferment—no confidence in the civil power—a spirit of combination ripe among the workmen in the manufacturing towns, and the population of six of the most important counties in the south of England—namely, Kent, Sussex, Surrey, Berkshire, Hampshire, and Wiltshire, in a state of almost open insurrection and rebellion—a ready prey to incendiaries, and plunderers of every description. We found, moreover, the civil power without energy or direction—the magistrates in the disturbed districts afraid to act, and the king's peaceable subjects either besieged in their houses by night, or openly maltreated and plundered in the day. We found a still more dangerous state of things in the unwillingness of the middle classes to support the Government in the suppression of these disturbances—an unwillingness which we found carried to such a pitch on our accession to office, that I am confident even so experienced a military commander as the noble Duke himself would have found it no easy matter, by the mere aid of an armed soldiery, to pacify the disturbed districts, unaided, or at best but feebly and coldly supported, by that important body in every free State—the middle classes. This was the state of the country, not only in the disturbed districts in the south of England, but in the large towns in the manufacturing districts of the north. In this almost desperate situation did our predecessors leave the country, when they resigned their offices! What, then, did we do, and with what success? We first won back the confidence and support of the middle classes. This important body we found alienated from the civil power by the declaration of the noble Duke against Reform;—that alienation was removed by the open and uncompromising pledge of my noble relation in favour of Reform. Having thus produced this important effect on the public mind—having enlisted the confidence of the country in our intentions to administer, on right principles, the affairs of this great empire, and having firmly, yet mercifully, asserted the majesty of the law, public tranquillity was restored, and the way was prepared for that internal improvement and amelioration which is now so generally perceptible. Having then, on our accession to office, given a pledge in favour of Reform, the question was, as to the manner and period of our fulfilling it. I need not tell your Lordships that, if Ministers had contented themselves with barely redeeming their pledge by some small measure of Reform, just sufficient to fulfil the promise they had given, this would not have satisfied the just wishes and expectations of the public. Such a course would not have been fulfilling the spirit of the pledge given, nor would it have been what the people had a just right to expect. It would not have strengthened the Administration—but it would have weakened it, by sowing the seeds of future discontent and agitation, and would have further increased that want of confidence in the sincerity of statesmen which has so long prevailed, with the worst effects, in the public mind. Besides, I know that there is no policy more blindly mischievous than an obstinate resistance to the just claims of the people: your Lordships well know that no lesson of history has been more frequently taught than that the ill-timed refusal of such demands of a nation have no other effect than to raise them higher and higher, till you are compelled to yield, without thanks, what, if timely granted, would have been received with gratitude. Ministers knew and felt this, and therefore were determined that their measure of Reform should be one, from its broad basis, and from its adaptation to the just demands of the people, of permanent settlement. My noble friend, it is true, denies that the measure will be a permanent one; but his denial is only an assertion entirely unsupported by facts or reasoning. We on the other hand affirm, that by our plan an end will be put at once and for ever to the rotten-borough system, and the elective franchise bestowed on a large and important class which at present are denied it—in other words, we at one blow remove a great abuse and provide an efficient remedy—we enable all those who possess sufficient property to insure their independence to exercise the elective right; and, without yielding to extravagant demands, we satisfy the just claims of the people. There is no principle of our Constitution—there is no principle affecting the Representative system—that has not property for its basis, and I am warranted in saying, that the plan of Ministers is of this nature. It is, therefore, I contend, of a permanent character, and I know that it has been so considered by all classes of the community. I think that I may venture, without the fear of contradiction, to assert, that the measure has been hailed as wise and beneficial by the enlightened and respectable portion of the people—that the middle classes have been unanimous in its favour, and that the great body of the people regard it with satisfaction. If we consider the almost countless petitions that have been laid on the Table of this House in favour of it, from all parts of the country, and from all classes—if we look to the proceedings of the various public meetings in England and Scotland—if we refer to the emphatic declaration in its favour by the first commercial body in the world—I mean the Merchants and Bankers of the city of London—if we remember that the great organ, the public Press, has generally and ably supported it, and advocated its immediate adoption—in fact, in whatever way the opinion of the public on the subject is investigated, it will be found that the plan of Government has satisfied the just expectations of the country, and that we have honourably, consistently, and boldly redeemed the pledge we gave on coming into office. I now come to the Bill itself, which rather irregularly, I own, has been so unsparingly discussed and criticised by my noble friend—but I do not complain of this proceeding on his part—on the contrary, I rejoice at every opportunity that is afforded his Majesty's Ministers of explaining and defending, here, the measure which is now pending in the other House. The first part of the Bill to which my noble friend objects, is that which cuts off the rotten boroughs; and he is pleased to call this a breach of the constitution of the House of Commons. Now, I cannot conceive that any measure, short of lopping off altogether these rotten boroughs, can produce those beneficial results which we anticipate from the present Bill. These boroughs are so monstrous an abuse—they are so wholly indefensible—that it is hardly necessary for me to detain your Lordships by entering into a detail of the hideous defects of the system, and the gross bribery and corruption to which it leads. We have had so many proofs daily before our eyes of these abuses—we have them in the printed records of the evidence given at our bar, in the cases of Penryn, Grampound, and East Retford, in which bribery and corruption were as notorious as the sun at noonday—that it is almost a waste of time to do more than mention them. Have your Lordships forgotten the evidence to which I have just alluded? My noble friend, at any rate, has not; for he has complained that this House, by its strict adherence to the rules of evidence, in these cases, has prevented the adoption of a trifling and "bit-by-bit" Reform, and thus produced this universal demand for a more comprehensive measure. Then as to the notorious corruption of the rotten-borough system? Do you not know that persons of every description buy and sell seats in the other House of Parliament? That Jews as well as Christians deal in the right to nominate Members of the Legislature? Has the threat of a noble boroughmonger been forgotten, that he would put his own menial in Parliament—as a Representative, forsooth, of the people of England—a threat which was not fulfilled; not from want of power on the part of the proprietor, but from his individual discretion? I myself heard the fact of nomineeship—that libel on the Representation of a free people—distinctly avowed, not long since, in the other House of Parliament; and, in common with, I am sure, many who now hear me, I heard of sales of seats in the other House being a matter of daily occurrence;—that, for example, 1200*l.* a year was sometimes paid to a borough-dealing attorney for the Representation of some rotten borough, of which the person elected, perhaps, had never heard before, and which he would never visit. But the abuses of the rotten-borough system are notorious, and their continuance would be disgraceful. Even in the more open boroughs, need your Lordships be informed of what you have in evidence on your own Journals—extorted, it is true, by the most unjust and inquisitorial process, but yet there recorded—and, I fear, too well known by practice to some of your Lordships individually—the disgraceful bribery and corruption of which they are almost invariably the scene under the present system? These facts are matters of public notoriety, and no Reform can possibly satisfy the public mind that permits their continuance. How, then, I would ask, could Ministers, in justice to themselves and the country, shrink from boldly and impartially proposing to disfranchise at once, all those boroughs where such gross abuses exist. We hesitated not for one moment; and determined to propose the extinction of every borough which could not be purified by the practicable infusion of independent electors. My noble friend has urged some objections to the line which has been drawn in disfranchising those boroughs. I confess I do not think that we could have adopted any fairer course than that which we did. I will enter into a short explanation on this point, as the view his Majesty's Ministers took of the case has been misunderstood in this House as well as elsewhere. In fixing upon a population of 2,000 inhabitants in 1821, as the line within which all boroughs should be disfranchised, our object was, to cut off all those rotten boroughs for which there could be no purifying remedy by way of extension of franchise. It was not because the boroughs, the population of which was under 2,000 in 1821, contained but few electors, that we proposed to extinguish them entirely; but because we could not possibly extend the franchise in them so as to do away with the evils of the system, without absorbing in them nearly the whole county Representation. It was because that line accurately described them—because it included them all—and if the line of 2,000 had not effected this, we should have proposed 3,000, or any other number which could have effectually accomplished this purpose. This was the reason that we fixed upon the population returns of 1821—not from any attachment to a particular number or theory—and in founding upon them our line of disfranchisement we were wholly influenced by a regard to the general good of the community at large, without consideration of personal detriment, or advantage to friends or enemies. And here I hope I may be permitted to say a few words in reference to myself, impure motives having been imputed to me, which it is but fair to allow me to refute, the rather as my situation in the Government requires such refutation to be explicit. It has been insinuated, that I used my official influence in favour of the county with which I had the honour of being connected, in procuring for it additional Members, to which it would not otherwise have been entitled. No language which I can summon to my aid can express my contempt for the baseness of this insinuation, nor can I find words to express my pity for the understandings which could suggest or harbour such an imputation. Need I disclaim being actuated by such low, paltry motives of self-aggrandizement? I feel that I need not; for I know that in considering this Bill, all merely personal or party feelings were absorbed in a desire to promote the general interest of the country. But how does the matter stand as regards the county of Durham? Simply that it contains 50,000 persons more than the number which has been fixed as the line above which the counties were to receive an additional Member. If, therefore, you refrain from granting to Durham additional Members, the exclusion, on the same ground, must extend to ten other counties, and the North and East Ridings of Yorkshire, which are now included in this Bill. It was proposed that Durham should have new Members, because it fell within the line of wealth and population which had been fixed upon as a just ground for an extended Representation. If, therefore, you exclude Durham, you must also exclude Shropshire, Gloucestershire, Suffolk, Cumberland, Northamptonshire, Sussex, Nottinghamshire, Hampshire, Worcestershire, and Leicestershire. With respect to the three towns in that county which will return Members under the Ministerial plan of Reform, all that I need say is, that their population is considerably above the line of population and property which has been, after due deliberation, fixed upon as the basis of extending the Representation to large towns. The population of Sunderland and the two Wearmouths is 33,000;—of Shields, 16,000; and of Gateshead, 11,000; so that, if you do not allow these places to return Members, you will exclude many others. With two of these places I never had any further connexion than that which arose from my being Member for the county in which they are situated. With Sunderland I certainly have commercial relations, but not more than my noble friend who expressed his opposition to this plan of Reform a few evenings ago, and who has also property and influence in the neighbourhood. Indeed, I should be ashamed to stand up in this House, if such an unworthy motive could, for one moment, have actuated me. I have no parliamentary influence, and therefore exercise none. I have never sought the possession of such influence, contenting myself with having, in my own person, and at an immense cost, asserted the cause of independence in a contested election in my native county. I have no doubt that voters, not elevated to a certain rank of life, might easily have been induced to support my political views—but it never has been an object of desire with me, to establish a parliamentary influence. If, however, I had been accidentally possessed of it, let the extent be what it might, I should be glad to relinquish it, for the sake of the great and beneficial change which the Bill before the House is intended to accomplish. I shall say nothing more with respect to the insinuation which has been attempted, so unfairly and unjustly, to be cast upon me. Having explained to your Lordships the principle on which we proposed to disfranchise all boroughs, where the population was less than 2,000 in 1821, I now come to those in Schedule B. That class consists of those which may be retained, after purification, by the admission of 10*l.* householders. But, it was found that, even under the operation of the Bill, several of these boroughs would not possess more than from fifty to eighty electors; hence the necessity of the provision which adds to them the adjoining districts, so as to ensure a constituency of at least 300. We have thus drawn a distinct and most important line between the curable and the incurable boroughs: the incurable we lop off as rotten branches; the curable we protect against disease by an efficient constituency. They are both defined by the population returns of 1821; but I beg to assure your Lordships, that if, in the list of either, it is found that exceptions ought to be made, owing to any incorrectness in those returns, his Majesty's Ministers will deem it their duty to see them rectified. The next question is, as to the unrepresented towns on which it would be expedient to bestow the choice of Representatives. And here, again, Ministers take population and wealth as their guide for the measure of an efficient and independent Representation; and in doing so, we have adhered closely to the ancient principle of our Representative system. My noble friend says, in allusion to the time at which his own borough was erected, that then the amount of population was not attended to—and that it is not, therefore, the principle on which Representation was originally granted. This is undoubtedly true, as regards that particular period, because the object then was, to strengthen the King and the Aristocracy; but, had my noble friend gone a step further back in his inquiries, he would have seen that the primary object of Representation was, to give population, wealth, and intelligence, their due share of weight and influence in the decisions of the Legislature—an influence not allowed them under the present system. He would have found that originally (before it became an object with Kings and nobles to obtain personal influence in Parliament) writs were always issued to populous and wealthy towns—and for the plainest and most obvious reason—supplies of money were wanted for the service of the State, and from those sources alone could they be derived. My noble friend has read an extract from a work by Lord John Russell, on this point. Will your Lordships allow me to cite an authority—greater he will admit—without supposing that I undervalue that to which he has alluded—I mean, Mr. Locke. "Things of this world (said Locke) are in so constant a flux, that nothing remains long in the same state. Thus people, riches, trade, power, change their stations, flourishing mighty cities come to ruin, and prove in time neglected desolate corners, whilst other unfrequented places grow into populous countries, filled with wealth and inhabitants. But things not always changing equally, and private interest often keeping up customs and privileges, when the reasons of them have ceased, it often comes to pass, that in Governments, where part of the Legislature consists of Representatives chosen by the people, that in tract of time this Representation becomes very unequal and disproportionate to the reasons it was first established upon." After commenting on the absurdity of places without inhabitants returning Members to Parliament, the same great authority proceeds thus:—"*Salus populi suprema lex* is certainly so just and fundamental a rule, that he who sincerely follows it cannot dangerously err. If, therefore, the Executive, who has the power of convoking the Legislature, observing rather the true proportion than fashion of Representation, regulates not by old custom, but true reason, the number of Members in all places that have a right to be distinctly represented, which no part of the people, however incorporated, can pretend to, but in proportion to the assistance which it affords to the public, it cannot be judged to have set up a new Legislative, but to have restored the old and true one, and to have rectified the disorders which succession of time had insensibly as well as insensibly introduced." Upon this principle, and upon no other, have Ministers proceeded; and they have, therefore, enfranchised the largest and most populous towns of Great Britain. I now come to that part of the question which has so much alarmed my noble friend—namely, the class of voters who are to be allowed by this Bill. Your Lordships will take into consideration that the 10*l.* householders are possessed of sufficient independence and property to ensure a permanent interest in the prosperity of the country; that they are free from undue influence on the one hand, and factious excitement on the other; and that, therefore, we could not have selected a better class of people in whom to vest this important privilege. The noble Lord, it appears, has at present in his employment a labourer, who happens to be a householder to that amount; but what inference are we to draw from such a fact? Why, that the noble Lord is a good master, and that his labourer is well-conducted and industrious; and it appears to me matter of congratulation to the noble Lord, that he has the opportunity now offered to him, by which he may confer such an invaluable privilege on so respectable a person. But why should not this individual have a right to vote, if in other respects eligible? I really cannot admit, that the fact of being a labourer, can be a just reason for excluding him from the exercise of the elective franchise. The right of householders to vote at elections has been repeatedly asserted to be the ancient right of the people of England. It has been recognised by a Resolution of the House of Commons, which declared, that "where no custom by charter of incorporation existed, there the right of franchise was in the householders;" and, therefore, we do not go further, by adopting this measure, than we are justified in doing, either by this Resolution, or upon constitutional principles. Anciently, all possessors of any property, however small, had the right of voting—all freemen—from the earliest ages until the time of Henry 6th, when those rights were most arbitrarily narrowed. We, therefore, do not propose to give the right of voting to any class of persons whose claims have not been already recognised by the Legislature itself. Consequently, I repeat, that in giving the franchise to these classes, we have not introduced any thing new or unknown to our Constitution. My noble friend founds one of his arguments upon the incorrectness, which he states to exist, in the Tax-office returns upon which this measure proceeds; but, until I am shewn to the contrary, I must hold that the returns, made by the proper officers of the Crown, are as likely to be correct as any assertion of the noble Lord's can be; and, certainly, if we are to judge by the noble Lord's own statement in regard to the voters of Liverpool, his calculations are founded in error. Now, let us see what proportion the amount of the population in England and Wales bears to the numbers of the enfranchised electors. In 1821 it was more than 12,000,000; it now must be more than 14,000,000. According to the Tax-office returns, it appears that the number of persons in England and Wales, now rated at 10*l.* and upwards, is only 378,786, it cannot, therefore, be said that the suffrage is too extensively diffused. Of these 378,786, 116,030 are rated between 10*l.* and 15*l.*; so that one-third only of these householders in England and Wales are of the lowest description of voters. In Scotland there are 380,000 houses; but the number of persons to be entitled to vote is only 36,700, of whom 17,900 are of the minor or lower class, rated at from 10*l.* to 15*l.* Now, I do think, unless we presume that the most gross and palpable mistakes have been made in the returns to which I have alluded, that we are not liable to the charge brought against us by my noble friend, of creating an enormous constituency; but that, on the contrary, we have called forth a body of electors which will include all the respectability and intelligence of the most independent classes of society. And how has the noble Lord attempted to show the extent to which this Bill will confer the right of exercising the elective franchise? My Lords, he refers us to the case of Liverpool; and states, that the number of persons there who will enjoy the privilege of the elective franchise, under the operation of the proposed measure, will be 25,000; but does the noble Lord know, that the number of houses in Liverpool is only 19,000? Has the noble Lord forgotten, too, that the non-resident voters are to be disfranchised? [Lord *Wharncliffe*: No; I admit that.] If the noble Lord gives up that point, I say his calculations are then proved to be completely erroneous. I now come to what I confidently hope will be the advantages arising from the adoption of this measure. If it be true, as the noble Lord and others have stated, that there is a spirit of discontent abroad, among the lower classes, hostile to the institutions of the country, and tending to the destruction of the monarchy; if there be this spirit abroad (which I deny), I should like to know in what class will the supporters of the Constitution find greater friends henceforward, or more stedfast allies, than among the middle classes? And what measure can be wiser than that which goes to secure the affections, and consult the interests of those classes? How important must it be to attach them to our cause! The lower orders of the people have ever been set in motion by their superiors; and in almost all cases they have chosen their leaders from men moving in another sphere. From the multitude, therefore, we take the body from whence they derived their leaders, and the direction of their movements. To property and good order we attach numbers; and the issue of a conflict, if any should ever occur, cannot be doubtful. But I cannot make these observations without stating, that I do not believe such a spirit exists as that which we have been told of. I believe, on the contrary, my Lords, that the lower orders are attached most sincerely to the monarchy, and to the maintenance of the three estates, King, Lords, and Commons, as the sources of their welfare and security—and that, of all the nations in the world, the lower orders of England would be least disposed to change for a theoretical republic, or a pure despotism. To give security to the three estates is the object of our Bill. We leave the Peers in possession of all their privileges; the Crown in the enjoyment of all its prerogatives; but give to the people at large that share in the Government, of which, by the lapse of time and the progress of corruption, they have long been deprived. The principle of the Bill being the extension, not contraction, of the elective franchise, we have felt it right, disfranchising only the rotten boroughs, to preserve all existing rights, although, in many instances, the exercise of those rights has been grossly abused! but we certainly have not thought it consistent, in these cases, to extend this great privilege beyond the present possessors. True it is, my Lords, the opponents of the Bill, sympathizing for the first time with them, have endeavoured to excite alarm and jealousy on the part of the pot-wallopers and burgesses—but those bodies disclaim all community of feeling with the anti-reformers, and petition generally in favour of the measure. Driven from this strong hold, the Opposition have now changed their ground, and profess similar alarm for the privileges of the apprentices. How that body might act under such circumstances, it is not for me to say; but judging from the manner in which others have performed their part, I have no doubt that they likewise will emulate such an example, and that they will not interfere to deprive the country of the benefit of a measure in which they will participate themselves, and by which they will be gainers. I regret very deeply that I have to weary your Lordships by going into these details; but I have felt it necessary to take some notice of the remarks advanced by the noble Lord (Lord Wharncliffe) upon the details of the measure, and to state such observations as have occurred to me upon them. I shall not pursue them at present any further, contenting myself with simply observing, that in this Bill we have also amply provided for the diminution of expense at elections—which will be effected by the enforcement of residence—the registration of votes—and taking the poll in counties in districts. Before I leave this part of the subject, I would state with regard to the observation, made rather sarcastically by the noble Lord, as to the power which it is proposed to give to the Privy Council; the reasons why we have made this provision in the Bill. We felt it necessary that power should be given to alter the limits of boroughs, in order to ensure a numerous and independent constituency, and to make the necessary divisions in counties, for the purposes of lessening the expenses of county elections; and we felt that, in order to effect this, we could not go to a body more responsible, better known, or more confided in by the country, than the members of the Privy Council; among whom are individuals unconnected with the Administration—men eminent for talent and character, whose decisions could not possibly be impugned as that of interested parties, and who were, therefore, liable to no misconstruction of motives, or imputations similar to those which have been already directed against myself and others of my colleagues, on the discussion of this question. It was upon these grounds that we considered the Privy Council the best and most impartial power to apply to, entertaining, however, no wish to give any undue influence to that particular body. My Lords, I now come to almost the last subject upon which I have to make any observations, and it is one of the gravest importance. The noble Lord (Lord Wharncliffe) has said, that though he will not charge us with being revolutionists, yet that we are guilty of introducing a great change in the existing Constitution, and that we shall subvert our present happy form of Government; in short, my Lords, though he disclaims the word "revolutionary," still that is the term which the noble Lord, by his arguments and insinuations, does really apply to us. If, however, he has been sparing of the term, he is unlike others, both in and out of this House; we have been assailed by them, and that in no measured terms, with reproaches of the most bitter and vituperative description. We have been told, that we are destroying the Constitution, and perniciously changing all the relations which have heretofore subsisted between each branch of it. I am not to be scared by a nickname, or discountenanced by a word. Undoubtedly any change effected in the government of a State may be deemed a revolution. The glorious events of 1688 bear that name—yet they are hallowed in the breast of every true Englishman. I have often heard that memorable Revolution termed a glorious event by the same persons who now use the word for the purpose of denunciation and opprobrium. This Revolution of 1688 was upheld by none more warmly than by the noble Lords opposite during the discussion of the Roman Catholic Relief bill: it was then never mentioned but in terms of approbation and reverence—because it suited their political purposes—and yet the noble Lord and others now use the word "Revolution," in order to frighten us from the adoption of the proposed measure. Revolution, it seems, is, at the present day, no longer glorious, but horrible; and it is now no longer associated with the recollections of 1688, but with those of the Revolution which occurred in France forty years ago; all its horrors are dressed up in the most vivid colours, for the purpose of scaring weak, timid, and short-sighted alarmists, and the effects produced by the operation of different causes made applicable to a state of things now utterly and entirely dissimilar. My Lords, I ask how is that Revolution to be assimilated to the present period in England? The people then massacred their superiors, it is true; but for one cause? Not in consequence of their just claims having been granted, but because they were wrongfully denied, and pertinaciously withheld. The populace were hurried into criminal enormities, not in the exultation of success, but in the recklessness of despair. It is this very state of things we wish to avoid, this very crisis we would avert, by granting to the people those claims which they have a right to make, and by refusing which, we must inevitably leave the power in the hands of those who would plunge us into all the evils of a civil war. Such a deplorable consummation it is our object to prevent; and the measure which has been proposed, so far from leading to anarchy or revolutionary excesses, will conciliate the disaffected, if such there be, while it strengthens and consolidates the fabric of the Constitution. — But my noble friend tells us, that this Bill will destroy the Constitution—that I most peremptorily deny. It involves no departure whatever from the principles on which the Constitution was established in 1688. It is an enforcement of them, not in violation of, but complete conformity with, them. In fact, it is the final settlement of that great work, which in this respect was avowedly left defective. It may be known to your Lordships, that it was a matter of grave charge against the authors of the Revolution of 1688, that they did not do that which we are now going to do by this Bill. It is stated by Lord Bolingbroke, that the authors of the Revolution ought not only to have made the Act of Settlement, but that they ought also to have secured the independence of Parliament. In his Dissertation on Parties, after alluding to the conduct of the authors of the Revolution, he says, "They ought to have been more attentive to take the glorious opportunity that was furnished them by a new settlement of the Crown and of the Constitution, to secure the independency of Parliaments for the future. Machiavel observes, and makes it a title of one of his discourses, 'That a free Government, in order to maintain itself free, hath need every day of some new provision in favour of liberty.'" After affirming the truth of this assertion, and illustrating it by reference to Roman history, Lord Bolingbroke uses these remarkable words:—"If a spirit like this had prevailed among us at the time we speak of, something like this would have been done, and surely something like it ought to have been done. For the Revolution was in many instances, and it ought to have been so in all, one of those renovations of the Constitution which we have often mentioned. If it had been such with respect to the electing of Members to serve in Parliament, these elections might have been drawn back to the ancient principle on which they had been established, and the rule of property, which was followed anciently, and was perverted by innumerable changes, which length of time produced, might have been restored, by which the communities to whom the right of electing was trusted, as well as the qualifications of the electors and elected, might have been settled in proportion to the then state of things. Such a remedy might have wrought a radical cure of the evil which threatens our Constitution, whereas it is much to be apprehended, even from experience, that all others are merely palliative." But, my Lords, I should like to know from whom the charge against us proceeds, of making innovations upon this Constitution of 1688? Why, it has been mainly advanced by the promoters of the Roman Catholic Relief Bill! If this measure be an alteration of the Constitution,—what was the Roman Catholic Relief Bill? Certainly that relief was most wisely afforded. But is it for those to object so loudly to the introduction of change, who have so materially altered the Constitution by the admission of Roman Catholics to privileges which they had not before enjoyed since the Revolution so often referred to? The policy adopted in reference to that portion of our fellow-countrymen was wise and judicious undeniably, but still, was it not a change in the Constitution? It was urged then, with a good deal of clamour, and not a little of pertinacity, that emancipation would alter the three estates of the realm, would violate the Coronation Oath, would annihilate the Church, and destroy the liberties of the people. And yet, my Lords, those very persons who then stoutly resisted this clamour, are now struck with horror and amazement at any proposal which goes to affect the inviolability of that Constitution which they themselves had fundamentally altered only two years ago. But, my Lords, let me not be misunderstood; I think those changes were of the greatest importance to the welfare of the country, and events have proved that the change effected by the Catholic Relief Bill has been essentially beneficial. It has admitted within our walls noblemen who have long been deprived of their rights, it has opened the doors of the other House of Parliament to as loyal, as honest, and as respectable men as are to be found in the country, and it has erased that foul blot of religious and political intolerance which had so long disgraced our Constitution. My Lords, I believe that I have now, to the best of my ability, gone through all the arguments of the noble Lord opposite. I do not offer any opposition to the Motion. On the contrary, I assure the noble Lord that it is the wish of his Majesty's Ministers to produce every information that can facilitate the most strict examination into all the various points which bear on the question, convinced, as we are, that the more the subject is probed, the more the measure will be found entitled to the approbation of the country. I must declare, on the part of his Majesty's Government, that, so far from being influenced by a wish to change the institutions of the country, we are anxious to protect and strengthen them. We propose to enable your Lordships to exercise your high privileges, consistently with the legitimate rights of the people, and the real interests of the State. We do not permit even the smallest jewel to be extracted from the Crown, but we add to its grace and lustre. We secure to the Monarch the undisturbed enjoyment of all his dignities and prerogatives, sustained and cherished by the love of an affectionate people, and on them we propose to confer the noblest gift which can be presented to freemen, the power of choosing Representatives, in whom is vested the maintenance of their properties, rights, and liberties.

Lord *Wharncliffe* explained. The noble Lord had mistaken a part of his statement. His argument had merely been, that although Ministers professed to give the franchise to the middle classes, they really intended to bestow it upon the lower. He had never said that the lower classes were hostile to monarchy, but he had asserted that there were persons in this country—not amongst the lower classes, but ranking far their superiors—who, from his first entrance into political life, had evinced an anxiety to bring the Constitution nearer and nearer to a Republic.

The Duke of *Richmond* said, that it was not his purpose to take up the time of their Lordships; but as he had been alluded to by the noble Lord, and as a charge of inconsistency had been elsewhere urged against him, he wished to make a very few observations. Taking the present question merely on its own merits, it must be considered one of overwhelming interest, and he had therefore little supposed that the opinions of so humble an individual as himself would have attracted notice on so important an occasion. It had, however, been thought fit to appeal to his protest against the disfranchisement of the 40*s.* freeholders, and an attempt had been made to draw a parallel between that disfranchisement and the proposed disfranchisement of the boroughs, for the purpose of fastening upon him a charge of inconsistency in supporting the Reform Bill. He would not now flinch a tittle from his former statements, or pare down any one of his expressions with a view to his exculpation. At the period referred to, a great measure had been brought forward, disfranchising 180,000 freeholders, without any accusation of corruption having ever been brought against them. It might have been pretended that they were habitually under the stern control of their landlords, to whom they had been obliged to render an unconstitutional obedience; but this had ceased to exist in 1828, for in the course of that year they had exhibited a fearless defiance of those who had hitherto held them in political subserviency,—they had duly elected an agitator, to the prejudice of a Cabinet Minister, who was the other candidate in Clare; nor was that the only county in which they had set at nought the authority of their landlords. Thus no sooner had they roused themselves to a constitutional exercise of their rights than these unfortunate freeholders had been attacked with a bill of pains and penalties. He had certainly, in the protest which he signed—and the passages had been quoted elsewhere—said he was a dissentient, "because to seize upon and to confiscate the indubitable rights, privileges, and franchises of unoffending citizens, — unaccused, unheard, untried—by whole descriptions, by hundreds and thousands together, was an utter subversion of that immutable law of true justice which was at once the vital principle and the most beautiful of the British Constitution." But what analogy was there between the case of sixty rotten boroughs and that of 180,000 unoffending citizens, condemned, unaccused, and unheard? Were the patrons of boroughs and the nominees of patrons unoffending, or were they unheard, and was their cause unadvocated? He would not for a moment admit the special pleading and sophistry by which this question had been attempted to be disguised. Would the disfranchisement of Midhurst, or Wareham, or Old Sarum, affect any one individual, save only the patrons and their nominees; and had not these been accused by the united voices of the whole country? On one side there was a Ministry which had floated into office on the tide of public opinion, and was there not on the other a Ministry which had laid down office in defending the system so universally complained of? Nay, was there not at this moment a late Secretary of State in the other House fighting as if for life and death for his share in the borough of Tamworth? It was not likely indeed that either the right hon. Gentleman or any one else on either side, would forget Westbury. Then how ably had the interests of the notable Boroughbridge been defended by the facetious drollery and legal astuteness of the ex-Attorney-general, its celebrated Representative. The protest against the disfranchisement of the 40*s.* freeholders, which had been signed by a noble friend of his and himself, had been read in part by those who flouted him with inconsistency, but he had reason to complain that the concluding clause had been omitted, for they had therein expressly stated, that they were "willing to correct every proved abuse." Now, could it be maintained that the borough system was not a proved abuse? The entire charge was empty, and could not be substantiated, as far as he and his noble friend were concerned. They had been also reproached with subverting settled institutions, but he looked upon this Bill as a reformation and timely restoration of the Constitution, which all concurred in thinking required repair, although there was a difference of opinion as to the extent to which it ought to be applied. The noble Lord, it appeared, accused them of revolutionary projects, yet as well might a similar charge be urged against the gallant officer opposite, who led the British troops to victory, because he maintained the discipline of the army, and introduced new regulations in various departments, or supplied new men of superior energies according as his troops became debilitated or decayed. The principle was precisely the same. It was proposed to draught off Gatton and Old Sarum, and substitute for them the youthful energies of Manchester, and the full-grown manhood of Birmingham. Could the noble Lord suppose that they were weakening the defence of the Constitution by sweeping away the ruins of Aldborough and Corfe Castle, and intrenching themselves behind the strong bulwarks of Leeds and Sheffield? or did the noble Lord suppose that treason was lurking in the proposition for investing the West Riding of Yorkshire with the elective franchise? He would not detain their Lordships any longer. He would only say, he hoped their Lordships would not refuse their sanction to a Bill which was the offspring of long deliberation—the result of the reflection of an unanimous Cabinet—and which would soon come before them. He trusted that they would not refuse their sanction to a measure which must have the effect of uniting the hearts of all his Majesty's subjects, which would increase their respect for, and their confidence in, Parliament, and their affection for their Sovereign. Their Lordships, he was sure, would not refuse their sanction to a measure which satisfied the just expectations of reasonable people, which would give permanent security to property, and perpetual stability to the throne.

The Marquis of *Londonderry* said, he should not, on that occasion, trouble the House with any remarks, as, should the Bill unhappily come up to that House, every noble Lord would have an opportunity of expressing at length his opinion upon the question. He would observe, however, that the noble Duke had not very clearly made out his denial of inconsistency, for he had formerly been a staunch Church and State man, and a subscriber to the Eldon testimonial. No one could say of him that he had been a Tory, and was now a Whig. No one could say of him that he had been a pro-Catholic, and was now an anti-Catholic, or that he had arrogated to himself the merit of being one of the strongest supporters of the Church and State. He did not know that the noble Duke had proved the inconsistency of any body else, but he had certainly not proved his own consistency—for now he consorted with Whig colleagues, whom he had always heretofore opposed.

The Marquis of *Clanricarde* expressed his conviction that they should have a considerable majority in favour of the Bill when it came under discussion, and was happy to find that so little had been said against it. He trusted, therefore, to see that House succumb, as it ought to do, to public opinion. Their Lordships were aware what a long period had elapsed since the noble Lord opposite had first given notice of this Motion, that the House had been expressly summoned on the question, and yet only one solitary Peer had been found to speak in opposition to Parliamentary Reform. The noble Lord had travelled too much out of his way to seek for quotations from the former speeches of the noble Paymaster of the Forces, in order to make his past political professions appear irreconcileable with his present opinions. What had the personal opinions of any individual to do with the actual merits of the question itself? Thus much he would only say on the present occasion; the rejection of the Reform Bill would, undoubtedly, be the most dangerous proceeding which that House had ever sanctioned; but, as he had already stated, he looked forward to a very different result. Every one who heard him was apprised of the fact, that whatever was uttered within those walls went forth to the world, whether contrary to privilege or not, and they must also be aware that they were thus put in possession of an extensive influence on the public mind; but it was for their Lordships to take care that that influence should be salutary, and not such as to make them fearful of their responsibility. He did not think it necessary to eulogise the details of the Bill, or state his reasons for supporting it He should be prepared, when their Lordships came to vote upon the measure, to justify his conduct, and show, that in following what he considered the line of his duty, he had swerved from no principle he had ever adopted. He meant certainly to support, and he hoped their Lordships would also support, a measure which had been received by the unanimous acclamations of the people, and was sanctioned by the House of Commons and the King's Government.

Lord *Plunkett* said, that the question had been argued by so many noble Lords upon the side of the House upon which he had the honour to sit, and they had spoken so strongly and so effectually upon the subject, that it might appear that he rose to add to the triumph they had obtained, if he addressed the House at any length at such an inconvenient period of the discussion. Under such circumstances, he should not detain their Lordships long, nor should he have taken the liberty of offering himself to the notice of the House, if he had not felt apprehensive that he might not have the opportunity of expressing his sentiments when the question came regularly before their Lordships, and he might therefore labour under the imputation of shrinking from the duty of declaring his opinions, and of supporting the measure. He certainly could not say, that he had approached the consideration of this momentous question without a very considerable degree of alarm, but he must avow that he now felt a very great relief from that alarm, for he found that what was originally stated to be an inroad upon the Constitution, and a principle pregnant with every danger,—what was declared to be a measure which ought to be met resolutely in the very first outset, as calculated to introduce a new system subversive of all constitutional practices—was now no longer so formidably denounced, and all such grounds of opposition were entirely abandoned. It was at first stated that the measure was calculated to introduce a new system; but, after a short time that enunciation was given up. At first it was stated that there was no necessity for any Reform, and it was now four months since that opinion was announced. It had been persevered in to nearly the end of a seven days' discussion, and had never been formally relinquished. At the close of that period, with a tardy candour, or he might call it a reasonable prudence, it was admitted that all Reform was not revolutionary. The principle, then, of Reform was no longer knocking at the outer door and refused admittance—it had been admitted within doors, and its demands, it was allowed, were not altogether unreasonable. Those who did not agree in those demands did not deny them altogether—they only wished to avoid prompt payment, and asked to pay by instalments. He was at a loss to understand how noble Lords and hon. and right hon. Gentlemen meant to meet the question under these circumstances. He had not heard of one person who did not agree that Reform was just and proper, only they quarrelled with the degree and extent of the Reform proposed. They abstained, nevertheless, from stating how far they were willing to go. The noble Lord who had introduced the question to their Lordships' notice, with great ability, and, he would add, with great fairness, had employed a tone in discussing the subject, and made admissions which were not calculated to obtain for him the support of those noble Lords who sat around him, and he had not found a seconder. That noble Lord had stated, that the claims of the people was irresistible, and that some degree of Reform was absolutely necessary. The noble Lord had referred to the opinion of Mr. Canning, but he did not think the supposition of what the opinions of dead men might be, were they now alive, ought to guide the opinions of living men. How could he or any man say, that if Mr. Canning were now alive, his opinion would not be changed like the opinion of the noble Lord? and how could he say that Mr. Canning would not now think some Reform necessary. The noble Lord, who was warmly attached to Mr. Canning, was as much opposed to Reform at one time as Mr. Canning. They ought, therefore, to consider the nature of the question before them, and not endeavour to guess at the opinions of those who were not alive to speak for themselves. What then did he find? Why, that the persons who were lately at the head of the Government of this country, of whom he wished to speak with great respect, particularly of the noble Duke who was then at the head of that Government—he found that these Gentlemen—and he did not say it as exciting feelings of degradation—he found these Gentlemen obliged to resign the Government, and obliged to resign it because they could not resist the pressure of Reform. To that pressure the present Government had acceded; and now their opponents pressed on them because they had taken up the principle of Reform. Under these circumstances, what was to become of the country? Did the persons who, under such circumstances, resisted the plan of Reform, look at the consequences? What medium party was to succeed? Did those who resisted Reform—the Reform proposed by his Majesty's Ministers, and who acknowledged the necessity of some Reform—come forward with any plan or principle of their own? Why did they not introduce a Bill into the other House, or even into that House, if it could be done consistently with the principles of the Constitution and the laws and usages of Parliament? Those who were of opinion that the present plan went too far, should bring in a bill of their own, and should let the two lie side by side, and thus the public would be able to form some judgment of the comparative merit of the two measures. Was this fair and honourable course adopted? Was it expected that his noble friends, and the distinguished persons who originated this plan of Reform, could stoop and degrade themselves so low as to belie their principles, and abandon the measure? His noble friends had been accused of endeavouring to excite in the people of the country discontent with the Government, and at all our institutions. But he would ask all those who had made use of such language, were the grievances of the country any secret, or were the sources of those grievances so concealed that a veil could be drawn over them to hide them from the public odium? He would maintain, that his noble friends had not excited the people of England; but, on the contrary, by bringing forward this great and satisfactory measure, they had done much to quiet the people, by meeting the general sentiments, and by removing the permanent and just sources of discontent. If his noble friends should abandon their plan, they would cover themselves with irretrievable disgrace, and they would bequeath a most bitter legacy to those who came after them, by teaching the people that no confidence whatever was to be placed in any set of public men. There would then be no means left of governing the country, and it would be plunged in all the horrors of anarchy. He therefore felt himself much relieved from the embarrassment of making a choice. He was compelled to embrace the plan of Reform. His noble friends had come into power on account of the evils which oppressed the country, and the danger arising from the conviction of those evils upon the public mind. They had found the people excited. The storm was growing, the surges were lashing, the vessel was heavy laden and labouring in the troubled waters, and the helm had been abandoned by those who had been placed at it, and whose duty it was, to have steered with skill and science. His friend it was, who had seized upon the helm, and who with mature experience had said, "I will undertake what they won't undertake; I will meet the danger, and with a firm hand I will point out to you the haven to which your course ought to be steered." Every honest man in the country was bound to assist in this great effort, upon the success of which depended the safety of the State. His noble friend was calling upon them not to proceed through unexplored latitudes, and upon devious courses, but to steer cautiously, but boldly, to the only port that was capable of affording protection and safety. He (Lord Plunkett) was not inclined to trouble their Lordships at any great length at that hour of the night, and under the circumstances of the question, but he must address a few more observations to their Lordships before he sat down. The Reform Bill had been termed a revolutionary measure. The term revolutionary was the most ridiculous, the most dishonourable, and the most offensive, that it had ever been his unfortunate lot to hear in any public assembly. It was true that this charge had been abandoned in all the mortification of defeated artifice, and in all the shame of detected folly; but still it was said, that if the measure was not actually revolutionary, it was what was almost as dangerous—it was a great and an extensive change. Did any noble Lord who heard him, and who was in the least acquainted with the history of his country, believe that great political changes were either unusual, unconstitutional, or bad? Did they not owe, and was not every stage of society indebted for, all they possessed to some great change from what had been precedent? He had not been an inattentive observer of the progress of society, and the nature of his studies had pretty well acquainted him with the history of this country; and the page of history showed nothing more clearly than that from the beginning of its political existence there had been a continued course of changes, when the circumstances of the country required changes to be adopted. He found the people of England at all times clinging to one great principle; the polar star which guided them at all times—at least through a period of 1,000 years, during which the Constitution had been preserved—was the principle, that it was the people's birthright that the freedom of their persons and the enjoyment of their property was not to be injured or affected but by their own consent. They had at all times given effect to that great principle. That was the basis of their free Government, and that principle all the rules and regulations, which were the offspring of times and circumstances, were intended to carry into effect. They never had the folly to say that this great principle should bend to rules and regulations, but they always adapted their rules and regulations to this principle. Nothing could be more revolutionary in relation to this great principle than to adopt some stickfast Resolution, which would prevent this principle from being at all times acted on. Looking at facts, did not our history abound with great changes? Was not the Reformation, which altered all the property of the Church, a great change—a salutary change indeed, but a great change? Was not the Act of Henry 6th, by which the great body of the freeholders was excluded from the privilege of voting, and the franchise conferred on those who held a freehold of 40*s*., a great change? What did their Lordships say to the Union with Scotland, which altered the whole Parliamentary Constitution of the country? or what did they say to the Union with Ireland? Were not these great and extensive changes? He could enumerate many more changes, but he would content himself with adverting to that last and great change which admitted the Catholics into the bosom of the State. These were all great and rapid changes. What would their Lordships say to the King's power and prerogative to issue writs for new places? That was a permanent machinery for perpetual change. That power had been, perhaps, unduly exercised, and there had resulted a great abuse; and were they not to exercise the prerogative of Parliament, and get rid of that abuse? Persons who did not see these things must explore history, not with the eyes of statesmen or of philosophers, but merely with the curiosity of antiquaries. They did not look at the great lesson which history afforded, but they stereotyped it, or, like antiquaries with coins, they did not care for the legend inscribed on them—they valued them for the rust. Great and most important changes had taken place in England since the Revolution of 1688. The rapid and astonishing influx of wealth had absolutely changed the whole state of the middle classes of society. Those middle classes now consisted of persons well acquainted with every useful branch of art and science; they were fully capable of forming enlightened views and sound principles upon all political and moral questions, and upon all points connected with the State. This class of persons had been raised in England into astonishing power, and they now came forward and demanded a reform with an irresistible pressure. Parliament had to choose between two alternatives. Would they oppose their present institutions, enfeebled as they were by abuses, and tottering with corruption, so often and so ably pointed out and exposed, to stand the shock of these great rushes of public opinion, or would they receive these people, the middle classes, into the pale of the Constitution, and by giving them their due share in the Representation, claim them as friends and allies, instead of opposing them as aliens and enemies? The spread of intelligence among the lower orders, and even amongst the middling classes, was considered by many to be dangerous to the State. Widely different were his opinions upon the subject: but he would only say, that whether it were or were not dangerous, certain it was that there were no means of stopping it. He did not consider the diffusion of knowledge to be dangerous to society, but the most fatal proofs existed of the inconvenience and dangers arising from a population in a state of ignorance. The spread of imperfect light might be attended with danger; but it was a danger to be removed only by a diffusion of more perfect information. Purify the institutions of the country, and no safety-lamps would be required. It had been said, in terms of exultation, that the Constitution of England was an admirable Constitution—that it worked well—that it produced the most perfect moral and intellectual state of a population, and it was the glory and happiness of the country, and the envy of all foreign nations. He would avow, with the greatest satisfaction, that he did not believe, with all its defects, that there could be found, in the page of either ancient or modern history, a single Constitution that had worked so well even for the good of the people. He would acknowledge with pride and satisfaction, that the Constitution of England was the envy of all less favoured nations;

All this was perfectly true. He believed that every civilized nation admired in the English Constitution the Bill of Rights, the institution of the Jury, the *Habeas Corpus* Act, the independence of the Judges, and the impartial administration of the laws by Judges who were independent of the influence of the Crown, and lastly, the theory of our Representative Legislature. Having acknowledged all this, he would now only beg leave to ask, who among these foreign admirers of the British Constitution ever fell in love with the corporation of Old Sarum, or was enamoured of the free representation of Gatton? Who would say that the British Constitution had ever been admired, out of England at least, because there existed the practice of trafficking in boroughs, and the privilege of buying and selling the rights of the people? These were not the subjects of admiration with any body,—they were plague-spots to be purified, or vices to be held in execration. If the Constitution worked well, it was not from the variety of its abuses, or the number of its deformities, but in spite of them. Remove these, and they would restore it to its proper form and vigour. How did the Constitution work well? Although the system of borough corruption was acknowledged to be a gross abuse, a hideous deformity and vice, still was it repeated, that many distinguished persons who possessed boroughs were people of virtue, and who disdained to use their privileges, or to prostitute their possessions to bad purposes. Many persons in whom these borough properties were vested did not act upon the same views, and therefore some sat upon one side of the House, and some upon the other. These things happened very frequently, but was the British Constitution to be for ever dependent upon such accidents? Let them, as soon as they could, take away accidents and introduce a system of securities. The physical system of the human body presented a beautiful economy of nature, and worked well; and if any accident occurred, such as an injury to a blood-vessel, nature accommodated herself to the change, and some substitute of organ or of function was produced. But when nature resumed her power, she dispelled all substitutes. The well-working of the political Constitution of England was the growth of happy accidents and lucky chances; but these would be dispelled when sound and enlarged principles were resumed. His only object in getting up in his seat that night was, to explain himself upon this great measure of Reform, and he apologized for having detained their Lordships so long.

A noble *Lord* reminded their Lordships, that any discussion upon the subject at that period might justly be viewed with jealousy by the other House.

The *Lord Chancellor* said, he owed no little apology to their Lordships for troubling them with any further discussion of this subject under the existing circumstances at this late hour of the night; but he still more owed an apology to his noble and learned friend who preceded him, when he rose to say anything after him, before there was even the shadow of reply to his clear, energetic, argumentative, and unanswerable speech. Although he agreed with the noble Viscount (Sidmouth) who was a great authority on these subjects, and with some of those noble Lords who had spoken after him, that it was not necessary on the present occasion to go minutely into the details of the measure, yet he could in no way admit that it was unbecoming or improper in him to take this opportunity of stating his sentiments on the Bill generally, and on its particular parts. The noble Lord who opened the debate felt himself compelled to admit, in the course of his argument, that the measure was supported by the petitions of all classes of the community, which came pouring in upon their Lordships in boundless variety, and in countless numbers, almost all of them expressing the most ardent desire that their Lordships should strenuously support the measure, and speed it to the foot of the Throne. No discussions had taken place on the presenting of these petitions without a protest against debating the subject in that irregular and incidental manner; but still the discussions went on, and the protests were renewed. The opponents of the measure discussed and protested, and repeated that it was irregular to enter upon a debate of this grand question merely on the presentation of petitions. "Wait (it was said), until an opportunity is given for a regular debate upon the Bill,—wait till the moment comes for which we pant,—stay the wishful course of your proceedings, the advent of which we gladly hail, and then we will be no longer restrained by the fastidious feelings which now check our genius, and de-press our ardour for debate, but we shall rush down into the arena, and meet you with gladness." Such had been the language of the opponents of the Bill, but now it appeared that another and a very different movement had been made by these great tacticians. At first they had contented themselves with merely throwing out a few skirmishers; then his noble friend gave his notice of a motion, and then his notice was withdrawn. More petitions were presented, more conversations took place, more parlies were indulged in, more complaints of irregularity ensued, and more reluctance at the discussion was expressed. Then, again, noble Dukes, noble Earls, and noble Barons entered into piecemeal conversations; then again it was repeated, wait till a proper day, and keep the feast till the feast-day comes. A few skirmishers were then again thrown out, and when it was asked, why do you change your tactics all of a sudden, and thus get out of the jaws of the lion, it was answered, "We will give a notice of a motion, and have a debate at once." The present, therefore, was an occasion of their own seeking, and the enemies of the measure had brought forward this question for the view and purpose of having a premature and incidental discussion. Then the cry was, "Don't be carried away by an incidental discussion." He would ask, what had been done during the whole Session but to engage in incidental and premature discussions? First, there was the incidental discussion upon the timber trade, the cotton trade was afterwards incidentally brought under their Lordships' notice, and then the subject of taxes was to be incidentally discussed. He should make the hair of the noble Viscount stand an end, when he informed him that a tax had been debated in that House, before the Chancellor of the Exchequer had proposed it to the House of Commons. It might be irregular and peculiar to the present Session, and to the present Opposition, and to the times in which they lived, but he could not apply the epithet "unprecedented" to the course taken by the opponent of the Bill that night. His noble friend had given notice of a motion for the production of papers, and the noble Lord at the head of the Treasury bench had declared that he had no objection to their being produced. Upon this his noble friend said, that the object of his motion was to afford an opportunity to discuss the whole question of Parliamentary Reform, which he was as anxious to attack as the other side was to defend. At last came the day,—the important day,—big with the fate of the noble Lord's important speech, made to be unanswerable by his Majesty's Ministers. After all this promise and preparation, he saw the noble and learned Lord, who it was presumed was to overthrow all the constitutional principles of the Bill, and his friends, moving off *en echellon*, although they had just before been intrenched behind the Commander-in-chief. The noble Lord declined the combat, and moved off, aided by the light squadrons from the cross-benches, until he had nearly emptied the House. Ministers thus found themselves in an awkward situation—such a situation as it was not very usual for Ministers to be placed in. They were actually looking out for antagonists. Their eyes wandered over the House in all quarters to search for opponents, and every here and there they saw only a bush, which led them to think that if the bush were well beaten, game might be sprung. The bushes were well beaten, and still no game took wing. Ministers were reduced to the necessity of fighting the air. In that state of things, their Lordships would not expect him to go into a liberal and extensive discussion upon the principles of the Bill, or to touch upon its details. Where they had been attacked they had been successfully defended. It was the constant, and the great, and the triumphant, and the taunting argument in the mouths of the anti-reformers in former years—"We follow a plain, straight-forward, and direct course—our way is uniform and unqualified; but as for you, the advocates of Reform, there is no grappling with you; what one man amongst you will maintain, another gives up—what one clings to, another runs away from; what one defends, another attacks; and what one describes as the very foundation and corner-stone of the measure, another of you will tell us would be the ruin and total destruction of the Constitution. There are as many plans amongst us as there are advocates for Reform; and you are all violent in the praise of your own theories, and in the condemnation of those put forward by your fellow-reformers." That was the line of argument used by the late Mr. Canning, and used by him with his wonted felicity, against the measure of

Reform. He never lost sight of an opportunity of applying that principle to the measure, whenever it was brought forward in any shape in Parliament, and in his unqualified and consistent opposition to Reform he made great use of that argument, which was derived from the diversity of opinions amongst reformers themselves. No one at the time felt more the force of that argument than he did; but now the tables were turned, and that argument as to contrariety of sentiment, and diversity of opinion, could be effectually turned against the anti-reformers themselves. Concerning the present measure of Reform, he agreed with all his colleagues cordially and completely and almost the whole population of the country had adopted it as their chosen child, which they would patronise with fostering care and fond affection. They looked at it as a whole measure, and as a whole measure they would have it. He agreed with them in calling for the proposed measure of Reform, and for no other. All the reformers were now agreed upon that point, -they had buried in oblivion their minor differences,—they had given up their disagreements and dissensions,—they had rallied round this measure as a centre of union, and no longer could it be tauntingly objected to them, that one class of them approved of one measure of Reform, and another class of a different one,—they were all unanimous for the Bill, the whole Bill, and the Bill only. But while all was thus simple and plain on the side of Reform, how did matters stand in the enemy's camp? In their arguments not merely against Reform generally, but against this specific measure, would there be found that agreement,—that uniformity, and that consistency, which were so much vaunted of in the days of Mr. Canning? Let their Lordships but just attend for a moment, and they would see that the reformers had now changed places with their opponents, and that the charge of diversity and disunion could now be fairly thrown in the teeth of the anti-reformers. He would just refer, in illustration and in proof, to the speech of his noble friend who had brought forward this Motion that night. In the course of argument which his noble friend had adopted, and in the fair and candid speech which he had made, he (the Lord Chancellor) could not desire to discover a more absolute contrast to the doctrines maintained by those with whom he was leagued. His noble friend had admitted, in the course of his address to their Lordships, that whatever might have been his former opinions on this subject, and whatever might be his own feelings or wishes on the question, he could no longer deny the necessity of Reform. He admitted that the people of this country had expressed themselves plainly and loudly, and with unprecedented unanimity, in favour of this great question. He allowed, that the voice of the people had been raised in a peaceable, but he acknowledged, in an irresistible manner for Parliamentary Reform. Therefore, his noble friend, making all those admissions, was obliged to acknowledge that Reform must be granted; and to a certain degree his noble friend must still further admit, that not only must Reform be granted, but that to yield to that unanimous wish, to obey that irresistible voice, and to satisfy the people, the Reform which was to be granted must be not of a nominal, but of an effectual description. At all events, his noble friend had admitted the necessity of some measure of Reform; but what said the noble Duke (Wellington) on that subject? If ever he (the Lord Chancellor) had heard a declaration which had more than another mortified him, it was the declaration which had been made by that noble Duke; if he ever had been more grieved by one thing than another in the course of his life, it was by the line of conduct which had been taken on that subject by one who had rendered great services to the country at the head of her armies—who had rendered equally great services at the head of the King's councils,—services which he (the Lord Chancellor) should be ever forward to acknowledge, and which, with his latest breath, he should be most anxious to proclaim,—if ever, he repeated, he had been mortified and chilled by disappointment, it was by the declaration which that noble Duke had made at the commencement of the present Session, on the subject of Reform. He had expected, indeed he had fondly hoped, that that noble Duke would have yielded to what he must have seen was the general desire of the country, and that with the spirit of an enlightened statesman, and the boldness of a great captain, he would not have hesitated in adopting those measures, and pursuing that course, which could alone satisfy the just expectations of the people of this empire. But that fatal declaration which the noble Duke had made against all Reform, at the commencement of the present Session, had dissipated all those hopes; and now, after several others had changed their opinions and had yielded to that tide which they saw it was vain to resist, he had heard that noble Duke again, during the last three or four days, with a manly consistency, declare that his opinion remained unchanged. While that noble Duke saw those who had heretofore stood with him fairly backsliding from the cause, —becoming the victims of expediency,—and all, one by one, dropping from his side,—to hear that noble Duke, under such circumstances, in manly, strong, and honest terms, tell their Lordships that his opinion remained unchanged on the subject, while the voice of the public had been raised against it,—to hear him say, that, so far from exciting his astonishment,—he might add, his admiration,—was exactly what he had expected from that noble person. He was ready to award its just meed of praise to the noble Duke's consistency, but he felt that the noble Duke might be perfectly consistent and still be in the wrong. He felt that that noble Duke might be perfectly consistent himself, and yet had he not been able to preserve the consistency of every one else connected with him. He would warn him that he had mates on board who did not pull the vessel as he did up against the stream; that, stationed at either end, they worked in opposite directions; that while there were those with him who were against all Reform, and for having things as they were, and who agreed with the noble Duke himself, that the Constitution was a most perfect one, and that if it were left to them to create it over again, they could not call into existence a single new perfection in it, nor hope to add a star to that galaxy of rotten boroughs which excited their admiration, and demanded their respect,—that while there were those who thus went with the noble Duke, there were also those on his side, and arrayed with him against the present measure of Reform, who, unlike him, were ready to admit the absolute necessity of some species of Reform. His noble friend who had brought forward this Motion, though leagued with the noble Duke against the present measure of Reform, differed much more on the general question of Reform from that noble Duke than he did from his Majesty's Ministers: he only differed from them in degree, they going to an extent, to which he could not follow; in fact, there were but few points of variance between them, for they agreed in principle, and differed only in details. He could now, therefore, he thought, successfully retort upon the enemies of Reform, that charge which, in former times they had levelled at the heads of the advocates of Reform. He could tell them that no two of them seemed to agree in their mode of opposing, or objecting to this measure. In bringing forward a measure to settle such an important question as that of Reform, it was nothing wonderful that those who proposed the plan should find difficulties in determining the course which should be adopted, but that those who had only a mere negative to support, and to deny what the others asked for, and to rebut what the others proposed,—that they should differ so much amongst themselves, he looked upon as a singular feature in the discussion of this great question, and one of the strongest and most incontrovertible proofs that the pressure of argument and of public opinion was on that side of the question which was espoused by his noble colleagues, and supported zealously by himself. He had no desire to detain their Lordships by alluding to the details of this measure, as a more fitting opportunity would arise from the discussion of them; but he could not avoid observing upon the concession, as he would call it, which had been made by his noble friend who had opened this Debate. There was no avowal, there was no admission, which he had ever heard made upon any great popular question which came up to the acknowledgment which had been made by his noble friend, as to the unanimous acceptance of this great measure by all classes, all ranks, and all descriptions of persons in this country. Men of every sect, party, and class, who might hitherto have entertained a difference of opinion on the question of Reform, had, with a miraculous unanimity, abandoned all their differences, and had cordially united in favour of the present plan of Reform. But that was not the most extraordinary fact connected with the present measure. They who would be injured by it—they whose franchise would be virtually taken from them, with but a few miserable and paltry exceptions—the majority of that class who would be virtually disfranchised by this measure—joined the country, and yielding to the torrent of opinion which had become quite irresistible, in favour of it, professed themselves ready to sacrifice their privileges for the good of the country. But here he was reminded of a question which he had heard put from the cross-benches,—that quarter eminent for sagacity, and which, though it might have escaped their Lordships, unacquainted as they were with the subtleties of the law, had not passed unobserved by him (the Lord Chancellor). He had heard it said from the cross-benches that they should be furnished with the dates of the petitions, as well as with the prayers which they contained. He knew to what that question led; he was well aware what a structure would be erected upon the recent date of the petitions, and upon the absence of all complaint for 300 or 400 years. He had no hesitation in asserting, that the people had complained over and over again, and that they had a just right to complain. It was not true, it was most unfounded, and most false, to charge the people with coming forward at a late period to complain of evils which had existed for years. He would refer them to the Parliamentary History in proof of the truth of what he asserted. They would find that the Table of that House had been crowded with petitions praying for Reform in 1791: in 1817 their Table was also loaded with petitions calling for Reform, and now again, almost without the slightest concert, and certainly without preconceived arrangement, petitions flocked in upon them in thousands, and, as his noble friend had admitted, irresistibly overpowered all objections to the granting of a large measure of Reform. "But thus (continued the noble and learned Lord) it ever is with injustice—it always moves quicker than the complaints of its effects, or the desires for redress. 'Injustice,' I remember the poet tells us—

'Injustice, swift, erect, and unconfined,
Sweeps the wide earth, and tramples o'er mankind,
While prayers to heal her wrongs move slow behind.'

But though prayers be slow, they are not less sure to follow, and if injustice tramples o'er mankind, and sweeps the wide earth, and if prayers lag behind, as sure as that it is in the power of Heaven to grant redress, so sure does injustice always lead to complaint—and so sure does the denial of right engender the sense of wrong; and were the Government even insensible to the signs of the times, and to all the other examples which have been furnished to it by other States it would in my opinion be perfect madness on the part of the government to resist the unanimous appeal of a suffering people. I give you not counsel, my Lords, to yield to menace or to bend to fear. I only give you that counsel which I have before addressed to the other House of Parliament,—I but give you that counsel which has been often given to you before by those noble persons who have been most forward in promoting the success of this great and healing measure of Reform. They honestly and manfully performed their duty in those times, at the risk of the animadversions which it might draw down upon them. They laughed at the ridiculous charge of yielding to fear, and if they did fear a discontented people, I tell you plainly, my Lords, that I share in that fear with them. I own that I fear the discontent of an unanimous people, and that I should tremble at the thought of going on further without endeavouring to appease that discontent, feeling as I do that they ask only for their right, and that right, if withheld, and that wrong if unredressed, might rouse their slumbering strength even to day and might lead to that confusion and those, convulsions which your Lordships justly dread. That appears to me, my Lords, a reason which fairly calls upon us to yield to the just demands of the people." The noble and learned Lord proceeded to observe, that this measure had been called a revolutionary measure, and a great and uncalled-for change. His noble friend (Lord Wharncliffe) had said, that it was an unprecedented thing to do that which he argued this measure went to do—namely to alter the frame of the Constitution of the country. He would willingly meet and engage his noble friend on that ground. Without going into the details of the measure, he would maintain that the very principle of the Bill was the principle of the Constitution,—that it had been uniformly acted upon, and that it had been acted upon in a stronger manner than it was acted on in this instance. He would meet his noble friend upon the very threshold of the Bill,—the disfranchisement of sixty boroughs, and the in part disfranchisement of forty-seven more. That was the part upon which the great attack had been made, as if it were the weakest and most vulnerable part of the Bill. As to the objection about giving an increased influence to the landed interest, though some of the opponents of the Bill might not object to it on those grounds, they hated the Bill on account of the disfranchisement of the boroughs, and that disfranchisement was represented as an unprecedented change in the Constitution of the country. Mr. Canning was a consistent and ingenious, a statesman-like and successful, because consistent, enemy of all Reform. He objected to all kinds of change, and when his attention was drawn to the unrepresented state of Birmingham, Manchester, Leeds, and such places, he would admit the fact, but then he would say that Liverpool, York, and Pontefract were represented, and that unrepresented Manchester was safe in the representation of Liverpool. Then when he was asked what he could say to Scotland, where there was not even that virtual Representation which he could point out in England,—where unrepresented Glasgow could not be said to be safe in unrepresented Edinburgh,—where from the banks of the Tweed to John O'Groat's house there was not even the semblance of a popular election, and where things had come to such a pass that, as had been said by Mr. Fox, the forty-five Representatives for Scotland might be chosen by men living in Lombard Street, in the City of London, Mr. Canning admitted the argument, but then he contended that any change in such a state of things would be only a portion of a Parliamentary Reform—that it would be an alteration in that parliamentary Constitution which had been given to us as *data* for political men,—that that constitution they had no right to alter in any respect, and that they might as well think of touching the Crown on the head of the Monarch as the constitution of Parliament. Now that, at least, was a consistent argument. In some years after, when Mr. Canning supported the disfranchisement of a borough which had been proved delinquent he had asked that right honorable Gentleman on what grounds he then justified such a measure, when he recollected the arguments which he had formerly urged against any thing of the kind. Mr. Canning justified the measure on the necessity of the case, and he argued that those people had committed an offence for which they should be punished; that by transferring the franchise from Grampound to Yorkshire no change was made in the constitution of Parliament, no change was made in its numbers; that it was a mere substitution of York for Grampound to meet a particular case and could not be used as a precedent for further changes except such another case should arise. That was the only answer that Mr. Canning could give to that question. but surely that proved that Mr. Canning himself was not totally and completely averse from all and every species of Reform. But they were told that the disfranchisement of the boroughs mentioned in the Bill was a revolutionary measure; as if there had been an eternally fixed order and custom under the constitution of this country for the maintenance of a certain number of boroughs—as if the number of those boroughs should remain perpetually the same, and as if they formed according to the assertion of their advocates a portion of the ancient and immutable Constitution of this country. Now, there never was a charge brought against any measure which was more completely founded upon an utter ignorance of the history of the Constitution of this country. Well and truly had his learned and eloquent friend (the Lord Chancellor of Ireland) said, that such persons had read history to little or no purpose; that they pored with the delight of an antiquary over the rust of the coin which they collected in their search, but they neither read the legend which was inscribed on it nor regarded the intrinsic value of the metal. Did such persons mean to assert that Gatton and Old Sarum, and all the other boroughs, had been time out of mind a part and parcel of the Constitution of the country, and that many of them had not been, even in recent times, altered and abrogated? He did not know whether he was about to give information to their Lordships of that with which they were not previously acquainted, but, judging from what had taken place elsewhere he was certain that he communicated information to some Members of the House of Commons, when he stated, that to the Crown of this country, up to the period of the Union with Scotland, never was denied the unquestioned and undisputed right of sending writs to any borough it pleased, and of ceasing to send them to any borough it might choose not to send them to. If they looked into the history of the country they would find that such was the case. It appeared from a statement made by Mr. Pitt, that before the period of the Revolution seventy boroughs were disfranchised, and thirty-six were then enfranchised. They only now proposed to do that which the Crown had often done previously to the Union with Scotland. Could that Bill, therefore, which disfranchised a certain number of boroughs be justly described as a Bill which went to pull down the Constitution, when they found that, up to the beginning of the seventeenth century exactly the same power had been exercised by the Crown? His noble friend who had brought the subject under their Lordships' notice had taunted some others of his noble friends because they were the disciples of Mr. Canning and yet supported this Bill; and he had described all the speakers at present in Parliament as mere puny orators compared with Mr. Canning. The noble Lord had either never before heard the Lord Chancellor of Ireland speak, or he must have forgotten his masterly eloquence, or he would not have made that assertion, and his taunt against the noble Lords who had been the friends of Mr. Canning was quite undeserved. From all that he had ever seen of Mr. Canning he was convinced that if Mr. Canning still lived he would now be with the reformers and opposed to those who resisted this great and healing measure. But they had heard much of the great men who had advocated the present system. Mr. Canning was but the disciple of a still greater man—Mr. Pitt; and after all they had heard about Reform being dangerous, revolutionary, and so forth, it was a curious circumstance that Mr. Pitt was for a long period a strenuous reformer. Out of office he approved of Reform; and while in office he voted for it. He propounded too a measure of Reform himself; on that he divided the House; and if he ceased to advocate Reform at the period of the French Revolution, he had never concealed his decided mortification and disappointment that his plans had failed. His memorable saying should not be forgotten; "that without Reform no honest man could be the Minister of this country; and that if by hazard you should get an honest man Minister, he could not honestly serve you." What was one portion of Mr. Pitt's Reform? To add 100 Members to the other House of Parliament. The Bill brought into the other House by the Ministers only proposed to make the House in numbers more like what it was before 1801. A multiplicity of changes had, from time to time, been made in the Representation of the country, and in the constitution of Parliament. He would not go back to the time of Henry 6th, when the qualification for an elector was raised to 40*s*., equivalent to 40*l*. of our money; but he would refer them, for instance, to what had occurred on the Union with Scotland and on the Union with Ireland. He would refer to 1778, 1782, and 1793, when they repealed a great portion of the Catholic disabilities, and actually admitted five-sixths of the population to the right of voting who never possessed it before. That was, in fact, more a Parliamentary Revolution than a Parliamentary Reform. He would refer them also to the period when they reduced the Representatives of Ireland from 300 to 100, and added those 100 Members to the English House of Commons. These all were measures which much better deserved the epithets of revolutionary, and so forth, than the measure upon which they had been so abundantly lavished. He was sure that if a more moderate Reform, such as had been recommended by his noble friend that evening, but which would never satisfy the people, had been brought forward by Government, it would have met with quite as much opposition as the present one in Parliament. Suppose that half the rotten boroughs had been disfranchised or that all of them had been mutilated of half their Members, should they not have had from his noble friend, and from all the opponents of the measure elsewhere, the same reprehension of disfranchisement? Should they not have been told that they were going too far? Would it not have been said to them by his noble friend, "Why do you stop there?" had you not better lop off all; for, if you had, you could not have committed a greater violation of the principle of the Constitution? [*"hear, hear," from Lord Wharncliffe*] He perceived that his noble friend appreciated the force of his reasoning. [*"No, no." from Lord Wharncliffe*] Yes, his noble friend did, only his noble friend was surprised to find that the argument should have struck them in the same way. His noble friend, and those who held the same language with his noble friend, would have said to them, "why do you stop here: the argument which will justify the taking away one borough, will justify the taking away another: if so, why should you be both rapacious and inconsistent too? Why this half measure? Do you think the people will like it? Oh, no; you may gratify your foolish partialities; you may retain your cherished Gatton, your beloved Boroughbridge, and your favourite Sarum; but do you think the people will like you as well for this as if you had put them all in your cauldron together? You are doing all you can to protect your plan from the assaults of enemies within doors, but you are not doing that which the people will expect from you?" He must confess, that if his noble friend had had an opportunity of saying this, he should have felt it difficult to answer it. Well, but those who opposed the measure talked about some Reform, and yet kept carefully out of view even the outline of any plan which they would be inclined to accede to. Now he put it to them whether they were not in this dilemma:—they admitted that there was in the country a very strong feeling in favour of Reform,—aye, of rather an extensive system of Reform;—for that, indeed, was the only ground upon which anti-reformers now proclaimed themselves willing to listen to Reform at all. Did they suppose that any plan short of disfranchisement would justify the people? If not, this was one of the horns of the dilemma, upon which their admission of the strong feeling in favour of Reform had fixed them. Now mark the other horn the goring horn of this dilemma, as it appeared to him, and he felt for those who were threatened by it. They must begin the work of disfranchisement, and how? Would they disfranchise all the boroughs on one side,—all the boroughs of their foes? No,—for that would be such an apparent job, that it would not be tolerated for a moment. Every body would cry shame upon it. Well, then, they must take some from one side and some from another: spoliating, as they now called it when others did it, first a friend and then a foe,—thus converting former friends into foes; but not making any friends among their former foes, and they might be compelled to sacrifice, unless pity for a recent purchase withheld their hand, even Gatton itself. But no matter in what way they disfranchised; disfranchise they must, and then, what would become of their principle, of the arguments that were founded on spoliation—the invasion of property,—and the violation of the spirit of the Constitution? One word at parting with this dilemma. Let him tell those noble and honourable proprietors of boroughs who now talked about moderate reform, and who were sincere, for he spoke not of those who assumed the garb of moderate reformers for the mere purpose of catching votes against this bill, that if that moderate Reform of which they spoke were to be carried, he should very much marvel if they would have Gatton or Boroughbridge, or any such places long spared to them. These, then,—the reasonableness of the measure, the consistency of it in principle, and the defensibleness of it in argument,—constituted the main ground of his approval of the measure. The second ground of his approval, though indefensible in argument,—though difficult to reconcile in principle, and though more difficult to maintain in debate,—was, that there were many boroughs infinitely worse and more intolerable than the boroughs which were called close boroughs. If there were any security that the close boroughs would remain in such hands as had hitherto held them, and as did still hold them, he should think the longer existence far less exceptionable, than the existence of such boroughs as Barnstaple, and—but he would not go into them, for a late report of a Committee of the House of Commons prevented him from thinking of any of them but the last to which their attention had been called—he meant the overgrown, foul, and corrupt borough of Liverpool, where corruption had stalked the streets by daylight, and where the iniquity of the place had waxed so great, that the fame of it had spread from one quarter of the empire to the other;—where, instead of imitating the practice which a remnant of shame or a sense of danger had given rise to in smaller boroughs, of a private room and a hole in the wall, men were seen huckstering their votes in the open streets at noon-tide, and tallies that sold for 20*l.* a-piece at first fetched double and treble afterwards. Then there was the out-voter—the scourge of the place in which he exercised his right of franchise—who inoculated all whom he approached with the vices he had learned in the capital or in some other large city, and who, however pure the resident body might have been before they saw him, was sure to bring with him venom enough to make it one festering mass of corruption before he left it. The election for Liverpool was decided almost by the non-residents, and he who could ensure the votes of eight or nine hundred non-residents, might be pretty sure of the result. Putting a stop to the system which arose from out-voters was, in his opinion, one of the best parts of the plan. Well, then, he said that he thought there were some other boroughs much worse than the close boroughs, and he knew that in saying this he laid himself open to be told—"Ah! but you support the retention of some of those boroughs." He thought, however, that he had already answered that argument. He could not tell exactly where to draw the line, but he knew that the public eye was fixed upon such boroughs as these, so that if delinquencies continued in them it could not escape detection, and, consequently, punishment; while, as contentment and conciliation to a certain extent were necessary to the success of the measure, he was prepared to accede to this part of the Bill. But when their Lordships were told of the probable evils of the measure, it was right to remind them of existing evils, and ask them, whether any thing so bad as some results of the present system could possibly be expected, under any change? As a sample, what did their Lordships think of a man who, to get rid of his debts, bought a seat in Parliament for three months? What did they think of a man who by so purchasing a seat, got out of prison, and being out of prison went abroad; and, when abroad vacated his seat, so that another Member might come in, while the gentleman who had gone abroad never found his way back again? He need not tell them that this had happened. But what did they think of this next case which he was about to narrate to them? "A man" continued the noble and learned Lord, "bought a borough, say for 40,000*l.* or 50,000*l.*—I say bought a borough, because that is the phrase,—but your Lordships know, that what is really bought is the power of deciding upon peace and war, upon all affairs of commerce, upon Parliamentary Reform, upon the amount of taxation,—in a word, upon all the great and vital questions, on the just decision of which the prosperity, perhaps the very existence of the empire depends. This, my Lords, is the meaning of buying a borough. Well, but in the case of which I am speaking, all the money was not to be paid down at once—perhaps it was not convenient; and so it being agreed that the prompt should be at six months, there was to be discount, of course; and what do your Lordships suppose the discount was? Money, perhaps. Oh no, my Lords; the simple men out of doors, and particularly those on the Stock Exchange, would have answered, simpletons as they are, money; but in this case the discount was not money, but a man. Yes, it was said to the purchaser, 'You shall have a term; you shall go out for a time, and another shall go in; and so the affair shall go on, and the discount be taken until the time for the prompt comes." Now this I am credibly informed is a fact, and your Lordships think it a very laughable matter. But why is it so? It is laughable only on account of the gross and flagrant incongruity of it; and the incongruity consists in a man having been the representative of five per cent. on 40,000*l.* or 50,000*l.* for a few months, instead of being, what he ought to have been, a Representative of the people. The character of the Legislature, his Lordship continued, could not be unimpaired if such a case occurred but once. If the system admitted of the possibility of such an occurrence, that alone was a sufficient reason for the reformation of it. But the grand principle on which this measure of Reform was built was not the lopping-off excrescences, nor the converting of close boroughs into open boroughs, nor the removal of non-resident voters, nor the diminishing of the expense of elections by taking the poll in districts, and by other particulars into which he would not then enter. Great and important as these consequences of the Bill were, they were not the main, the most valuable features of it; but the great and broad principle of the Bill,—that in which the beauty of it chiefly consisted was, the letting in of large quantities of his Majesty's subjects who had been hitherto altogether unrepresented. Large towns, densely peopled, marts of commerce, emporia of manufactures, the abodes of honest and industrious men, who, in time of peace contributed to advance the prosperity of their country by the sweat of their brow, and who, in war defended their country by the sinews of their arms, and by the blood in their veins; but who, because they had not been formerly congregated into masses in certain small districts, had not hitherto been thought worthy of being represented in the legislative council of the nation. By the Bill, too, copyholders were let in—leaseholders were let in; and though it had been said, that as leaseholders only of twenty-one years were to be admitted, that alteration would not make much difference, yet he must be allowed to dissent altogether from that position. He thought it would make a vast difference. At the same time let him observe,—but in saying this he begged it to be understood that he spoke merely as an individual,—he should not care if the leaseholder of the smallest term were let in; for, while he let in the towns, it was his anxious desire that the election for counties should be independent. His noble friend had alluded to his canvass in the county of York; but he begged to remind his noble friend that he had never thought of canvassing the squires though he had taken great care to canvass the towns. Indeed the squires were at first violently opposed to him,—as most of his best friends always had been,—and among the squires of Yorkshire he had the honour of boasting many friends. The squires actually held a meeting for the purpose of preventing his standing,—but he was bound to add, that when they found they could not do that, the meeting ended in an invitation to him to offer himself as a candidate. However, he had not placed any dependence upon the squires; all his reliance was upon the towns, for they were sure to carry the election. This his noble friend knew as well or better than he did; and he put it to their Lordships and to his noble friend whether that was a state of county representation which ought to be satisfactory to the country? Now this Bill restored the state of Representation to what it ought to be, although his noble friend insisted that it was not so good a measure as one which he could have proposed, but which his noble friend had not proposed. Last of all, then, such was the state which this country had reached, and the world at large had arrived at such a state, that it was no longer just, no longer expedient, no, nor no longer even safe, that the great mass of the honest and industrious people of this great kingdom should continue longer unrepresented. The spread of knowledge among them, the intelligence, the industry, the weight which attached to them, rendered it neither honest nor safe in their Lordships, nor expedient for the country, if they valued the welfare and security of the State, that the only point on which they should continue to overlook the people should be the right of the people to be represented in Parliament. They were not slow in calling upon the people for manifestations of their loyalty,—they were not slow in calling upon the people to contribute millions of taxes,—they never forgot to enlist the people in their ranks when they drained the people of their blood in warfare, as they drained them of their money in peace; but the only point on which they never appealed to the people, the only point in which the people had been grossly ill-treated by them, was, that no Representation had been given to the people to that extent to which their worth, their services, and their character gave them a right. If the kingdoms had not been united, the Crown must have issued writs to the large towns, and he believed that the Crown must also have discontinued the issue of writs to the boroughs. All, therefore, which they could be called upon to do, was to effect that regularly and, which, but for the Unions, must have been done, irregularly, by a well considered act of the Legislature. But for the Unions, that which they would be called upon to do by Act of Parliament, he was sure would have been done by the Crown. Of that he had no more doubt than he had of the ultimate success of this great, this important, this healing measure of Reform.

The Duke of *Wellington* must say, in the outset, that up to the present moment he had heard nothing like an answer to the able address of his noble friend (Lord Wharncliffe) near him; and he had not, therefore, wished to address their Lordships until he heard the speech of the noble and learned Lord on the Woolsack. That noble and learned Lord had only done him justice in supposing that his opinions had undergone no change since the declaration he had made to their Lordships at the opening of the Session. In his opinion, the state of the Representation ought not to be changed. In his opinion they could, on principle, no more deprive one of these boroughs of their franchise, without delinquency being proved, than they could deprive him of his seat in that House, or of his title, or the noble Lord on the Woolsack of his estate. The right in both cases was the same, and he contended that that argument had been held over and over again in that House, and would be held again, if the case of Liverpool should ever be brought forward. That House had always required proof of delinquency before it would consent to any act of disfranchisement. He admitted that there were circumstances of necessity, which would get rid of this strict letter of the law, as they would get rid of the strict letter of the law in other cases; but he contended, that no circumstances of necessity, upon this subject, had, till this moment, been made out. Even the eloquent speech of the noble and learned Lord had done nothing to establish it. At the close of his speech, indeed, the noble and learned Lord had talked of the people who laboured by the sweat of their brow, and who shed their blood in our armies; but these were not the persons to whom this Bill gave the elective franchise—it was given to altogether another class of persons. On all this, the noble and learned Lord went upon the principle of expediency, as well as he did. But the noble and learned Lord, and his noble friend near him, had both left out of consideration, that it was the creation of a legislative assembly they were to look to, and not what the voters were to be—that they were to consider what a House of Commons ought to be, and not what the constituents ought to be. This, he contended, it was the duty of the Government to consider in framing a measure of this kind. But he had not yet done with the matter of principle. The noble and learned Lord had admitted that he would have preferred to keep some of the rotten boroughs in the place of other boroughs, but what then became of the noble and learned Lord's principle? The principle was at once given up here. Well, but he had said that they were to look more to the formation of a House of Commons, than to the formation of an elective body upon the principle of population. Now he thought that the present House of Commons was as complete a one as could be formed. He contended that the House of Commons, particularly since the peace, had shown itself to be the most efficient legislative body in the world, without any exception. It had rendered more services than any other House of Commons in this country during the same length of time. He contended that it had continued to render those services till the close of last Session; that it was prepared to continue them still in this Session; and that it was only interrupted by the introduction of the discussion of this subject of Reform. He would refer to the opinion of the noble Marquis (Lansdown) opposite, whom he always heard with great delight, whose opinions he believed did not much differ from his own, and who had said, that if he had to form a House of Commons, he would form one like the present, giving a large preponderance to property, and the most to landed property. The noble Earl (Grey) opposite, too, had, in a speech which he made in 1817, admitted that the House of Commons was always ready to attend to the interests of the people. This speech of the noble Earl was made upon his presenting a petition to that House upon this very subject of Reform. He must say, then, that the opinion which he gave at the commencement of this Session was not at variance with those opinions of the noble Earl and the noble Marquis. He would add, too, that he retained that opinion now, and he believed he should entertain it till the last hour of his life—especially as it was an opinion which was borne out by almost all the eminent men who had spoken upon the subject. Well, then,—but it was said that it became necessary for the Government to propose some plan of Reform in the representative system. Now, he must say here, that some observations which had fallen from the noble Lord, the Privy Seal, and from the noble and learned Lord, the Lord Chancellor of Ireland, were not quite correct as to facts; and upon those observations he felt himself called upon to make some remarks. It was quite true, that when the late Government brought forward the Catholic question, they were supported by many noble Lords who were generally in opposition to the Government. He had the misfortune on that occasion to lose the support and regard of a great number of friends, both there and in the other House of Parliament. That was a misfortune which he should never cease to lament; yet he had the consolation of knowing, that what he then did was no more than his public duty required of him. Believing, as he did, that civil war must be the consequence of continuing to refuse the settlement of that question, he thought that he should have been wanting in his duty, both as a man and as a minister, if he had hesitated to give up his former views with regard to that measure. Certainly the part he had taken on that occasion had lost him the confidence of many of his former friends, and the noble Lords who supported him in that measure were not willing to lend him the same support on the other measures which he thought necessary for the good of the country. Nevertheless, he thought he was bound to remain in the position he then occupied, as long as he enjoyed the confidence of his Sovereign, and the support of the House of Commons. He might, he believed, have continued in that position, but the late revolution in France had occurred at a critical period. Like former revolutions, such as those in Spain and Naples, it certainly did create a very great sensation in this country, and a strong desire was excited by speeches in various places, and by the spirit developed at the elections for Parliamentary Reform,—a desire more strong on the part of the people than had been displayed for many years with respect to any political object. But he did not then, nor did he now, think that desire irresistible,—to be sure it would be irresistible if Parliament thought proper to make the alterations demanded in our representative system,—but if it should decide otherwise, he believed the country would in this, as in other instances, submit to the decision of Parliament. He admitted that there had been a growing wish for Parliamentary Reform in the country, but he thought that if the question were fairly discussed in Parliament, and if, after a fair hearing of the case, Parliament should decide against it, the country would submit without a murmur. The fashion resulting from the example of the French and Belgian revolutions had now subsided—people saw the consequences of revolution to be distress and ruin; and his belief was, if Parliament in its wisdom decided that Reform was not to be carried, that the country would submit to the decision. With respect to the question of the Civil List, he had heard it stated that there was no combination of parties against the Government of the day; he would not positively assert anything which he did not know to be fact; but he always understood that there had been something of a combination. It was extraordinary that all the gentlemen who usually attached themselves to certain parties should accidentally combine to vote against Government. However this might be, he was defeated on the question of the Civil List: in short, the Government was placed in a minority. Upon that, finding that he had the misfortune no longer to enjoy the confidence of the House of Commons, he thought proper to resign the situation which he held in his Majesty's service. At that period the question of Parliamentary Reform had no more to do, as far as he was concerned, with the resignation which he had tendered to his Majesty on the day following the defeat on the Civil List, than any thing else in the world. He admitted he resigned next morning because he did not wish to expose his Majesty and the country to the consequences which might result from the Government going out on the success of the question of Parliamentary Reform. There was the truth, but to say he had resigned upon account of Parliamentary Reform was wrong. He had resigned upon the ground before stated, and he had resigned at the particular moment when he did, because he did not choose to expose his Majesty and the country to the consequences that might ensue from the occurrence of the case just mentioned. There was the real fact of the story. But the noble and learned Lord said, the late Ministry had given up the principle of Parliamentary Reform by their resignation: no such thing—they resigned because they did not possess the confidence of the House of Commons, and they thought that the same majority which defeated them on Monday on the Civil List, might have defeated them on Tuesday on Reform, and then they would have sacrificed (as the noble Lord said) the principle of Parliamentary Reform in the Commons. He did not think it worth while to make any further struggle in order to retain office a day or two longer. He came now to the circumstance of the members of the present Government taking office, and he found the noble Earl stating, on the first opportunity after having occupied office, the three principles of his Government; and these were,—Retrenchment, Peace and Reform. As for Retrenchment, and Peace, he maintained that there existed no difference between the noble Earl and himself. As far as he had heard, up to that moment the noble Earl had not found a single six-pence to be retrenched in the public expenditure; every thing had been done which could be done by the late Government to promote economy in all our establishments. With respect to peace, he hoped the noble Earl had found things in such a train that he could and would be able to maintain peace with all the world. He did not say that some details had not occurred since his resignation, in which he could not agree with the noble Earl, but sooner than put the noble Earl to the risk of any inconvenience with respect to subjects so delicate, he would not have a single question asked in relation to them, if he could help it, because no man desired more than himself the prosperity of the noble Earl's Government, not out of any peculiar attachment to the noble Earl himself, but through love of his country. Parliamentary Reform was the remaining question,—for the introduction of that it appeared Ministers had obtained the consent of his Majesty, and certainly it appeared that his Majesty's name had been used upon the subject, and, he believed, frequently by persons who were by no means authorised to use it, and also upon occasions when it ought not to have been used. It was true Government had the sanction of his Majesty to bring forward the question of Reform—perhaps this measure of Reform; but to say his Majesty had taken a more active part in the matter than was implied in taking the advice of his Ministers, was not constitutional; and such being the case, he could not consider the assertion as being founded in fact. Let their Lordships look at what such a measure ought to be, and let them see what the measure was which had been brought forward by the Ministers. A measure of Parliamentary Reform brought forward by Government ought to be a measure which should enable Government to carry on the King's service in Parliament according to the Constitution as it was established at the Revolution, and as it had since proceeded. How had the public service been carried on since the Revolution? By persons of talent, property, and knowledge—scientific, political, commercial, and manufacturing, —men connected with or representing all the great interests of the country,—men noted for great abilities, who on all occasions had been a conservative party in the State, and who had supported the power and glory of the country in war, and had promoted her prosperity in peace during the last 140 years. If the country were to lose such a Parliament, Ministers were bound to see that their new system of election should be such as would secure the King's Government the support of this other Parliament when formed upon the new principle. Look at the new system. His noble friend, who had addressed the House earlier in the debate, stated with great clearness what would be the result of the Bill in certain respects. His noble friend stated, that throughout the towns of England and Wales many existing interests would be interfered with, and he also stated the effect of giving votes to 10*l.* householders for counties. His noble friend's statements well deserved the attention of their Lordships. He himself had examined the Bill with reference to its effects on the county of Southampton. In that county were several towns—Winchester, Christchurch, Portsmouth, Southampton, and the borough of Lymington. Several boroughs in this county were struck out of the Representation by the Bill, and there were besides a number of considerable towns left unrepresented; but the voters of these places were to come into the county constituency. According to the old system, only the freeholders had votes for the county, but according to the new system the inhabitants of these unrepresented towns would have votes for the county. Now copyholders and 50*l.* leaseholders were to vote for the county. In the towns those two classes were for the most part shopkeepers. He was convinced that there were not less than 4,000 or 5,000 such inhabitants of towns in Hampshire, who would come to have votes for the county as well as the freeholders. Now, of whom did this class of electors consist? As he had before stated, they were shopkeepers—respectable shopkeepers—in the towns. He begged to ask, were they fit persons to be the only electors to return county Members to a Parliament which was to govern the affairs of this great nation, consisting of 100,000,000 of subjects, and so many various relations, foreign, domestic, colonial, commercial, and manufacturing? Men of the description he had mentioned, with their prejudices and peculiar interests, however respectable as a body, could not be fit to be the only electors of Members of the House of Commons? But he begged to say, that however respectable this or any other class of electors might be, there was a strong reason against any uniformity of system in the Representation of the country. He had heard already of the establishment in this town of a Committee formed for the purpose of recommending candidates for the Representation to the different towns throughout the country. Now, considering the means of combination, and the facilities of communication which existed, he thought such a body dangerous. Associations of a like kind had been found effectual in other countries to put down the Government. Was it fit to establish such a uniform system of election (he cared not in whose hands placed), that any Committee sitting in London could guide the determination of the entire country with respect to the Representation? He wanted to know what security there would be for their Lordships' seats in that House if such a Committee existed at the first general election of a Reformed Parliament? He was in France at the period when the law of elections was passed in 1817, at that period there were in each department 300 persons, who, paying the highest amount of taxes, were chosen to manage the Representation. The King and Government altered this, and gave the power of choosing representatives to persons paying taxes to the amount of 300 francs. Two years afterwards they were obliged to alter the law again, and form two classes of electors. Since then there had been two general elections, one more unfavourable than the other to the Government, and the matter ended in the formation of a Parliament, the spirit of which rendered it impossible for a Government to act. It was not his business, and he had no wish to defend the late French Government, but he wished on that occasion to observe, that he had never written to Prince Polignac in his life (much as he had been accused of encouraging the proceedings of that person), and he had never written to Charles 10th, except when that monarch lost his son, and when his grandson was born, till he came to this country. In fact, he had never corresponded with any French Minister without the knowledge of his colleagues. The noble and learned Lord on the Woolsack might rely on it he had no more knowledge of Prince Polignac's proceedings than the noble and learned Lord himself, or most probably still less. He was not the apologist of Prince Polignac; but things had been brought to that state in France, that it was impossible there should not be a revolution. When he saw a similar mode of election recommended in this country—when he saw the adoption of a uniform system of election—when he saw the election placed in the hands of shopkeepers in towns and boroughs all over the country—he thought that we incurred considerable danger, and did put the country in that situation that no Minister could be certain that any one measure which he brought forward would succeed, or that he would be enabled to carry on the Government. The circumstances of France and England were in many particulars alike, and we ought to take warning by the dangers of the neighbouring country. He wished the House to advert to what the business of the King's Government in Parliament was. It was the duty of that Government to manage every thing. He had heard the noble and learned Lord on the Woolsack, in a speech of admirable eloquence and knowledge, propose a new judicial system at the commencement of the Session; but he maintained that it would be impossible for the Government ultimately to decide on that question, and he told the noble and learned Lord this—that if a Parliament were constructed on the new plan, it would be too strong for Government on that and many similar questions. So, also, in matters affecting commerce and manufactures, Government would depend entirely upon Parliament. He wanted to know how Government was to carry any measure on the appointment of a new Parliament? There was a great question now before the House of Commons on the subject of tithes. A Government might submit to the will of a majority opposed to its own views on other questions, but on the question of Tithes and the Church, its duty was clearly pointed out, the King's Coronation Oath, and the acts of Union with Scotland and Ireland, guaranteeing the integrity of the Church establishment. But he wanted to know how Government was to maintain the safety of the Established Church, after placing Parliament on the footing proposed. He did not wish to carry this argument farther than it would safely go; but he inferred from every thing he could see, that the Government of the country could not be carried on as hitherto, if this plan were adopted. In such an event we must alter the Constitution. He did not say the Crown could not be preserved: the King's power might be limited and confined to the management of the Army, Navy, &c.; but that would not be the English Constitution,—the country could no longer go on as before—it would not be the same England. Assuming that the concession of the Catholic question, and that the Union with Ireland were great alterations, as the noble and learned Lord stated, in the Constitution, still they were both resorted to on the principle of expediency, which was clearly made out, and he could not admit that the expediency of the present measure had been demonstrated. On the contrary, all experience warranted him in saying, that the present Legislature had answered its purposes remarkably well, and that there must arise great danger, if not irremediable mischief, from altering its composition. The great difference, therefore, between those departures from the Constitution and the present measure was, that they were warranted by expediency, and it is not. He regretted being compelled to differ from many of his political friends with respect to Reform, but duty obliged him to do so. He had no desire for any thing, except to be useful for the service of the public in any way that might be required. He had no personal reasons for communicating his opinions; he spoke them broadly and openly, with a view to the country benefitting by their expression. He wished to God he could convince the noble Earl and his colleagues of the error into which they had fallen on the subject of Reform, being convinced that they would place the country in the greatest possible peril if they passed the Bill in its present shape.

The *Lord Chancellor* assured the noble Duke (Wellington), that he never had any concern with Polignac or Charles 10th; and with respect to the government of France, he had only in conjunction with the liberal party in this country, recommended it to take the side of mercy.

Earl *Grey* found it impossible to remain silent after listening to the speech of the noble Duke opposite, though if he had consulted his own ease, he certainly should not have addressed their Lordships at that late hour. He would begin by expressing the same wish towards the noble Duke, as the noble Duke had expressed with respect to him. He wished to God he could cure the noble Duke of the error into which he thought his Grace had fallen. The noble Duke thought him in error; he thought the noble Duke mistaken—which was right, time would show. He believed there was hardly one man in the House, and but a very small proportion of persons in the country, who concurred with the noble Duke in opinion, that there was nothing in the state of the Representation of the people in Parliament, or in the circumstances and character of the times, which required any alteration to be made in those laws by which the Representation of the people in Parliament was at present constituted. This opinion the noble Duke was pledged to,—that the system was perfect as it stood—that all those things which others called abuses, had contributed to the glory and welfare of the country,—that the abuses were an essential part of the system,—and that, if we attempted to correct them, we at once put an end to the glory, power, and prosperity of the empire. This was a bold doctrine, which few men could be brought to concur in; even the noble Duke himself did not say that one of those generally united with him in political principles agreed with him in this opinion. In all the discussions on the subject, he had hardly heard one person (certainly not the noble Lord who opened the Debate) venture to say, that situated as this country was, and in the present state of public opinion, it was impossible to proceed safely without some attempt to restore the satisfaction and confidence of the people, by giving them a share in the right of Representation to which they considered themselves (and he thought justly considered themselves) entitled. The noble Duke had stated the circumstances under which he thought the question arose, and it was a satisfaction to him to hear, not only from his noble friend who opened the Debate, but also from the noble Duke, statements that relieved him from a charge under which he felt a good deal of uneasiness—namely, that to him and his colleagues was owing that state of excitement at present existing in the country, which alone seemed to make some change necessary. He must here observe, that a great part of the noble Duke's speech had been to him not very intelligible. The noble Duke stated the circumstances of his resignation of office, and in doing so referred to the division on the Civil List, intimating that the majority was occasioned by a combination of parties against the Government, of which combination, if it ever existed, he was certainly altogether ignorant. Indeed, it would seem from the noble Duke's statement, that a want of confidence in the Government, on the part of Parliament, placed him under the necessity of tendering his resignation to his Majesty; but the noble Duke denied that the act was connected with Reform, yet in the same breath the noble Duke stated, that he thought it his duty to save his Majesty from the embarrassing situation in which he might have been placed if the question of Reform had been carried against the wishes of Government; such a result, as the noble Duke very properly said, being also calculated to decide the principle of Reform. Why, then, it appeared that it was upon the principle of Reform, after all, that the noble Duke had resigned. To be sure, the noble Duke said, he did not go out upon Reform, but in order to spare his Majesty the difficulty that might result from Government being beaten upon Reform.

The Duke of *Wellington* begged leave to explain. He was sure the noble Earl did not wish to misrepresent what he had said.—He had stated, that he had determined to resign, because he found he did not enjoy the confidence of the House of Commons, having been defeated on the Civil List on Monday: he might, however, have remained in office on the Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, or possibly longer, if the Reform Question had not been fixed for Tuesday; but such being the case, he determined to resign on the Tuesday, with the view before stated, of extricating his Majesty from the difficulty that might result from Government being beaten upon that question.

Earl *Grey* resumed.—He had stated the noble Duke's sentiments exactly as it struck him that they had been expressed, and now he found that the difference between his account and the noble Duke's was very trifling. It appeared that the noble Duke having determined to resign on the Civil List defeat, hastened to put his determination into execution in order to avoid being in the King's service during the discussion of the Reform Question, lest it might have been carried against the Government, and embarrass his Majesty. He gathered from the noble Duke's own account of the matter, that there was existing in the country—the thing was manifested at the general election—a strong desire, (whether augmented, as the noble Duke supposed, by the Belgian or French Revolution, or occasioned by some other cause), a strong desire among the people to procure Parliamentary Reform. Nay, the noble Duke had gone farther; he acknowledged that this inclination was so far indulged in by the House of Commons itself, that if he had remained much longer in office, he apprehended the question might have been carried against him. The noble Duke had admitted then that there existed in the country, and in the House of Commons, at the time the present Government came into office, so strong a feeling in favour of Parliamentary Reform, that it was impossible for the Government to avoid taking that subject into its earliest consideration. The noble Duke had adverted to the statement which he (Earl Grey), had made of the principles on which he accepted office. In the first place, he would state that the opinion of the necessity of some measure of Reform did not force itself upon his mind for the first time on that occasion. He took the opportunity of adverting the other night to what he had stated on the first day of the Session. He was sure the noble Duke could not forget it, because it produced from him that memorable declaration, which at once astonished and astounded, to use the words of his noble friend, everybody who heard it, and produced an effect throughout the country, such as he remembered hardly ever to have been produced by the declaration of any Minister. On the first day of the Session, looking at the state of Europe, the circumstances of this country, and the difficulties and dangers with which he was surrounded, he said, that the best measure of security to which Parliament could resort, was to effect such a Reform of the House of Commons as would restore that confidence on the part of the people on which alone the safety of the Government could depend. He asked, then, with that recent declaration in favour of the consideration of the question, which was in conformity with the opinions which he had maintained during the whole of his life, was it possible for him, if he meant to retain any character for consistency, and to possess in any degree the confidence of the country, when power was offered to him to accept it on any other condition than that of being allowed to propose to Parliament those measures which he had stated to be necessary for the security of the country? The noble Duke had adverted to a former declaration of his, with respect to which he must be permitted to say a few words. The noble Duke stated, that he (Earl Grey) had made a declaration on some occasion, what he knew not, in 1817, with respect to the constitution of the House of Commons, which proved that there was no material difference between their respective opinions on that point. He certainly could not recollect everything which he might have said on every occasion on which the great Question of Parliamentary Reform had been discussed, during the forty-five years he had been in Parliament: but he could say conscientiously, that he had never for a moment swerved from the opinion which he originally formed on the subject. He would maintain, without fear of contradiction, that he had never said anything adverse to the Question of Reform. He understood that the declaration to which the noble Duke adverted, was one in which he alleged that many benefits had arisen from the House of Commons as at present constituted. It was very possible he might have said, what he had now no hesitation in saying, that with all its acknowledged defects, which did not assist, but materially impeded its beneficial effects, the House of Commons, take it altogether, had done greater good than any Legislative Assembly that ever existed in any country. But he was not on that account to shut his eyes to the acknowledged defects of the House of Commons, more especially when they were more and more felt by the people as a grievance, and tended to destroy confidence in its decisions, and obedience to its decrees. To return to the principles upon which he accepted office, to which the noble Duke had adverted, he certainly did take his present responsible situation pledged to three things—Peace, Retrenchment, and Reform. With respect to peace, the noble Duke said he did not think that there was much difference between the late and the present administration. If the noble Duke was sincerely anxious to maintain peace, as he believed he was, there was no difference between them so far, though with respect to the means of effecting that object there might possibly be some difference. The noble Duke took credit to himself for not having asked questions which might have embarrassed the Government. He stated, that he wished prosperity to the present Ministers,—not from any personal attachment to them, and that he (Earl Grey) had no right to claim or expect,—but from regard to the interests of the country. The noble Duke understood his duty too well to put questions in the delicate situation of foreign affairs, where one false step or rash word might have plunged the whole of Europe into war. The noble Duke did no more than his duty in abstaining from putting such questions, and if he had put them, he knew his duty too well either to answer them or to enter into any discussion on the subject. The noble Duke would give him credit for this, that however anxious he might be for the preservation of peace, he would never for that object sacrifice what he considered to be essential to the interests and honour of the country. The next principle on which he accepted office was that of retrenchment; and here again the noble Duke said, that there was not much difference between them. He certainly had not been able, under the circumstances of the country, to do all that he wished to have done in this respect; but he must say, in justice to himself and his colleagues, that as far as they could they had done their utmost to fulfil the pledge which they gave. Their Lordships would recollect the situation in which the present Ministers found the country when they were called to the councils of his Majesty. They would remember that the utmost alarm prevailed in the manufacturing districts, and that the counties round London were in a state of open insurrection, and as far as he had yet ascertained no measures had been taken by the late Government to put down the disturbances. The measures which the present Government adopted on that occasion proved that they were not deficient in the performance of that important part of their duty. The law obtained a signal triumph without any recourse being had to extraordinary measures, which, however, he would not hesitate to apply to Parliament for, if the state of things in another part of the empire should render it necessary to do so. Considering the state of Europe, the present Ministers had found it impossible to diminish the army or the navy, and the internal state of the country rendered it necessary that an addition should be made to the former. This circumstance, and the expense attending the calling out of the militia, and the appointment of the special commissions rendered it impossible to make any extensive reduction of expenditure this year. Nevertheless, Ministers had diminished the expenses of the country as far as they could, without impairing the efficiency of the Government. The Civil List had been reduced prospectively from 179,000*l.* to 75,000*l.* The only pension on the Civil List for which he was personally responsible was that to the widow of Mr. Fox, which was granted in 1806, at his recommendation. He knew, however, that many of the pensions had been bestowed as acts of charity, and as it was generally considered that they had been granted for life, he thought it would be a cruelty under these circumstances to annul them. He had therefore determined that they should only cease with the lives of the present owners. He did not mean to defend those pensions, he believed that many of them had been granted on improper occasions to unworthy persons, but it certainly would appear very ungracious in his present Majesty to withdraw the bounty of his father and his brother. As the holders of these pensions died, others would not be granted, and thus at the end of a short period, about 80,000*l.* a year would be saved to the public. In the various departments of the Government, too, Ministers had abolished between forty and fifty principal offices, and between 160 and 170 inferior ones, making a total of upwards of 200 offices. This was a material sacrifice of patronage on the part of the Government. He could therefore appeal to his acts and to the public, whether, on the subject of retrenchment, Ministers had not done as far as lay in their power, what they had proposed to do. He now came to the last point, which was the subject of that night's Debate. Parliamentary Reform was made a condition of his acceptance of office, and in fulfilment of that condition the question had been proposed to Parliament. A complaint had been made which, he thought, was reiterated by the noble Duke, of the use which had been made of the King's name on this occasion. The noble Duke admitted that the question could not have been introduced to Parliament by Ministers without the King's consent; but declared that nothing should have been said with respect to his Majesty for the purpose of influencing the votes of Members of Parliament. The noble Duke was quite correct in his position. The House, however, was frequently informed, by a Message from the Crown itself, that the Monarch was aware of particular measures recommended to him by his Ministers. This course was pursued with respect to the Catholic Question, when the noble Duke advised his Majesty to recommend to Parliament, in a Speech from the Throne to adopt measures on the subject. He could not but recollect the strong and emphatic manner in which the noble Duke, in introducing the Catholic Relief Bill into the House, stated that he had the cordial support of his late Majesty to that measure. He did not mean to instance one wrong act as an excuse for another, but when such complaints were made from such quarters, he might plead example by way of mitigation of censure. It had also been said, that he had resorted to threats. He had held out no threat, and he meant to hold out none—he was not authorised to hold out any, and he hoped that he knew his duty too well as a Minister of the Crown to say any thing until he had received his Majesty's sanction. He would only repeat what he stated on a former occasion, that he thought the measure of Reform now recommended by the Ministers of the Crown was of the greatest importance to the well-being of the country; to that measure he was committed heart and soul, and he would not shrink from giving his advice to his Majesty to adopt every constitutional means to carry it into effect. The noble Duke said, that if the measure should become a law, it would be impossible that the business of the Government should be carried on. He did not understand how the noble Duke made out that proposition. The noble Duke said, rather curiously, that it should have been the object of Ministers to look rather to the constitution of the assembly than to the qualification of the voters. What Ministers had looked to, certainly, was the composition of the legislative assembly. It was an error to suppose that the consideration of the two things could be separated. The noble Duke said, the effect of the measure would be to add 5,000 voters to the constituent body in Hampshire. He could hardly believe it possible that the noble Duke was correctly informed upon this point, because the whole constituent body in Hampshire at the present moment was only 8,000 or 9,000. The noble Duke said, that after the Bill should pass, it would be impossible for Government to carry any questions relating to finance, colonial policy, and other intricate subjects. What was this but saying that the Government need no longer have the power of dictating what the decision of the House of Commons should be? The noble Duke shook his head, but that was really the result of his argument. He believed that the Government would continue to possess all the influence which it ought to have, and that, relying on the confidence of the people, there was no fear of the salutary measures which it might propose not being carried into effect. The noble Duke had endeavoured to excite alarm by dwelling on the subject of tithes. The people of England were attached to the national church establishment, and a free Representation of the people would, however they might correct the abuses, which were not the strength but the weakness of the Church, never countenance any attempt to invade the just rights of the establishment. There were several points to which he should have wished to call their Lordships' attention but for the lateness of the hour: but there was one point which he could not pass over. It was objected to the measure, that it was not a resting-place; that it would necessarily lead to ulterior consequences, which would be fatal to the peace and security of the empire. "Give," it was said, "to those who clamour for Reform, the measure you now propose, and they will force you to go forward to extremes which you would wish in vain to avoid." He believed that the result would be the very reverse. The prospect of the measure had given almost universal satisfaction, and he had no doubt that it would unite all those who were at present in a state of discontent in attachment to the Government. But supposing, which he did not, that such might be the consequences, how would it be remedied by not granting Reform? The noble Lord saw that Reform was irresistible; that, whatever Government was at the head of affairs, it could not exist, if it did not do something to satisfy the expectations of the people. No paltry, no half measure would do; there must be something, he admitted substantial and effective. Then what he (Earl Grey) wished, with his noble and learned friend on the Woolsack, was to bring those persons who held his opinion to state what was the measure they meant to propose. If he knew what that substantial and effective measure was, he should then be able to give an opinion. Short of this measure it must be less satisfactory to the people, and then would be more likely to lead to those extremes which his noble friend wished to avoid. The difference between his noble friend and himself was this—his noble friend was for an extension of the right of voting, and for the extinction of boroughs, for he admitted that not only was Reform necessary, but he admitted the principle of disfranchisement; he would go a certain length, but he would not go the whole length of this measure, and he would consequently leave discontent behind. The measure would be an imperfect measure, founded on admitted principles. It could not give satisfaction, and therefore all the consequences predicted from the present measure,—but which he did not expect,—would certainly flow from the partial Reform alluded to by his noble friend. With respect to the measure of Reform, he had considered himself pledged to it when out of office, and still more when in office, from a sense of public duty. He thought the state of the country required that the question should be looked at, and he asked himself what was to be done? Should he bring forward a short measure, that should "keep the word of promise to the ear and break it to the hope?" or should he bring forward a measure that would afford a reasonable hope of satisfying the people, and would put an end to the agitation by which the country was disturbed? He had been represented as if he had gone further than the intention he had at first held out. Undoubtedly he had said moderate Reform, but at the same time effective Reform, such as would produce the effect of satisfying the country. The first disposition of his mind undoubtedly was to limit the Reform within a much narrower compass; but after full consideration, and discussing the subject with his colleagues, he was convinced that nothing short of the present measure would tend to the desired result of satisfying the country, and give to the Government security and respect. Founded upon these principles the measure had been introduced, and had received the general approbation of the country. It had operated like oil on troubled water; agitation had subsided, and he had every expectation, that if the measure was suffered to pass into a law there would be a season of peace and tranquillity, of improvement to the wealth and prosperity of the country, and an addition of strength to the Government, such as had not been witnessed for years past. Some persons had expressed a surprise that no opposition was made to it, but the current of opinion set too strong the other way. It would not do, at the present day, to talk of county meetings as farces, or to say they were not attended by a large proportion of the freeholders. Look at the meetings in Yorkshire, Derbyshire, Cheshire, counties which had hitherto been most adverse to Reform; look at the respectable names of the persons who attended those meetings, and then let their Lordships say if the question had not been favourably received by persons of all parties, and even by persons who were eminently Tories. There never had been a measure regarding which public opinion had so nearly approached to unanimity. He would refer to a criterion upon this head, sanctioned by an authority which even the noble Duke would think entitled to respect. In the discussion on the Catholic Question, a right hon. Gentleman had stated the proportion of counties and principal towns for and against that measure. He stated that there were nineteen counties for, and seventeen against the measure of Catholic Emancipation; of principal towns, twenty-six were for and nineteen against the measure. Assuming that as a practical and correct mode of estimating public opinion, let their Lordships see how that opinion was expressed upon this Question. Taking the same counties and towns, he found that twenty-seven counties were for, and nine against the measure; of principal towns, there were thirty-seven for, and eight against it. The noble Duke had said that if Parliament should reject the measure, he was satisfied the country would submit without a murmur. He would admit that, if the measure were rejected, there might be no opposition to the authority of the law or a throwing off attachment or allegiance to the Government and he trusted and hoped such would be the result; but that there would not be a murmur, let not the noble Duke "lay that flattering unction to his soul." That there would be a general attempt, by legal and constitutional means, to urge on Parliament the adoption of the measure, he had no doubt; there would be discontent and agitation throughout the country, which would be kept in alarm and irritation; and the consequence would be, a state of things similar to that which preceded Catholic Emancipation in Ireland. The very persons who now reject the measure would then find themselves obliged to agree to it. He had supported Catholic Emancipation for more than thirty years, through good report and evil report; he had been driven from office by an endeavour to make a slight step towards it; and it was a sacrifice he willingly made for that object. In all the discussions he had heard on that question, it had been contended that Catholic Emancipation must produce the subversion of the Constitution and the separation of the two countries. No man had argued more strongly against that measure than the noble Duke. He remembered the noble Duke saying that it was not Catholic Emancipation that Ireland wanted; adding—for the words sank deep into his ear—that Ireland had never been more than half conquered. These opinions had been uttered as confidently by the same persons who opposed Catholic Emancipation, as they now predicted similar results from Reform. But at the end of a few years these persons found the error they laboured under in resisting those claims, and the measure of Emancipation was proposed by those very men. Had the discovery been made sooner, the evils which now oppressed Ireland would perhaps have disappeared. The same would be the case in the event of the rejection of the proposition for Reform. Granted at the present moment, the people would consider it as an act of grace; refused, who could predict the consequences of the rejection? It was a rejection which might destroy the present Administration; but how would it operate on their successors? The people, disappointed of their just expectations, would be inflamed with resentment; and would eventually demand, with a voice of thunder, that which it would be found impossible longer to deny; but the granting of which would not only be unattended with the advantages that would now accompany its concession, but, in the strong excitement that would then exist, might be productive of evils which no man could foresee—evils that might throw the whole country into irremediable disorder. He was firmly convinced that the present measure would satisfy the people, and as firmly convinced that, without some large and liberal measure of Reform, the Government could not possibly be carried on advantageously for the country.

Lord *Wharncliffe* made a short reply,

in which he asserted, that the motion which he had made proceeded from himself alone; and contended that, although Reform, and a considerable degree of Reform, was necessary, his Majesty's Government might, if they had thought proper, have brought forward a plan which would have been sufficiently satisfactory to the whole country, instead of originating the rash and dangerous measure which they now advocated, and from the perilous consequences of which, should it be adopted, they would find it difficult to discover the means of extrication.

Motion agreed to.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Monday, March 28, 1831.

MINUTES.] The Committee appointed to try the validity of the Election of the Member for the Forfar district of Burghs reported, that the Lord Advocate was not duly elected, and that Mr. Ogilvie was.—Return amended. Mr. OGILVIE took the Oaths and his Seat.

The Committee upon the Liverpool Election Petition reported, that W. Ewart, Esq. was not duly elected at the last election of a Burgess to serve in Parliament for the Town and Borough of Liverpool, and that the said Election was null and void. The Committee further reported, "That it appeared to the Committee that gross bribery and treating had prevailed during the last election for the Borough of Liverpool."

A new Writ was ordered for Winchilsea, in the room of the Hon. HENRY DUNDAS, who had accepted the Chiltern Hundreds.

Bills read a second time. The Sea Apprentices Settlement, and the Annual Indemnity. The Land-Tax Double Assessment Amendment, read a first time.

Returns ordered. On the Motion of Mr. GUEST, of all Dividends received upon Rentes placed in deposit with the British and French Commissioners under the Convention, No. 7, of 20th November, 1815, and with the British Commissioners under the Convention of 25th April, 1818; stating the dates of such receipts, and an account of all Rentes purchased with such dividends, from the period at which the return to the House of Commons, dated June 29th, 1821 (No. 728) ends, down to 26th July, 1826; also, of all sums of Money remitted by such Commissioners to England during the same period, and the rates of exchange at which, and the times when, such remittances were made, and an account of all sums invested in British public securities during that period, with the dates of such investments, the rates at which the same are invested, and all dividends received thereon:—On the Motion of Sir MATTHEW WHITE RIDLEY, of the number of Merchant Seamen who are now in Greenwich Hospital; distinguishing those that have served, and those that have not served in his Majesty's Navy; of the number of Children of Merchant-Seamen in the School at Greenwich Hospital:—On the Motion of Lord KILLEEN, of all Monies expended by the Commissioners of Woods, Forests, and Land Revenues, out of the annual rents or ordinary income of the Crown Land Revenues for redemption of Land-tax, charged on the possessions of the Crown, from the time the whole capital stock, appropriated for redemption of land-tax was disposed of for other purposes, according to Act 5th Geo. IV., c. 48, down to the time of making the return; of the amount of Land-tax redeemed on the site of Carlton House and Gardens, since their relinquishment by his late Majesty, for the purpose of granting building leases thereon, and of the rents in lieu of land-tax reserved from, or otherwise claimed or proposed to be charged by the Commissioners upon the tenants who have built, or may build, on that site; shewing also, how much of the amount of land-tax redeemed is charged, or proposed to be charged, on the parts not intended to be let for building:—On the Motion of Sir ROBERT INGLIS, shewing the amount of Monies which would have been applicable to his Majesty's Civil Government in England, if the hereditary and temporary revenues of the Crown, enjoyed by his Majesty King George 2nd, had been enjoyed by his Majesty King George 3rd, from 25th October, 1760, to 29th January, 1820; and by his Majesty King George 4th, from 29th January, 1820, to 26th June, 1830; distinguishing each year, and distinguishing also, the hereditary and temporary revenues of the Crown respectively; shewing also, first, the amount of the annuity received by their late Majesties in lieu of those revenues; secondly, the amount of Monies granted by Parliament for the discharge of the Civil List Debt, during the same period; and, thirdly, the difference to the public upon the balance of the said account, so far as the same can be ascertained; (such account being in reference to the account marked 'Appendix C.' to the Report of the Select Committee upon the Civil List, ordered by the House of Commons to be printed, 16th June, 1815, No. 401; and also, in reference to No. 18 of [III.] Civil List, ordered by the House of Commons to be printed, 12th November, 1830, No. 22.)

Petitions presented For the Abolition of Slavery, by Mr. A'COURT, from Knaresborough:—By Sir F. BLAKE, from Baptists at Arnwood, and twenty-five other bodies of Dissenters:—By Lord MORPETH, seventy-six, from different places in Yorkshire:—By Lord STANLEY, 160, from different places in Lancashire:—By Mr. HUME, seventy-eight, chiefly from Middlesex, and some from Scotland. Against the Register of Deeds Bill, by Mr. A'COURT, from Southwell:—By Sir M. W. RIDLEY, from Solicitors at Newcastle and Gateshead, and from the Chamber of Commerce, Newcastle. For Reform, by Mr. FARRAND, (and praying that the East-Riding of Yorkshire might be considered):—By Mr. A. DUNCOMBE, from the Corporation of East Retford:—By Lord STANLEY, from various places in Lancashire:—By Mr. HUME, from the Bath Political Association:—By Mr. HOBHOUSE, from St. James and St. John's the Evangelist, Westminster:—By Sir J. SEBRIGHT, from the County of Hertford. Against Reform, by Sir R. INGLIS, from the western parts of London:—By Mr. MALCOLM, from Boston:—By Mr. ORD, from Morpeth. Against the Tax on Cotton Wool, by Sir W. RAE, from Cotton Manufacturers of Glasgow:—By Lord STANLEY, from Bury, Lancashire. By Lord KILLEEN, from Hacketstown, against Grants to the Kildare-street Society; from Navan, complaining of Distress, and for the Repeal of the Subletting Act:—By Mr. GRATTAN, a similar Petition, from Bray. By Mr. DENISON, from Market Gardeners at Battersea, to be Exempted from the Metropolis Police Act; from St. Mary's, Newington, for the Repeal of the Stamp Duties, and for a Repeal of the Assessed Taxes; and from Occupiers of Land in Stoke next Guildford, for a Commutation of Tithes. For the Repeal of the Malt Duty, by Sir JOHN OWEN, from Pembroke. Against the Liability of Landlords' Bill, by Mr. GUEST, from Merthyr Tidvil. Against the Abolition of the Coal Meters Establishment, Dublin, by Mr. SHAW, from Dublin:—By Mr. G. DAWSON, from the Corporation of Dublin, and from the Coal Meters of Dublin. By Sir M. S. STEWART, from Planters and Merchants at Glasgow, connected with the West Indies, praying for Compensation; and from the Procurators at Greenock, for the Repeal of the Duties on Certificates. By Mr. COOPER, from Sligo, for the Repeal of the Acts which restrict the circulation of Small Notes. By Mr. P. H. HOWARD, from Helensburgh, against the proposed Tax on Steam Boats. By Sir M. W. RIDLEY, from the Merchant-Seamen of Newcastle, against the Contribution to Greenwich Hospital. By Mr. WESTERN, from St. Paul's, Walden, for Reform, Commutation of Tithes, and the Repeal of the Assessed Taxes. By Sir J. BOURKE, from Barna, for an Alteration of the Galway Franchise. By Mr. S. RICE, from Skibbereen, for equalizing the Duties on East and West-India Sugar. By Mr. SYKES, from Cottingham, complaining of Distress.

REFORM—PETITIONS.] Sir *W. Rae* presented Petitions from the Fife district of Burghs, complaining of being deprived of the privilege of voting for Representatives in Parliament by the Reform Bill. The hon. and learned Member stated, that the population of the district was 6,000, and these petitioners had had the right of returning Members to Parliament ever since the Revolution. He concurred also in their view that they ought not to be disfranchised, and he hoped the Lord Advocate would take their case into consideration.

Colonel *Davies* asked how many electors the district contained?

Sir *G. Warrender* said, there were at least 100 electors, who were selected from a larger body of Burgesses. The population amounted to 6,000. He was opposed to all measures of disfranchisement such as were involved in the Reform Bill.

Mr. *H. Drummond* said, these were not the petitions of close corporations, but of the inhabitants generally, who disapproved of the measures of disfranchisement.

Mr. *S. Wortley* declared his opinion, that the question of the Representation of Scotland rested on different grounds from the Representation of England and Ireland. He would support the Second Reading of the Scotch Reform Bill.

Colonel *Lindsay* was opposed to the present plan of Reform. The people of Scotland were happy and contented, and he was of opinion that there was no necessity for an experiment to be made with a new Constitution.

Mr. *Kennedy* said, the disfranchisement was not unprecedented, and, in confirmation of the statement, referred to the Scotch boroughs, which were debarred of the right of returning Members at the period of the Union with England.

Mr. *Monteith* declared, that a great mass of the landed proprietors and inhabitants of the principal towns of Scotland was decidedly opposed to the measure.

Mr. *F. G. Howard* objected to the principle of disfranchisement which ran through the Bill; but was ready to admit that some Reform was necessary for Scotland.

Sir *C. Forbes* said, it was a little inconvenient that the Lord Advocate should not be in his place during a discussion like the present. Not that he regretted the cause of the learned Lord's absence, however, for he thought the Lord Advocate had been very properly excluded by the Committee. But he supposed the learned Lord would succeed in getting in for some convenient little borough, such as Windsor or Milborne Port, previous to the Second Reading of the Bill. It was very well for Ministers to declaim against boroughs, but they were occasionally found rather necessary.

The *Attorney General* said, he hoped the learned Lord would shortly be in the House, and, till then, it might be better to postpone any discussion on the Scotch Reform Bill.

Lord *Morpeth* called the attention of the House to an important petition on the subject of Parliamentary Reform, from the freeholders and inhabitants of the county of York, assembled at a county meeting, convened by the High Sheriff, in pursuance of a requisition to that purpose. The petition was signed on behalf of the meeting by a person deputed to preside over it by the Sheriff, who was prevented by illness from attending in person. The noble Lord, after referring to the numerous and important interests existing in the great county of which he had the honour to be one of the Representatives, observed, that no individual connected with one of those great interests had come forward to interrupt the unanimity of the meeting on the subject of the measure of Reform. The petition expressed the opinion of the meeting that the proposed measure for the amendment of the Representation would establish our legislative power on such a basis as would be calculated to secure the confidence of the nation, and that a Parliament so formed would be able to legislate fearlessly for all the interests of this mighty empire. In saying thus much he should have sufficiently discharged his duty, and should not have added another word in presenting the petition, had it not been for an opinion which fell from the hon. and learned member for Weymouth, in his speech on the Reform Bill that day week. The hon. and learned Gentleman, with great courtesy and infinite tenderness and consideration towards the Members for Yorkshire, was pleased to observe, that if the tri-partite division of the county were adopted (as proposed by the Bill), the members for York would no longer appear invested with the same weight and importance as at present. Now, professing himself, as he did most sincerely, deeply grateful to the general body of his constituents, he was content to submit to any personal diminution of importance which the change might occasion,—a course that he would be ashamed not to adopt amidst the examples of noble sacrifices in relation to the question of Reform by which he was surrounded,—examples presented by individuals connected with him by near ties of blood, as well as by other distinguished persons. The cases of Knaresborough and Horsham would not easily be forgotten; and it was pleasing to see virtuous examples offered, not only by our loftiest Dukes, but also by our poorest freemen. If Gentlemen wished to know whether the county of York resented the projected invasion of its territorial integrity, he could only say, that a feeling of approbation more general and complete had never attended any measure than that with which the present plan was received in Yorkshire, where it had been termed the great Charter of the fourth William. In proof of this feeling he referred to petitions, which he had already presented, from various places in the county, with from 50,000 to 60,000 signatures attached to them, and also to the present petition.

Mr. *W. Duncombe* would not follow the example of the noble Lord, who had turned his back on the Speaker, and addressed himself directly to another part of the House, which probably had peculiar attractions for the noble Lord. [*An allusion to Lord Morpeth having turned his face towards the strangers' gallery during the greater part of his speech*]. He had been assured, upon authority in which he placed the utmost confidence, that the meeting to which the noble Lord referred was a decided failure; in fact, that a thinner county meeting was never known to have occurred in the Castle-yard of York within the memory of man. He did not agree with the noble Lord as to the supposed complete unanimity of that county in relation to the subject of Reform. He admitted that there was a considerable feeling in favour of the Bill, but he also maintained, that a strong opposition to it prevailed in various parts of the county. It was not surprising, that a plan which gave two Members to each of the three ridings, and Representatives to several of the large towns, should be acceptable to many, but he denied that the measure had afforded undivided satisfaction. One objection to the Bill was, that it made the Representation that of one class only. The hon. Member quoted from a newspaper, in the political views of which he said he did not concur, to show, that at the commencement the meeting did not exceed from 1,000 to 1,500 persons, and that at one o'clock not above 3,000 were in the Castle-yard, including idlers, although it was the Assize-week. Be it recollected, that the Castle-yard at York was capable of containing 40,000 persons, and he (Mr. Duncombe) had seen it crammed to suffocation on an important constitutional occasion. Did it seem as if the great body of the county took a very strong interest in Reform when the meeting in its support was so thinly attended?

Sir *J. Johnstone* said, the inhabitants of the county had expressed their opinions in petitions on the subject of Reform, and there was no occasion for persons living at a distance to attend at the city of York to petition again. It should also be recollected that the country was thinly peopled about York.

Mr. *S. Wortley* confirmed the hon. Member (Mr. Duncombe's) account of the thinness of the meeting, although held in the Assize-week. He did not undertake to say what was the opinion of the county of York on Reform; he only protested against this petition being taken as a decisive declaration of that opinion.

Mr. *Sykes.*—Did the hon. Member opposite (Mr. Duncombe) pretend to say that this measure was not popular. [Mr *Duncombe.*—I never said so.] The petition ought, in his opinion, to be taken as expressing the opinion of the county of York. At the meeting at which this petition was agreed to, the utmost unanimity prevailed. The letters which he had received day after day informed him, that there was a strong feeling in the large towns, in the small towns, and even in the villages, throughout Yorkshire, in favour of Reform, according to the plan introduced by his Majesty's Ministers. He had no doubt that it was impossible truly to contradict the existence of that feeling. The petitions which had been presented from different parts of the county established the fact. Amongst the people, the question appeared to be, whether they were to have a Constitution of King, Lords, and Commons; or whether they were to have a Constitution of King, Lords, and Boroughmongers?

Mr. *J. Fane* expressed his decided hostility to the proposed measure, because it would have the effect of disfranchising the labouring classes, and would reduce them to the situation of mere hewers of wood and drawers of water. He could never bring himself to believe that those who sat there as popular Representatives, and whose duty it was, to guard the rights of the people of England, would ever condescend to delegate the power of declaring how the representation of particular places was to be altered, to three Members of his Majesty's privy council.

Mr. *Bethell* said, he believed that it was admitted on all hands, that this petition was not agreed to at a large meeting of the county of York; but from the information which he had received from various individuals connected with the county, he had every reason to think that the great body of the population was in favour of the Bill.

Petition laid on the Table.

Lord *Morpeth,* in moving that the petition be printed took occasion to return his thanks to his hon. friend (Mr. Duncombe) for having reminded him that he had not addressed his observations in a manner sufficiently direct to the Speaker. That circumstance, however, was to be attributed not to intention, but to mere inadvertence. He should only state farther, as he had stated before, that this petition was agreed to at a meeting, of which all the world was apprised, and at which the whole county might have been present, and yet not a single dissentient voice was heard.

Mr. *Sadler* said, the meeting at York was by no means numerously attended. The inhabitants of the city of York and its vicinity amounted to 30,000 or 40,000, and if people were so enthusiastically attached to this measure as had been represented, he should be glad to know why they had not appeared at the meeting in greater numbers? Indeed, the editor of one of the county papers which was favourable to Reform observed, that he never recollected a meeting that excited less interest.

Lord *Hotham* said, he was not present on Friday when the hon. member for Tamworth (Sir R. Peel) pointed out the injustice which that Borough would experience if the plan now before the House were carried into effect. Had he been present, he could have fully borne out the statement of the hon. Baronet. He did not believe, in making the proposed arrangement, that there was the slightest intention, on the part of Ministers, to act with feelings of partiality towards any interest; but he was quite sure, that if they proceeded with the plan as it now stood, they would do great injustice in many instances. It appeared, that sometimes the criterion adopted, was the population of the Borough, and sometimes of the parish. The consequence was, that in some cases the Borough would retain its Members, because the population of the whole parish was taken; and in others it would lose one or both Representatives, because the population of the Borough only was selected. In the case of the borough of Leominster, which he had the honour to represent, it appeared that the population was only 3,650; but there was a note, at the bottom of the page, by which it appeared that the population of the parish amounted to 4,601 persons.

Lord *Althorp* said, that Ministers had acted on the last population returns—those of 1821. In fact, they had no other data to proceed upon. If, however, there appeared to be such great incorrectness in them as was stated, Ministers would not fail to attend to the fact.

Sir *J. Johnstone* said, that the meeting at which this petition was agreed to, was a most respectable one.

Mr. *W. Duncombe* observed, that he had not asserted that Reform was not popular in the county of York; but he denied that it was popular to the extent which had been represented.

Petition to be printed.

London Coal Trade.] Mr. *F. Lewis,* in bringing in the Bill for regulating the taking off the Duties on Coals in the Port of London, said, that the Act which he had now to explain to the House, and to the provisions of which he begged their attention, was purely local, and applicable solely to London and its immediate vicinity. When, however, they considered the number of persons residing in the Metropolis who were interested in the Coal Trade; and when, too, they considered the extent and importance of the trade itself, and of the Shipping employed in it, he hoped he might be permitted to trespass a little on the time of the House while he attempted to explain the effect of the regulations which had prevailed in the Coal Trade, and of those which he proposed to submit to them in the Act now to be introduced. Every person who knew any thing of the price of coals, and every person whom he addressed was a consumer of them must have been struck with the difference between that price in the port of London, and any of the other great cities of the kingdom. In the port of Dublin, for instance, they would find that coals were seldom higher than from 21*s.* to 23*s.* a chaldron the duty being about 1*s.* 6*d.*, while in the port of London the ordinary descriptions of coal averaged a price of 44*s.* a chaldron, weighing not more than twenty-four cwt. The price of coals was, however, much too high in all the Ports which received coals in the southern parts of the kingdom, and it was the duty of the Legislature to adopt some means of remedying the evil. The great manufactures, such as those carried on at Norwich, and some other places, have been for some time abandoning that part of the country because fuel is scarce and dear, in order to find greater facilities for carrying on the business in the places where fuel is cheap; and the consequence is, that great distress is frequently felt in particular districts from the emigration of the persons connected with those manufactures. It was, he repeated, the duty of the Government to remedy the evils which the want of fuel is producing, both in the Metropolis and elsewhere, as compared with the northern counties, and at all events to take care that they did not increase and extend the natural difficulties of any particular situation by any legislative provisions. The House would recollect that a Committee was appointed to inquire into the nature of the Coal Trade, and the best method of remedying some of the laws which applied to it. After the most patient and laborious investigation, that Committee were unanimously of opinion, that the Act of the 47th Geo. 3rd tended much to increase the evils of the system, and that the minute regulations and restrictions which it imposed on vessels in the Coal Trade, from the moment when they arrived in the river until their cargo was delivered to the consumer, tended greatly to increase the price of the commodity, and to stop all the fair competition of the market. From the moment the ship arrives, instead of leaving the owner to dispose of his cargo to the best advantage and according to the principles which should apply to all buyers and sellers, an individual is put on board to collect the Customs' Dues of the Port of London and the Dues of the City, and at the same time to conduct the whole of the bargains between the buyer and the seller in the disposal of the cargo. To that arrangement he made his first objection, because he thought it infinitely better that the same freedom of trade which prevailed in other commodities should be extended to the traffic in coals. With respect, however, to the collection of the Customs' Duties by the Meters, he had, after much deliberation, determined to let that part of the arrangement stand, and apply himself merely to the other; but when he heard it announced that it was the intention of his Majesty's Government to abandon those duties, he at once resolved to get rid of the City ship-meters altogether, and to put an end, if possible, to all the regulations with which they were connected. In the inquiries which he felt it necessary to prosecute for that object, he was bound to say, that he had received from every person connected with the trade, from all the City authorities, and from all the officers acting under them, the fairest, the most liberal, and candid treatment, and every assistance in their power. In no one instance, indeed, was there the slightest impediment thrown in his way in the obtaining of any information which he felt it necessary to require. Under all the circumstances of the case, and after the most anxious inquiry, the course which he proposed to adopt in the Bill, with reference to the payment of the different duties, was briefly this—that all coals should in future be sold, and all duties collected by the ton weight instead of the chaldron. The Members of the House were all well aware of the fact, that the duties which were collected under the name of the Orphans' Fund had been mortgaged to a large amount, for securing the payment of the sums necessary to the completion of London Bridge, and that it was not therefore within the power of Parliament to make much reduction in their amount. The Committee had, however, succeeded in making an arrangement with respect to the collection of that duty; they had compounded the 10*d.* collected from every chaldron of coals on account of that duty, for a sum of 8*d.* to be paid on every ton weight. With respect to the other duties—the 4*d.* due on every chaldron to the City, and several other sums under various denominations, it was proposed, and had been agreed to by the City, that the whole should be compromised on the payment of 4*d.* in the ton. This made the whole duty 1*s.* a ton; and by the addition of a 1*d.* for the market, which would make altogether 1*s.* 1*d.*, they would thus get rid of all the Dues which had hitherto been collected under so many different denominations. While he proposed this arrangement, he could not, however, avoid saying—although he did not wish to interfere with the arrangements of the Government—that he thought it would be infinitely better to do away the Orphans' Fund altogether, and raise a sum in lieu of it by a certain small per centage on all the custom duties paid in the Port of London; a charge which, he thought, would be infinitely fairer than that which was now imposed solely on coals. He threw this out, however, merely as a suggestion which he thought worthy of consideration. In the Bill, he applied himself to the duty as it at present existed, and he had compounded for it by the sum already stated. With respect to the amount of coal which entered the Port of London in the different Colliers, he proposed to do away with the whole plan of measurement which at present existed: and, without substituting for it any other plan of taking the quantity by weight, to refer to the Ports from which the vessels sailed for a satisfactory account of their tonnage, which was now taken under competent officers; and, by that means, save all the expense of any establishment for the same purpose in the Metropolis. With this understanding on the extent of the tonnage of the vessel, and the quantity of coal which she would carry, he proposed to allow every vessel entering the Port of London to compound with the City for a given time for the amount of her dues. Everybody would know the tonnage of the vessel by the established registers, and the owner could then make his composition for any number of voyages or of years which he might think fit, for his benefit, and which the City might be disposed to allow; and, he was confident, from the course the trade would then fall into, that scarcely a single vessel would be engaged in the trade unless under a composition of that description. The next point, after attaining this economy in the collection of the duties was, to allow the Colliers to employ such men as they thought proper, at such wages as they could agree on for the discharge of their cargoes, and to get rid of all that class of persons called whippers, who had hitherto increased the cost of coal without adding to the facilities for obtaining it. The wages of the persons employed in the discharge of coal vessels was fixed by Act of Parliament, in the year 1807—an impolitic proceeding at any time, but most impolitic in the present case, in which the employer, although compelled to pay 16*s*. a week to his men, contrived, by charging them for lodging which they did not require, and for beer which they did not drink, and for various other things of that description, to pay scarcely 4*s*. a week in money. He need not, therefore, say that one of the provisions of his Bill, went to the repeal of the clause which compelled the payment of any stipulated sum, and left the employer to pay as low, and the employed to demand as much, as the market of labour would allow them; the owner or master of the Collier being at liberty to employ whom he pleased, and the whipper to work for whom he pleased. With reference to the discharge of the cargo itself, and its ultimate delivery to the consumer, he proposed to do away with the whole system of selling coal by measure. Who could suppose that a measure would at any time hold the same quantity of coal? Was it possible, he would ask, to put the same quantity into any measure twice over? The thing was impossible and the law absurd; but the reason why the plan of selling coal by chaldron and measure prevailed so long was this, that the city of London was entitled to a duty of 4*d*. on every ton weight of coal, and to 8*d*. on every chaldron; or, in other words, it was entitled in the one case to a duty of only 4*d*. on twenty cwt. and in the other to a duty of 8*d*. on twenty-six cwt.—an unwise provision, which had for a long time tended to increase the abuse of the trade, and to deprive the Port of London of a supply of that kind of coal which was at once the cheapest and the best fitted for its consumption. Every one knew that the larger and the better sorts of coal were the only kind brought to London, although its various manufactures required every kind which could be supplied. At Newcastle, and in the coal districts, thousands upon thousands of small coal were burned in waste, blackening the ground, and defiling the atmosphere, and putting the proprietor of the coal mine to a great expense in purchasing a place for burning them on, because that kind of coal could not be brought to the London market, although, under a better state of circumstances, it could and would be used in preference to any other in the various furnaces, and limekilns, and brickkilns which abound in the vicinity of the Metropolis. It was a well-known fact, however, that no coals were shipped except the large coal for the London market; and why was this? Purely because the solid coal occupied a larger space when broken, and when sold by measure, enabled the ship-owner and the coal merchant and the retail dealer to make a large profit on their trade. For this purpose, coal was broken by the lightermen, broken in the ships, broken in the docks, broken on the wharfs, and broken by the retail dealer, until it reached the consumer in the smallest pieces, which he would purchase at a rate rendered still more exorbitant by the deficiency of quantity, which by this process was concealed. If, then, coal henceforward should be sold by weight, the small coal, which had hitherto been destroyed at the pit's mouth, would speedily find its way to the market, and would not only prove beneficial to the trades which require such a supply of fuel, but at the same time tend much to keep down the price of the better kinds. Under the new plan of selling coal by weight, a material improvement would be effected in the method of detecting frauds on the delivery of the article to the consumer. At the present moment when a buyer has reason to suspect that the sacks are deficient in quantity, he is obliged to send for a meter to the neighbouring wharf, and after he goes through the whole of the process required by Act of Parliament, if the coals be not deficient he has to pay the expense of the measurement, and thus he actually inflicts a penalty on himself for having gone through the pain of getting the coal re-measured. In order to remedy this evil, he proposed that every sack should be made to contain as nearly as possible two hundred weight of coal. At every considerable wharf he would have a weighing machine, and instead of the coal being tossed to and fro, with an apparent alteration of the quantity in the measure at every trial, he proposed that the cart should be weighed first, and the sacks being then thrown on, the exact quantity of coal could be ascertained with the utmost precision. Having now stated the principal provisions of the Bill, he had only to say that the persons whose interests were affected by the new arrangements would not be left without compensation. The City of London was to receive, as he had already explained, a market penny a cwt., and out of the product of this fund, which it was calculated would amount to 11,000*l.* the City undertook, that compensation should be given to the ship-meters, and the other persons who might suffer by the alterations. He trusted, by carrying these arrangements into full effect, to render the sale of coal as open and as free from all trammel and restrictions, as Corn in Mark-lane; and he was confident that, in doing so, he should benefit both the seller and the consumer. It was a common custom now for the person who purchased from the ships to give a larger price than he otherwise would have done, because he knew that he could charge it to his customer; but it was the bounden duty of the Legislature to take care that the trade was left open to competition, and that no provision of theirs tended to enhance the price to the purchaser. After observing that four land-meters could keep a register of the arrival of the ships and the amount of their tonnage, the right hon. Gentleman concluded by expressing an opinion that these regulations would on inquiry be found perfectly practicable; and he believed it would be also found that he proposed no alteration which was not supported by evidence before the Committee, or by the most extensive and accurate information collected from those best acquainted with the trade to which the Bill applied.

Mr. Alderman *Waithman* agreed in the importance and utility of the alterations contained in the Bill; but he thought there was one fact which came to light in a recent action that ought not to be lost sight of. It appeared that the small coal sold at the pit's mouth was charged only 5*s.* if it was for the Irish market, and 14*s.* if it was for the London market. Now it occurred that a person who bought coal for Ireland happened for some reason to sell it in London, and this coming to the ears of the vendors, they brought an action against the man who sold the coal in London, and recovered the difference. When the object of the Legislature was to get rid of impositions, and set the coal trade free from combinations and restrictions, he thought a circumstance of that kind should not be lost sight of.

Mr. Alderman *Thompson* approved, like his hon. colleague, of the principle of the Bill, and of the necessity of getting rid of all the grievances of the system of the coal trade; but there were several difficulties connected with the alterations, which required consideration. The Orphan Dues, it should be recollected, were mortgaged for a sum of nearly one million and a half. It was necessary to take care that nothing should affect the fund thus pledged. He had doubts of the policy of getting rid of the ship-meters, because he thought there should be somebody between the buyer and the seller, and he confessed he had some misgivings with respect to the working of some of the other portions of the arrangements. Applying himself to the observations of the hon. Member with respect to Dublin, he begged him to look to the difference in the length of the voyage between London and Dublin. All the coals used in the Irish market did not come from one place. There were coals sent from Whitehaven, and from various parts of Wales, to the port of Dublin, the freight being seldom more than 6*s.* or 7*s.*, while the freight of coal from Newcastle to London was 10*s.* or 12*s*; indeed, nothing very short of 12*s.* would be a remuneration; so that in that respect there was a difference of 5*s.* a chaldron. The right hon. Gentleman contended for a free trade in coal; and he (Ald. Thomson) admitted it would be beneficial to get rid of the restrictions which were now imposed on it; but he thought it was also necessary to get rid of the combinations which raised the price 6*s.* or 7*s.* at the pit, and which could only be effected by opening new channels for the trade, and encouraging the import of coal from Yorkshire and Scotland. That was the effectual method of breaking up the combination among the present great coal-owners. It was in evidence before the Committee, that a coal ship had been actually compelled to stop three weeks at Newcastle before she could obtain a cargo, because the coal proprietor declared he had delivered his month's supply of coal, and the ship must wait till the 1st of the next month before he could deliver any more. He thought this required the attention of Government quite as much as the regulation of the port of London; and that it was the duty of Government to take some measures to break up the combination of the coal-owners.

Mr. *Bell* denied, that the price of the small coal was different to those who purchased it for the Dublin or the London market. The price was, he understood, the same to both, being about 6*s.* 4*d.* or 6*s.* 6*d.* at that moment. With respect to the combination of the coal-owners, he could only say that the price of coal had fallen 7*s.* within a very short time at the pit's mouth; and if that combination could do any good to the coal owners, it was evident that it must be carried much further. This fall was, however, a proof of the inefficacy of any arrangements; and he believed he might add, that the city of London had not been, during a vast number of years, left for a single day without its proper supply of coal.

Mr. Alderman *Thomson* explained, and referred to the action which had taken place, and which had established that the difference between the prices asked at the pit for the same coal, if to go to Ireland, or to go to London, was the difference between 5*s.* and 14*s.*

Mr. Alderman *Wood* approved of the measure, and observed, that the large charge upon the public of forty meters, each at a salary of 200*l.*, would be done away with. He could not understand the argument of those who maintained that the public would not derive benefit from the proposed reduction of 6*s.* in duty, any more than they did from the former reduction of 3*s.* The fact was, that the coal merchants in London were vieing with one another, who should pitch their coals at the lowest rate. If he were to be told that the public would receive no benefit from the remission of taxation, then he would say that it would be better to remain as we were. It would be better for Government to retain the revenue, if the reduction of it gave no relief to the public. He felt confident, however, with reference to this particular article, that the public would experience the greatest benefit from the competition which would take place among the dealers in it.

Mr. *Warburton* observed, that it was peculiarly necessary to remedy one grievance of which the southern ship-owners complained—namely, that they were frequently exposed to a loss of freight in consequence of the refusal, if their ships had received the usual monthly supply at a pit, to allow them another supply until the next month.

Sir *M. W. Ridley* characterised the terms in which the hon. Alderman had expressed himself, as unjust, illiberal, and unfounded; not becoming to the House, nor fair in themselves. By a reference to the evidence in the Committee on the subject, it appeared that there were five or six different kinds of coal, and that if a ship-owner changed his pit, he might at any time obtain a supply. The regulation that at each pit supplies must be afforded in turn, was necessary to carry on the business, and prevent confusion. The evidence before the Committee clearly proved that there was no limitation. There was not a single instance in which the London market had not been over-supplied with coals. If any inconveniences had resulted from the difference between small and large coal, that inconvenience would be remedied by the provision in the Bill, that coals should henceforth be sold by weight, and not by measure. As to the allegation that the coal-owners would deprive the public of the advantage that ought to arise from the remission of the duty, he pledged himself that the public should know the price of coal at the pit's mouth before the duty was taken off, and after the duty was taken off; so that if the inhabitants of London did not receive the full benefit of the remission of 6*s*. per chaldron, it should be seen that it was not the fault of the coal-owners. As an instance of the way in which charges were accumulated on the original cost of coals, he would mention an instance in which a friend of his, having paid a Bill of above 160*l*. to his coal merchant, the Bill for which he (Sir M. W. Ridley) analysed, and found that the sum paid for the coals to the coal-owner at Newcastle was 42*l*., and that the surplus was divided between the carrier, the London dues, and the coal merchant. The only wish which the coal-owners had upon the subject was, for fair and open competition.

Mr. *Robert Gordon* did not think that there was the wished-for competition which the hon. Baronet alluded to; for at certain collieries only certain proportions of supply were provided. He should be very glad to see any regulations which would render the trade wholly open.

Lord *Howick* observed, that his hon. friend forgot that there were certain imperative regulations to which all parties consented. It must be recollected that there were in Northumberland many extensive fields of coal the produce of which was not exported, because it would not pay. If, however, the owners of those fields saw other coal-owners making unreasonable profits, they would not have such a tender regard for them as to abstain from competition. On his father's estates there were many hundred acres of the best coal, only a quarter of a mile from the sea, which could not be worked.

Bill read a first time.

On the motion that it be read a second time on the 18th of April,

Mr. Alderman *Thomson* could not help observing that the hon. Baronet, the member for Newcastle, had taken an unwarrantable liberty in the words which the hon. Baronet had thought proper to apply to his former observations. He would not follow the hon. Baronet's example by the use of similar expressions. If in either action or words he had behaved himself unbecomingly to the House or unfairly, he was sure that the Speaker would have been the first to interfere and prevent his proceeding. The hon. Baronet's taunts, however, would have no effect in deterring him from making any representations which appeared to him to be just, on behalf of those who had sent him to that House, and whose rights and interests he would take every fair opportunity of advocating. He appealed to the members of the Committee on the subject, if he had said one word which was not justified by the proceedings before that Committee.

Bill ordered to be read a second time on the 18th of April.

Civil List.] On the motion of Lord Althorp, the Report of the Committee on the Civil List was brought up and read as follows:—That, for the support of his Majesty's Household, and the honour and dignity of the Crown, there be granted to his Majesty, during his life, a nett yearly revenue of 510,000*l*.; and that the same shall commence from the day of the demise of his late Majesty, and shall be charged upon and made payable out of the Consolidated Fund of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland. That all the hereditary rates, duties, payments, and revenues in England and Ireland respectively (other than and except the hereditary duties of excise on beer, ale, and cider payable in England), which, at the time of the demise of his late Majesty, King George 4th, made part of the Consolidated Fund of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland; and also, the hereditary duties and revenues (other than and except the hereditary duties of excise on beer, ale, and cider which were payable to his said late Majesty King George 4th, in that part of Great Britain called Scotland); and also, the yearly sums of 348,000*l.* and 6,500*l.* payable to his present Majesty, out of the revenues and excise arising in England and Scotland respectively, under and by virtue of an Act of the last Session of Parliament; and also, the small branches of the hereditary revenue and the hereditary casual revenues, arising from any droits of the Admiralty or droits of the Crown, or from the four-and-half per cent duties, and from all surplus revenues of Gibraltar, or any other possessions of his Majesty out of the United Kingdom, and from all other casual revenues arising either in the foreign possessions of his Majesty, or in the United Kingdom, shall, during the life of his present Majesty (whom God long preserve), be carried to, and shall be made part of, the Consolidated Fund of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland. That the several annuities payable to their Royal Highnesses the Duke of Cumberland, the Duke of Sussex, and the Duke of Cambridge, out of the Consolidated Fund of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, during the life of his late Majesty, shall, during their said Royal Highnesses lives, be charged upon and be payable out of the said Consolidated Fund."

Lord *Althorp* said, that in moving that the Resolution be read a second time, he begged to trouble the House with a few words, in order to prevent any misunderstanding as to what he had stated in the Committee before the Resolution was agreed to. The House would recollect that he had on that occasion distinctly stated, that in adopting that Resolution, he did not consider himself pledged on the subject of the reduction of the sum; although after considerable deliberation he was bound to say that he continued of opinion that the whole of the sum comprehended in the Resolution should be applied to the Civil List. The proper time for discussing this, however, would be in the Committee upon the Bill. When the different classes of the List were then considered, the different apportionments to them would be fixed. Now, however, there was no pledge with respect to any particular proposition.

Colonel *Davies* allowed the justice of the noble Lord's statements; but declared that he would miss no opportunity, as far as his vote went, to vote for the sum recommended by the Committee above-stairs, the consequence of which would be to reduce the salaries of the chief officers of the Household. For his Majesty, he was willing and desirous to make the most liberal and even prodigal grant. If the sum which it was proposed to vote were to be applied to his Majesty's personal comfort, it would be another matter. But he repeated, that no consideration should induce him to stultify the proceedings of the Committee above-stairs, by voting those sums to the great officers of State which that Committee had declared were too large. One word on the Pension List. He could not help thinking that the proposition of the hon. member for Gloucester on that subject should be adopted: he meant the principle of the proposition—for he did not think the proposed equivalent was sufficient—that the present Pension List should be transferred to the Consolidated Fund, and that his Majesty should receive a specific sum to be disposed of according to his discretion. About double the sum proposed by the hon. member for Gloucester would, in his opinion, be a fair equivalent. At present the grant to the King was apparent and not real, for although 75,000*l.* a year was nominally given, yet almost the whole of that was filled up, and his Majesty would not, perhaps, enjoy one-tenth of it during his life. The noble Lord (the Chancellor of the Exchequer) had declared that he did not think the King should have the power of granting a pension without the consent of his responsible advisers, and thus Ministers had the patronage. This was not justice to the Crown, and it would be better if there were in reality a fund to a smaller amount placed under the exclusive power of the Crown.

Sir *George Warrender* said, he was always of opinion, that the proposed vote for the Civil List was rather too small than too large, and he believed it would turn out that the sum would be found inadequate for the wants of royalty. The people he knew were anxious that the Sovereign should be liberally provided for; and they had so many reasons to be grateful for his conduct, that to say thus much was not presuming too far on their good feeling. The people should understand that it was beneficial that the Sovereign should be paid liberally, and that the revenue given up by the Crown was much greater than the proposed vote, to which he gave his cordial consent.

Sir *Henry Hardinge* said, after reading the Report of the Committee, and after having given due consideration to the subject, he had made up his mind to give his support to the grant proposed by his Majesty's Government.

The Earl of *Darlington* was anxious to give his support to any measure which might be requisite to uphold the splendour and dignity of the House of Brunswick. If 600,000*l.* a year had been proposed, he would willingly have given his vote for such a sum; but it was a different thing when the sum of 10,000*l.* was proposed for contingencies, and 119,000*l.* for the salaries of the officers of the household. He thought these sums might bear a reduction. It was only in the salaries of officers of that description that economy could be practised. In offices of trust it was not so easy to take off part of the salaries, as in useless offices, and in places of mere patronage. He thought a reduction of twenty per cent not too much, and should an amendment to that effect be proposed at any future period, he would support it.

Mr. *Briscoe* was of opinion that no pensions should be granted but for public services. The 10,000*l.* did not at all relate to the comforts of the Sovereign; nor was it at a per centage to be taken off the 510,000*l.* but off that branch only in which was included the salaries of officers of State. The present Government had set out with professions of the strictest economy; they had referred the Civil List to a Committee, and he thought the Government and the House ought to adhere to the Report of the Committee.

An Hon. *Member* said, that he had opposed the last Government on this question; and as the present Government had referred the matter to a Select Committee, to see what reductions could be made, he would support the recommendations of that Committee. He did not care whether the reduction were 12,000*l.* or 1,200 farthings, he went upon principle. It was utterly useless appointing Committees if their recommendations were not to be attended to.

Mr. *Curteis* said, no man was more ready to support his Sovereign than he was; but while he supported the Sovereign, he could not forget that he had a duty to perform towards the people. He was glad no division was to take place, for if a division had been persevered in, he must have voted with the member for Middlesex.

Mr. *Wilks* concurred in the vote, because he looked upon the additional 10,000*l.* as a provision for contingencies.

Mr. *Hume* entered his protest against the argument of the hon. member for Worcester, and declared, that he never would be prodigal of the public money on any occasion, not even to contribute to the pleasure of royalty. He was of opinion that considerable reductions ought to be made in the expenses of the Household, though at the same time he thought that the numerous family of his Majesty ought to be taken into consideration. He said he could not agree, nor would he ever agree, to the vote before the House, but he would not take the sense of the House on the present occasion, but when the Bill was brought in, and came to the Committee, the House would then be able to see what particular sums were allotted to the different departments in the King's Household. At that stage of the proceedings he would renew his opposition, if necessary, but he confidently hoped that the noble Lord (Althorp) would be induced to abide by the recommendation of the Committee. The item he objected to most was that of the Pensions, and which, in the eyes of the people, detracted more from the honour and dignity of the Crown than any thing else. His objection was, however, lessened, upon seeing that the amount voted under that head was half of the sum usually voted. He considered it unfair towards the king to make the pensions an item in the Civil List, because his Majesty could not have the free control of the money so voted. He should have no objection to provide a fund out of which his Majesty might be enabled to reward those only who had rendered him personal services; but the fact was, that the Pension Fund was taken out of the hands of the Sovereign, and controlled by his Ministers. The sum proposed to be voted for pensions, under the Civil List, was 75,000*l.*, which was only half of the whole amount. There still remained pensions to the amount of 82,000*l.* to be provided for in some way or other, and when that question came before the House, he would take care to watch narrowly the mode in which it should be proposed to provide for them. His own opinion was, that there were many pensions which ought to be altogether discharged from the List; that Ministers should be called upon to make a selection of those who received pensions for services performed by themselves or their relations; and that all unworthy persons should be discharged from the List. No individual, he thought, ought to be allowed to receive a pension, if his income from other sources exceeded the amount of his pension. Whether he should make that proposition, or move for an entire revision of the Pension List, he was not yet determined. He was willing to allow the report to be brought up, though he did not waive his opposition to the vote.

Mr. *Calcraft* was very glad that the hon. member for Middlesex did not intend to take the sense of the House on the question; and he must declare, that, in his opinion, the course which had been pursued with respect to the Civil List was not creditable to either side of the House. Hon. Members were constantly talking of gratitude and affection to his Majesty, and yet there was no instance since the Revolution, of the vote in the Civil List being nearly so long delayed. It was now nine months since his Majesty's accession to the Throne, and up to the present moment no decision had been come to on the subject of the Civil List. With respect to the amount of the vote, he was disposed to agree neither to a larger nor a smaller sum—and for this reason—because the experience of the last ten years had shown that the precise sum proposed had answered its purpose; and he would not consent, for the sake of a small saving or a large saving, to place the Crown in such a situation that it would be obliged to come to that House for the payment of its debts. To what purpose the sum of 10,000*l.*, which was the subject of dispute, was to be applied, he did not care. If the great officers of the Household chose to relinquish so much from their salaries, he did not think the sum too great for a contingent fund. It should be recollected, too, that her Majesty, contrary to the usage of former reigns, got no outfit. He did not understand that the usual outfit had ever been offered, but only a part. If that were the case, he could very well conceive that his Majesty would refuse a sum, the very offer of which he might consider an insult, it having been the practice of all his ancestors to receive double the amount. They all knew how frugal her Majesty was in all her arrangements; but still the expenditure of a person in her situation must unavoidably be great, and he was afraid, that in preparing her outfit, her Majesty might be thrown into pecuniary difficulties. This was well worthy the consideration of the House, and he should like to know why her Majesty was not placed on the same footing, with respect to her outfit, as all other Queens? With respect to the pensions, they had been reduced from 145,000*l.* a year, to 75,000*l.* That was an arrangement in favour of the public, but the House was in fact placing a powerless sceptre in the hands of his Majesty. It nominally gave his Majesty the control of 75,000*l.* for pensions: but if his Majesty wished to give him a pension of 1,000*l.* a year to-morrow, he could not do so, because all the pensions were anticipated. This fine grant, then, was a mere shadow; and unless somebody was obliging enough to move off the List, his Majesty could not move any one on.

Sir *R. Inglis* said, the Crown did not sue in *forma pauperis* for its revenues, but the Civil List was given to it as a compensation for what it resigned. The whole was a bargain, and he would take care that the House was made aware of what the Crown gave up for the Civil List voted by the House.

An Hon. *Member* said, that the country ought not to continue burthened with so large a Pension List. Many of the pensions were disgraceful to those who gave, and those who received them, and the whole ought to undergo revision.

Sir *T. Freemantle* said, that it would be disgraceful to the country to allow the subject of the outfit to her Majesty to rest as it stood at present. For the part he had taken in this matter he was accused by some hon. Members of being set on by others. He declared that he had been set on by no human being whatever, but had only followed the dictates of his own judgment. He deprecated the course which was followed by some hon. Members of objecting to every vote of money that was proposed, and could not believe that those who acted in that way were very favourable to a monarchical form of government. His present Majesty deserved more of his country than any other King, and yet he had been worse treated by his subjects. If his Majesty was so treated by an unreformed House of Commons, how would he be treated when that House was reformed?

Mr. *George Robinson* could not agree with the hon. Member who had just sat down, in thinking that it was disgraceful for the House of Commons to accede to the King's wishes. Among the many acts which had endeared his Majesty to the country, nothing had tended to that effect more than the anxious desire which had been manifested by his Majesty to relieve the suffering people from every burthen possible; and he could not hear an hon. Member endeavouring to induce the House to vote away 50,000*l.* without rising to express his dissent from that proposition. The same hon. Member had taunted those who were disposed not to agree to such a vote with being unfriendly to monarchical institutions. He had never heard any Member in that House venture to say that he was opposed to the monarchical form of government, and he did not think it fair to measure a man's loyalty by his vote on such a question. He must say, that he should be averse from voting 50,000*l.* for the Queen's outfit if her Majesty would accept of it, not because he was insensible to her Majesty's many virtues, but because he was bound to be the jealous guardian of the people's purse. He was far from wishing to see the Crown deprived of any thing necessary to uphold its dignity; but he approved of the proposition to reduce the vote to the amount recommended by the Committee. He did not conceive that such a reduction would trench in any manner on the comfort or dignity of the Crown. The noble Lord opposite had admitted that all the pensions terminated, according to law, at the decease of his late Majesty; and had further stated, that there were many on the list which ought never to have been there at all. He lamented that the state of the Civil List of the last reign had placed that House in the unenviable situation of not being able to grant to the present King a fund, out of which his Majesty might be enabled to give what pensions he pleased. He hoped that there would be a revision of the Pension List, and that pensions would be taken away from all those persons who possessed large private fortunes.

Mr. *Courtenay* recommended honorable Members who were continually finding fault with the Pension List to bring that subject regularly before the House. He supported the vote for the Civil List as proposed by the noble Lord, but considered that the arrangement made of removing various charges from the Civil List, and fixing them on the Consolidated Fund, far from economical.

Mr. *Bankes* wished to know from the noble Lord whether, if the Committee up stairs had recommended a vote of 510,000*l.* he had intended to call upon the House to grant a larger sum? and whether at any time he had communicated to the Committee up-stairs an intention of asking the House for a surplus?

Lord *Althorp* replied, that if the Committee had recommended a vote of 510,000*l.* it was by no means his intention to ask for a larger sum. With respect to the other question which had been asked by the hon. Member, he stated that he had never communicated to the Committee up stairs any wish that there should be a surplus sum of 10,000*l.* allowed.

Sir *J. Yorke* thought that the House was placed in rather an awkward situation for the proposition made was, to take a certain sum from the salaries of the King's servants, and place it in the King's pockets.

Lord *Althorp* had not pledged himself as to the particular manner in which the 10,000*l.* should be applied. That the House would decide upon, when the Bill came into Committee.

Mr. *O'Connell* said, it was not fair to reproach those who were advocates of economy with being the enemies of monarchy. The real friends of monarchy were those who made it popular, and not those who would increase the burthens of the people. The Irish Pension List was a part of the grant which required revision. There was a Mr. Leonard Macnally, a barrister, who had been always engaged against the Crown, in defending persons charged with high treason and publishing libels, who had for a period of eighteen years received a pension of 300*l.* a-year from the Crown and which was not discovered until he died, when his widow applied to have the pension continued to her. There were other pensions or annual payments still paid to the persons who were connected with certain papers, such as the *Patriot* and *Correspondent*. Besides this, a sum of 200*l.* had been paid yearly, since 1,706, to two persons, of the name of Hooper and Martin, until the sum of 2,000*l.* was paid in full, which he believed had latterly been done. In looking over the Irish Pension List, he found the name of no person in it who had performed public services, except that of Lord Rodney. It was the practice, too, when Catholics became eminent at the Bar, to give them pensions, for fear, he supposed, of their turning agitators; till at last they became too numerous to be pensioned off in that way. But one gentleman had three pensions accumulated upon him; and he had his pension increased, because at a public meeting he voted in favour of placing the nomination of Catholic Bishops in the hands of the Crown. He concluded by stating that he should support the report of the Committee.

Mr. *Grove Price* said, that after all the expectations of retrenchment which had been formed in the appointment of the Committee, the result was a proposition to retrench only to the amount of 10,000*l*. "—*Parturiunt montes, nascitur ridiculus mus.*" But even that limited proposition was negatived by the noble Lord opposite the great patron of economy. The declarations of Ministers when in opposition, formed a striking contrast to their conduct when in office; and hoped that the country which had been abused by a gross delusion would distinguish between those who were the real friends of economy and those who were merely professors.

Mr. *Lennard* said, that what had been stated by the learned member for Waterford in regard to Mr. Leonard Macnally confirmed the view he had always taken of the propriety of the Pension List being open. He thought that publicity would prevent all the abuses which had occurred in it: it would prevent improper applications being made, and it would prevent Ministers yielding to them if they were made. He did not object to the amount of the Pension List proposed by the Government. He was not an advocate for placing the pensions on the Consolidated Fund, which would be taking from the Crown that which had always been considered part of its prerogative. But he hoped that the Government would agree that the Pension List should be annually brought before Parliament, which would prevent abuses in it. The hon. member for Sandwich complained that no good had been done by the Committee. He thought great good had been done by it, for by separating the personal expenses of the Crown from those which did not properly belong to it, a sum of between 400,000*l*. and 500,000*l*. had been placed under the control of Parliament, out of which he thought great savings would ultimately be made. He should vote for the proposition of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, but he hoped the noble Lord would adopt the recommendation of the Select Committee, that the salaries of the great Officers should be reduced.

Mr. *Long Wellesley* wished only to explain the origin of the pension given to the venerable Lady Mornington. After the battle of Salamanca, Mr. Whitbread suggested that a larger pension should be given to Lord Wellington than he was inclined to receive; and then the pension was granted to Lady Mornington, without either reference to or application from any part of her family.

Mr. *Goulburn* wished to know on what fund the salaries were in future to be charged which it was proposed to separate from the Civil List?

Lord *Althorp* replied, that he intended to charge a portion of them upon the Consolidated Fund, and to provide for the remainder out of the Supplies for the year.

The Resolutions read a second time. Upon the last Resolution being proposed,

Mr. *Hume* said, that at that moment he suffered the subject of pensions to the members of the Royal Family to pass without notice; but he begged to state, that, on a future occasion, he should call the attention of the House to them. He should then require to know the authority by which such pensions had been granted, and the persons to whom the grant had been made. He should, therefore, move, on a future occasion, for a return of the pensions held by all the members of the Royal Family, exclusive of the King; and he gave this notice now, that he might not be considered as acceding absolutely to the present Resolution. He should submit, when the Bill got into Committee, the propriety of a reduction of the incomes of the junior branches of the Royal Family, on the ground that as their allowance, like that of others, had been increased on account of the high prices of provisions, they should now suffer the same decrease as the allowance of other public persons had suffered, in consequence of the present comparatively low price of provisions.

Mr. *Goulburn* hoped, that before the hon. Member brought forward such a motion, he would well consider the particular facts on which the measure of allowance had been granted.

Resolutions agreed to, and the Bill ordered to be brought in.

Supply—Navy Estimates.] The House then resolved itself into a Committee of Supply. On the Motion of Sir J. Graham, there was granted to his Majesty the sum of 21,211*l.* for the maintenance of the Naval Officers and Naval Yards abroad, and 534,124*l.* 4*s.* 4*d.* for the pay and support of Men employed in the navy yards of his Majesty. On the vote that 810,000*l.* be granted to his Majesty for the purchase and expenditure of the ensuing year in timber, stores, &c.,

Sir *J. Yorke* objected to the vote as excessive. He felt a strong objection to the purchase of so many materials, when we had such choice and powerful vessels, either in ordinary or on the stocks. The yards were, generally speaking, on too extensive a scale, and too much had been sacrificed to expensive experiment, as in the case of building the ship, called the *Pearl,* over which a gallant Admiral, who displayed his flag on the station of the Emerald Isle, occasionally expended his solicitude. Jobs of every kind should be discountenanced, and the practice of altering brigs of war into vessels with three masts he must reprobate as a wanton waste of public money.

Sir *James Graham* defended the amount of the vote, by acquainting the House, that it was usual to make a liberal estimate on this head of expenditure, because out of it, should there arise a deficiency for the pay or maintenance of the seamen voted, that deficiency was usually made good, whilst, if there happened to be a less expenditure, the balance was carried on the next year to the credit of the public, under the head of stores. The building of ships had been rendered necessary of late years, notwithstanding the number of vessels in Ordinary, in consequence of the rivalry of other maritime countries whose vessels were so disproportionably larger than ours of a similar class, that we were obliged to build larger vessels, to enable us to maintain our station on the seas.

Mr. *Hume* thought that there were in all conscience enough of fighting vessels, and even of round-sterned ships, when there was no prospect of a war with any other country. But what would the right hon. First Lord say in defence of the extravagant waste of the public money in keeping afloat not less than five Royal yachts, as well as one for the Commissioners of the Navy, and one for the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland?

Sir *James Graham* begged to say, that the change in the proportions of fourth-rates and frigates of a large class by other maritime and rival countries, had rendered the building of new ships positively necessary to cope with these improved and more powerful vessels, against which our smaller ships of the line and large frigates would have no chance but in the desperate valour of our seamen. Of the five yachts in commission there was not one perfectly manned; their expenditure was small, and this was the only mode which was left to the Board of Admiralty to keep old veteran officers on full pay. The appointments were made with a jealous scrutiny as to merit; and when it was recollected how wide a field of reward was open to military veterans, by appointments to the command of fortresses, the public would scarcely think these five vessels, which constituted almost all of the patronage of the Admiralty in this way, was too extensive to ensure the welfare of the service. As to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, it was not proper that, representing, as he did, the person of his Majesty in his Government, he should, when proceeding to sea, appear without the paraphernalia of Royalty; and more especially the present Viceroy should not be deprived of that in which, from his strong bias to nautical matters, it might be supposed he would find particular gratification—namely, a handsome yacht, for purposes of pleasure or utility.

Mr. *O'Connell* said, there never yet was wanted an excuse when public money was to be squandered. In the very ludicrous instance of the Lord Lieutenant's yacht, he could assure the House that the noble Marquis at the head of the Irish Government was too much of a sailor to trust himself—whilst he possessed so admirably built and equipped a vessel as that which was his own private property—in such a heavy, clumsy, crazy craft as the Government yacht. The consequence therefore was, that whenever, on state occasions, the Lord Lieutenant left Dublin on a trip to sea, he proceeded from the harbour in this lumbering vessel till he reached the spot where it had been previously settled the steamer, or his own handsome vessel, was to meet him, when he turned his Majesty's yacht adrift, as she deserved, and proceeded in the other vessel.

Mr. *Hume* again insisted that these yachts, with their appointments, were unnecessary, and ought to be abolished. And his right hon. friend, the first Lord of the Admiralty, seemed to think that he was the member of a despotic Government.

Sir *James Graham* said, that when he first went to the Admiralty, he thought, as the hon. Gentleman did, that the yachts might be dispensed with; but he had since ascertained, that from the time of William 3rd down to the present, this establishment had been continued in the same state, and that it furnished the only means of bestowing a reward for the services of meritorious officers. That being the case, although he was an advocate for economy, he did not think it would be judicious to abolish this establishment.

Mr. *Hume* said, he did not doubt that the right hon. Baronet acted conscientiously, but he must say, for his part, that he cared nothing for William 3rd, and did not think that the wisdom of our ancestors was always a good guide. His question was, whether these vessels were necessary? and he the more particularly objected to their expense, as the Government refused to establish another hospital-ship in the river, which in reality was much wanted. The *Dreadnought* had been selected for this purpose, but was refused.

Sir *Joseph Yorke* said, that, if it were necessary to abridge one single iota of the naval service, the yachts were the first which ought to be dispensed with.

Sir *Byam Martin* said, that the expense of the yachts was really so trifling as to be ridiculous to look at. He believed that in the last year they had not cost more than 400*l.* He hoped the Government would not consent now, or at any other time, to put them down, as it would be very injurious to the naval service.

Sir *George Clerk* thought that means ought to be afforded to the Sovereign of occasionally going to sea in a style befitting his regal dignity. Those yachts had always formed part of the royal establishment.

Mr. *Warburton* said, that if it were necessary for the Sovereign to go to sea, he could go in a man-of-war. It was not necessary to maintain these vessels, painted and gilded like gingerbread, for the purpose. There was no scarcity of vessels at his Majesty's command.

Mr. *Hume* wished to have some explanation concerning the refusal of the *Dreadnought*, and must request his right hon. friend to give him the explanation.

Sir *James Graham* again defended the continuance of these yachts, the command of which, he said, had always been given to men of real merit; and with respect to the conduct of the Government in the matter of the hospital-ship, he observed, that the Marine Society had required the Government to fit up the ship at the public expense, which the late Treasury had declined to do, as the sum required was considerable, amounting to no less than 1,600*l.* A similar application had been made since he had come into office, and he having referred the matter to the Treasury, it was now under consideration.

Mr. *Hume* thought the Government might better have incurred that expense for a great public benefit, than have resolved on others that produced no such advantage. It was very hard on the merchant-seamen to be obliged to pay 6*d.* per month for Greenwich Hospital when there was no asylum afforded them by the Government. The money thus taken from them amounted to 24,000*l.* in the year, and was tranferred to Greenwich Hospital, from which, as merchant-seamen, they could derive no benefit.

Mr. *George Robinson* said, if the merchant-seamen contributed so much, it would not be unreasonable to give them a ship at an expense of 1,600*l.* out of the money; and if Greenwich Hospital could not go on without that money, it should be made up to it in another way.

An Hon. *Member* stated, that great anxiety existed at the different sea ports on the subject of the payment to Greenwich, and most of the seamen looked to be relieved from that tax.

Sir *James Graham* repeated, that the matter was under the consideration of the Board of Treasury. If that Board consented to the application, he need not say how happy he should be to carry it into execution. With respect to the money drawn from the merchant-seamen, he observed that Greenwich Hospital would suffer much inconvenience from the want of that contribution. It was not true, however, that the merchant-seamen derived no benefit from this payment, for Sir Richard Keats had calculated that one half of the merchant-seamen passed through the King's service, and were, in that way, entitled to the benefit of Greenwich Hospital. But as merchant-seamen they had also a direct benefit, for their sons were entitled to education on the establishment, and Sir R. Keats had calculated that the proportion of merchant-seamen's boys was as four to five out of the whole number in the school. The contribution, too, was only made when the men were at sea, and in actual receipt of wages. In his opinion, Greenwich Hospital was indispensable to our naval superiority, and its means of relieving the unfortunate seamen ought not to be diminished. He would now only add, that he had at that moment the draft of a Bill which he intended to introduce after the Easter recess, and in which he meant to propose to the consideration of the House to give to the merchant-seamen, under certain circumstances, a concurrent claim with sailors in King's ships to the advantages of Greenwich Hospital.

General *Phipps*, as Representative for a sea-port, thanked the right hon. Baronet for this communication.

Mr. *Warburton* said, if such a measure were carried into operation, there was not a ship-owner who would not approve of the levying of this tax. The hospital-ship, too, was a most useful establishment, as it admitted not only British seamen, but also seamen of any country who required such care and attention.

Mr. *Hume* said, that if both the services were to be put upon an equal footing, it altered the case very much; and the only question that remained was, which was the proper way to effect it?

Mr. *Schonswar* said, the merchant service had hitherto felt it a most galling grievance that they were compelled to contribute to an establishment from which they derived no benefit.

Mr. *Hodgson* believed that an arrangement of the kind proposed would satisfy the seamen.

Mr. *Sykes* would prefer having the tax if it were to be continued, levied on the tonnage of the vessels rather than on the seamen.

Resolution agreed to.

The next Resolution was for a grant of 98,000*l.* for improvements in his Majesty's Dock-yards at home and abroad.

Mr. *George Robinson* begged to ask, whether the first Lord of the Admiralty had in his possession any estimate of the expense of completing the establishment at Bermuda? He was told that the climate was ill adapted for the conservation of naval stores, and that Halifax was well adapted. At all events he was sorry that the country had been put to the expense of works at both places. There was another point to which he wished to call the attention of his Majesty's present Government—namely, a previous arrangement for the consolidation of the command in the West Indies and Nova Scotia. The duties could not possibly be efficiently performed where a space of fifty or sixty degrees intervened.

Sir *James Graham* said, that the expense of the works at Bermuda was at present uncertain. But at the other stations, the sum now proposed would cover the entire expenses. The present Government were not responsible for the amount of these expenses, as the works had been undertaken by contract before they came into office. Although he had not, as yet, any estimate of the expenses at Bermuda he had appointed a confidential Officer, as a Commissioner, to report to him what portion of the original plan might be dispensed with. He believed that a considerable sum of money might be saved in this branch, and the sum that he now asked for was merely to carry on the works until he should have a complete estimate. He hoped next year to be able to announce the final expense of the completion of the works.

Sir *Joseph Yorke* said, that Halifax was certainly too far from the fine-weather country to be advantageous for the purpose for which it had been selected. The works at Bermuda might have been carried on upon too extensive a scale; but let not the right hon. Gentleman imagine that merely sending out a Commissioner would be sufficient; for Commissioners had already been employed, and great care bestowed upon the works. He would take that opportunity of asking why the basin at Sheerness, which had been constructed at so much expense, and which was, in reality a harbour itself, was not used by ships fitting out? There was there every convenience for the purpose of putting all their stores on board at a small expense, and such great facilities for extinguishing any fire that even Etna itself might be put out. Every store, from a sail needle to a bower anchor, ought to be put aboard there before the vessel went out.

Resolution agreed to.

The next Resolution was for 50,500*l.* for the charges of Pilotage, and other contingencies, for the year.

Mr. *Hume* complained of the expense of the light-house at Spithead, which, he said, ought to be thrown upon the Trinity House, which had plenty of funds.

Sir *Byam Martin* said, that the light-house was for the benefit of King's ships, and, therefore, properly came under the naval department.

Sir *J. Yorke* said, that merchant vessels also derived great benefit from these lights and he was of opinion that it would be fair to throw the expense of them on the Corporation of the Trinity House.

Resolution agreed to.

25,000*l.* for Transports and Freightage, and 24,040*l.* for the hire of Packets were voted.

The next Resolution was, 25,000*l.* for ships building in Bombay.

Sir *J. Yorke* did not think it right while we were contracting our establishments and keeping down the price of oak at home that such a large sum should be voted for encouraging Parsees instead of our own people.

Sir *J. Graham* observed that the charge in the estimate was for work already done.

Sir *G. Clerk* said that, in 1828, the late Government had sent out orders to stop the building of ships in India. But on a representation that great loss would be experienced if permission were not given to finish the ships already on hand, leave was given for that purpose. The present, however, would be the last vote required for this object.

Sir *Charles Forbes* was sorry to hear that there was an intention to abandon the building of ships at Bombay. The ships built in the East Indies were some of the finest in the service. There was not another ship of war equal to the Ganges. They were likewise built much cheaper than in England, and were almost everlasting. The natives of India had as much right to be employed in building our ships, as those of any other portion of the British Empire; but they seemed to be overlooked, and under the monstrous measure of Reform proposed by Ministers, he did not see how the interests of India were to be represented in that House or defended in the country.

Mr. *Sloane Stanley* said that, as a large proprietor of timber, he felt a great interest in the question. He certainly had heard that Indian teak was the best material for ship-building; but after that came Sussex oak; and after that the oak of his own county (Hampshire). But however this might be, he wished to know whether it was the intention of Government to supply the dock-yards, during the present year, with British timber, or whether they intended to supply the Navy with Indian timber, or with timber from the coast of Africa?

Sir *B. Martin* stated that the intention was to use one half British, and one half African timber.

Resolution agreed to.

On the Resolution granting a sum of 782,000*l.* for Half-pay to the Officers of the Navy and Royal Marines,

Mr. *Hume* asked whether the regulations with respect to promotion were adhered to?

Sir *James Graham* said, that the plan of making one promotion for three vacancies had been adhered to, and he was happy to say the effect of it was visible in a diminution of from 2,000*l.* to 3,000*l.* on the half-pay charge of the year.

Resolution agreed to, as were,

Resolutions granting a sum of 246,058*l* for pensions to Officers, their Widows and Relatives, granting 1,300*l.* as Bounty to Chaplains.

On the Resolution that 249,200*l.* be granted in Out-pensions of Greenwich Hospital,

Sir *Joseph Yorke* asked what was the intention of the First Lord of the Admiralty as to admitting merchant seamen to a participation in the benefits of the Hospital?

Sir *James Graham* said, another opportunity would arise for his giving explanations on that subject; but he might say that, as at present advised, he did not propose to admit merchant seamen as out pensioners, but he was disposed to allow their claim to enter the Hospital as in-pensioners, in common with the seamen of his Majesty's service, subject, however, to the examination and consideration of the Board of Admiralty.

Resolution agreed to.

The sums of 155,905*l.* for Superannuations in the Civil Department. 136,000*l.* for defraying the expense of ships for the conveyance of stores. 3,000*l.* for the conveyance of Stores to the Swan River; 88,500*l.*, for sending convicts abroad. 3,380*l.* bounty for the capture of piratical vessels. 30,050*l.* for the salaries of officers and the contingent expenses of the Victualling Office, were also voted.

On the Resolution granting 63,363*l.* for the expenses of the Victualling Yards,

Sir *G. Clerk* asked if it was the intention of the right hon. Baronet to discontinue the supply of beer for the Navy at home?

Sir *James Graham* said, that it was intended to discontinue the supply of beer except in the case of a crew returned from a very long voyage, whose health required a change of that description, when the beer would be supplied by contract. It was by effecting various reductions in the yards of Deptford and elsewhere that he was able to reduce the estimates of the expense of each man from 32*s.* to 29*s.* per month.

Mr. *Hume* was at a loss to know why our naval victualling was not all supplied by contract. Instead of that, we adopted the most expensive mode of curing meat. If meat was anywhere at a higher price than elsewhere it was in the London market; and yet Government bought it in that market, and then sent it down to Deptford to be cured. A saving to a great amount might be effected by adopting a different practice. As the Army was victualled by contract, why not the Navy? The East India Company victualled their ships by contract; they had no stores. He had no doubt that 50,000*l.* a year might be saved by a different plan of management.

Colonel *Sibthorp* asked if it was the intention of Government to discontinue the Commissioner at Deptford?

Sir *J. Graham* said, that the answer to this question depended upon the course which would be pursued with respect to the suggestions of the hon. member for Middlesex. If the yards were to be kept up on their present scale, the retention of the Commissioners would be indispensable. The question, however, was, whether it would not be better to supply the Navy by contract. As a general rule there could be no doubt but that contract was the best method; but this rule admitted of exceptions, and beef was one. As the contractors were few, the establishment was found extremely serviceable in keeping combinations in check; and he understood that, a few years ago, a sum was saved more than sufficient to cover the expenses of the establishment by defeating some such combination. With respect to bread there was no security for getting the best sort, except by manufacturing it. If bread was found to have even a slight defect, when a ship was on a foreign station, it was all condemned and sent home, with all the costs of freight—so that it was much more safe, and more economical also, to manufacture that article for the Navy, instead of obtaining it by contract.

Resolution agreed to.

24,242*l.* for Salaries and contingent expenses of the Naval Medical establishment. 30,000*l.* for Medical Stores in the Navy in 1831. 31,611*l.* for provisions for Officers of ships in ordinary. 8,557*l.* for provisions for Officers and men in the yard service afloat. 86,457*l.* for new works in the Victualling and Medical departments. 157,576*l.* for half-pay and pensions and superannuations to Medical Officers, pursers and Clerks. 175,000*l.* to defray the expense of troops in Garrison on foreign service and convict service, were also voted.

SUPPLY.—CIVIL CONTINGENCIES.] Mr. S. Rice moved, that a sum, not exceeding 80,000*l.* should be granted to his Majesty, to defray the Civil Contingencies for 1831.

Mr. *Hume* allowed the vote was considerably diminished, but he hoped and trusted it would be yet made much less. He considered several of the items extravagant and objectionable. Under the head of diplomatic journeys he found 490*l.* charged for a journey made by Lord Burghersh. Now, he knew of no journey the noble Lord had made, excepting that to England and back to Italy. He wished accordingly to move for an account to know what that journey was. He likewise objected to a charge of 1,373*l.* made by Mr. Vaughan, our Ambassador in America—a sum nearly equal to the whole allowance of the American Ambassadors. He also saw an extremely objectionable charge of 1,500*l.* made for installing the King of Wirtemberg, the Duke of Saxe Weimar, and Sir Edward Codrington, Knights of certain Orders. Now, he would be glad to know why the Commons of England should be called on to pay for the installation of these noble Persons? He would therefore move to know to whom this money was paid, and for what? The next item to which he objected, was 1,200*l.* for the contingent expenses of Lottery Offices, which had ceased to exist for four years. The next item to which he took exception was 3,600*l.* to Mr. Babbage, for his counting machine, two grants having been already made to that gentleman. He also disapproved of 500*l.* for a mail-boat to the Bahamas: this charge ought, in his opinion, to have been brought under the head of Post-office expenses, or expenses for the Colonial Department. He saw there was 346*l.* paid to make out the Commission for the Ecclesiastical Courts. This appeared to him a gross abuse. Was the charge for fees, or writing? Why such a sum should be expended for such a purpose he could not see. The Great Seal was put to the Commission, but the Chancellor was paid 7,000*l.* a year for that amongst other duties, and he saw no reason why the country should be asked to pay over again in fees of this kind. He should also move for an account of this expenditure. He likewise found that 575*l.* was charged for making out the appointment of a Board of Commissioners for the Affairs of India. He thought they should pay the expenses of the Commission. Why should they not pay the fees like Officers in the Navy and Army? He also objected to the 92*l.* charged to defray the expenses of the India Board Office, and to the 1,279*l.* paid to the Solicitor to the Commissioners for Charities; also to the 6,812*l.* paid to Lecesne, Escoffery, and Gonville, on account of their deportation from Jamaica. Looking to the Irish Estimates, he thought it highly unreasonable that 318*l.* should be paid to the Clerk of the Hanaper Office, as fines consequent upon the election of an Irish Peer to succeed Lord Headfort. A sum of 1,300*l.* for three Inspectors of Police, as allowance for travelling expenses for a year, was excessive. He next saw an item of 1,451*l.* for valuations in the city of Dublin. Surely an expense of this kind ought to be paid by local taxation, and not be thrown upon the country at large. He likewise protested against the Archbishop of Dublin receiving 276*l.*, as Chancellor of the Order of St. Patrick, on the delivery of the Collars to the Marquises of Drogheda and Waterford. The Archbishop of Canterbury formerly stood in the same way, but he was now obliged to content himself with the honour, as he thought, on his side, the Archbishop of Dublin ought to do. He also objected to the grant of 2,010*l.* for pensions on his late Majesty's bounty, for 1829 and 1830; and as to the charge for clothing and standards for the three regiments of Life Guards, &c. (which he had omitted to mention before), he considered it should have appeared in the Army Estimates. He also, small as was the sum, objected to the charge of 78*l.* for ringers at Christ Church, St. Patrick's, and St. Wereburgh's Church, on the occasion of his late Majesty's death. Adverting to the expense of Commissions, he observed, that Commissions for various purposes had cost the country 1,200,000*l.* since 1800, and he doubted much whether their labours had been productive of a saving of half that sum.

Mr. *Rice* observed, the particulars to which his hon. friend adverted were contained in the estimate of last year. The course pursued, however, by the late Government, was not open to objection, because the surplus which had accrued through their economy had enabled those now in office to reduce the vote. He was happy to be able to inform his hon. friend, in reply to his observations, that an arrangement was made, by which all charges under the head of diplomatic journeys, were for the future to be discontinued. In fairness he was bound to add, this was the act of the late Government. Extraordinary diplomatic expenses, too, were henceforth to be paid out of the fund for diplomatic expenses, without increasing that fund, and thus removed from the head of Civil Contingencies. In the head of outfits, also, a reduction had been made of from 9,975*l.* to 4,875*l.* by the establishment of a new scale. But the most important vote to which the hon. Member alluded was that to Lecesne and Escoffery, and he was sorry to say, that he had yet 11,000*l.* to move for, to complete the compensation to those persons. The papers, however, connected with the affair, would soon be in the hon. Member's possession, and he would then see that the sum was by no means too great, and that the case was one in which no Government could have acted differently from the late Administration. These persons had suffered great hardship undeservedly, by their removal under the order of the Duke of Manchester, and it was at first considered that the noble Duke should be required to pay this himself; but as he had acted on the opinion of his legal advisers, it was deemed right that he should not be so called on. This was the reason why he had to move for the sum for them. People were fond of instituting Commissions of inquiry, but they were often expensive. A sum of 800,000*l.* had been paid within these last ten years for such Commissions, but most of these had now come to a close. As to the vote to Mr.

Babbage, it was one which the country would rejoice to pay. It was for a machine by which the most abstruse calculations could be worked with unerring certainty; mathematical, nautical, and other Tables could be constructed by it with ease and perfect accuracy; indeed, his hon. friend ought not to object to it, for it was probable that he himself would hereafter be saved much trouble by it, and that some of his calculations on the Estimates might be made by mechanical means. The sum voted was for the purchase of the whole machine, which was to be applied to the public service. As to the expenses of the Life Guards, they being household troops, the expenditure could not be well brought within the regular Army Estimates. The expenses of the Solicitor for Charities were for proceedings under that Commission, and much of those expenses had been already recovered. The expense of conferring the Order of the Garter on foreign Sovereigns could not be avoided, while such orders continued in existence. With respect to the police of Ireland, some arrangement might be made by which the expense might be borne between the different counties and the country at large. As to the fees of the Clerk of the Crown and Hanaper, and other matters connected with this branch of the Estimates, the fullest account that could be procured should be laid before the House.

Mr. *Warburton* spoke in terms of the highest praise of the invention of Mr. Babbage, which, he said, would, when completed, not only do all that had been promised, but much more. It would calculate all known formulæ. The sum required for its completion, including the house in which it stood, would be 12,000*l.*; and the money thus expended would soon repay itself by the saving it would effect in the sums now paid for the construction of single Tables. The machine would be completed in three years, and would be well worthy of the sum expended on it.

Mr. *Lennard* objected to the sums paid to five of the principal servants of our Ambassador in France. He did not wish to underrate the services of that noble person, but he thought that, considering the salary paid to the Ambassador, this allowance to the servants was quite unnecessary. He objected, too, to the payment made to the servants of that Ambassador on account of family mourning. He wished also to call the attention of the House to the great number of Ambassadors and Ministers maintained by this country in the petty States of the German Empire, and he must express a wish that their number might be diminished. He admitted, however, that the reductions which the present Ministry had effected were sufficiently extensive to induce him to postpone for the present a motion of which he had given notice.

Lord *Palmerston* remarked, that the hon. Member, when he made the observation respecting the salary of our Ambassador in France, was not, perhaps, aware that it had suffered a reduction of 2,000*l.* It had formerly been 12,000*l.* per annum, but his noble predecessor had reduced it 1,000*l.* a year, and he proposed to effect a further reduction to a similar amount. As to the number of our Ambassadors in Germany, he believed that when the time came he should be able to prove that they were by no means too numerous. Great reductions had taken place among them. In 1827, the salaries paid to these Ambassadors, and their expenses, amounted to 62,000*l.*; in 1828, to 64,000*l.*; in 1829 to 59,000*l.*—the average of which was 61,000*l.*; but in the course of the last year the sum was reduced to 40,000*l.* He believed he should be able to bring down the amount by a further reduction of 14,000*l.* He trusted, therefore, that this branch of expenditure would not be considered extravagant.

Mr. *Goulburn* said, that the hon. member for Maldon ought to have given the credit of the reductions, which had induced him to postpone his motion, to the late, and not to the present, Ministers; and all the reductions now effected had been contemplated, and indeed begun, by the late Ministry. With respect to contingencies in the diplomatic expenses, he observed, that when the late Ministry took office, they amounted to 240,000*l.*; but they were now reduced to 80,000*l.*, or exactly one-third. He did not think the item could be reduced much farther.

Mr. *O'Connell* objected to several items in these Estimates, which, he contended, savoured strongly of the nature of jobs; some of which were for the erection of fountains intended to supply with water the poor, who could not afford to pay water-rates. In some instances, these were erected to please individual proprietors of the neighbourhood, though at the public expense, in places where the gentry only resided. In one instance, though the Chief Justice, Lord Downes, endeavoured to open a costly fountain in Merrion-square, he was obliged to desist from attempting to secure to the poor that supply of water which they were entitled to, because it was said that, at the time of the grant, it was expressly stipulated by Lord Blaquiere, who solicited its erection on his property, that the fountain (strange to say, though, perhaps, a perfectly consistent Irish stipulation) should never furnish one drop of water, lest the poorer class resorting to it should offend the eyes of the residents in that fashionable quarter of the city of Dublin. He did not know which to reprove most, the silliness or the corruptness of all this sort of jobbing, so frequent in the different departments of the Irish Government. He must also notice, that 2,000*l.* was annually given to the sufferers in the Irish rebellion, at the rate of 30*l.* each. He considered that a very large sum, and he could not help thinking that many persons were receiving the benefit of the grant, who had never suffered at all at the time of the rebellion. It was generally believed by the people that the money was voted to keep up an establishment of spies and informers.

Mr. *Stanley* said, that until within the last three years, the vacancies in the list of those pensioners had been filled up. Since then that practice had been put a stop to, and the vote was consequently in the course of diminution.

Mr. *George Dawson* hoped that Government would discontinue the useless expense of Inspectors of Gaols, who had no duty to perform; and of Inspectors of Yeomanry, whose duty could be so much better performed by a Staff Officer of the regular army in each district.

Colonel *Sibthorp* hoped, too, the charge of a per centage yearly to Sir Robert Chester, as a bonus on presenting presents of great value to foreign Ministers, would be discontinued, as totally absurd, and unnecessarily expensive to the country, overburthened as it now was with unavoidable charges and expenses. He thought too that the sum charged for Exchequer fees, of which he hardly knew the meaning, was excessive.

Lord *Palmerston* assured the hon. Member he would never hear of these charges again; he had made arrangements for the abolition of this ancient but unreasonable custom in our diplomacy.

Vote agreed to, and the House resumed.

ELECTIONS — (IRELAND).] Colonel *Trench* moved the Second Reading of the Election in Ireland Bill. The object of the Bill was two-fold: first, to make it incumbent on candidates at an election to warn every person who tendered his vote against giving it unless duly qualified; and, secondly, to settle, what was now in some degree a matter of doubt, whether a freeholder who held property in detached portions, of the value of 10*l.* in the whole, had a right to vote. He was anxious, as a hint of a dissolution had been thrown out, to have these matters settled before the next general election.

Mr. *Stanley* had no objection to the Bill going forward that stage, but

Mr. *Bankes* objected to taking a measure of that kind at so late an hour in the night.

The gallery was cleared for a division, but the Motion was agreed to without the House dividing, and the Bill read a second time.

CORPORATE FUNDS.] On the Motion that the Corporate Funds' Bill be committed—

Mr. *Fyler* objected to proceeding with the Bill at that late hour, and moved the adjournment of the House.

The House divided: For the adjournment 20; Against it 43. The House resolved into a Committee upon the Bill.

The Marquis of *Chandos* renewed the opposition to the proceeding with the bill, and moved that the Chairman report progress, and ask leave to sit again.

Mr. *George Dawson* urged the adjournment of the consideration of the question.

Sir *James Graham* admitted, that it would be very inexpedient to fight the Bill at that late hour, and advised his hon. friend (Mr. Spring Rice) to give way.

House resumed.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Tuesday, March 29, 1831.

MINUTES.] Bill. The Colonial Trade, went through a Committee.

Returns ordered. On the Motion of Viscount GODERICH, Copies of the several Reports of the Commissioners appointed by his Majesty's Warrant of the 21st of June, 1830, to inquire into the Receipt and Expenditure of the Revenue in the Colonies and Foreign Possessions.

Petitions presented. By the Duke of WELLINGTON, from the Merchants and other Inhabitants of Bristol connected with the West Indies, for a proper inquiry into the condition of the Negro Population. From the Beer sellers of Manchester, for an alteration in the Beer Laws. For

Reform, by the Earl of GOSFORD, from Newry, and from Beccles:—By the Duke of RICHMOND, from the Magistrates, Town Council, and Inhabitants of Peterhead:—By Lord KING, from Canterbury and its vicinity, and from Gravesend and Milton, in Kent; from a Parish in the County of Kilkenny, in Ireland, praying for a better appropriation of the Funds granted by Parliament to the Kildare-street Society. By Lord FARNHAM, from Independents of Usher's Quay Meeting House, Dublin, and from Drumcliffe and Calry for the abolition of Slavery. By the Marquis of BUTE, from the Merchants and Shipowners of Greenock, against the East India Company's monopoly, and from the Merchants of Greenock connected with the West Indies complaining of the publications of the Anti-Slavery Society. By Lord CARBERY, from the President of the Committee of Merchants in Cork trading to the West Indies, for protection. By the Earl of GLENGALL, from the Magistrates of Tipperary, against the introduction of the system of Poor-laws into Ireland, and praying for an assessment in the shape of a Property-tax, for the relief of the poor there.

TITHES.—LAY IMPROPRIATIONS.] Lord *King* presented a Petition from the parish of Woodbury, in Devonshire, complaining that while 600*l.* a year was levied in that parish, and appropriated to the Choral Fund of the cathedral of Exeter, only 50*l.* a year was paid to the Curate, who performed all the ecclesiastical duties in that parish.

The Bishop of *Exeter* stated, that he had no jurisdiction in that parish. That statement, he hoped, was sufficient to relieve him from the charge of not giving a larger salary to the Curate of that important parish. It was one of those cases in which the tithes were all in the hands of lay impropriators.

Lord *Wynford* said, that this formed one of those peculiar cases of impropriation, where Bishops had not the power to interfere. Cases of this peculiar kind of jurisdiction were at present under the consideration of a Committee, of which he had the honour to be a member, with a view to remedy such abuses. It was one proof of the use of Bishops, that where Bishops had jurisdiction such instances as this did not occur.

The Archbishop of *Canterbury* concurred in the statement of the noble and learned Lord, that no such instances of inadequate compensation were to be found where Bishops had jurisdiction. He would take that opportunity to inform the House, that it was his intention, immediately after the recess, to bring in a bill to give Corporations possessing impropriations of this description, the means of remedying evils of this kind, and wiping off the disgrace which thereby accrued to the Church. At present it was extremely difficult for such Corporations, as the law stood, to increase the stipends of the clergymen in parishes situated like this. It was also his intention, immediately after the holidays, to bring in a bill for the restriction of pluralities,—not for their abolition, but for their restriction,—by which they would be placed under such regulations as would prevent many of the abuses which at present arose from them. There was also another bill which he had often mentioned it was his intention to bring forward, and for the delay in the introduction of which he must apologize to their Lordships, by stating that it had arisen from circumstances not under his control; he alluded to the Bill for the composition of tithes. That bill had undergone a great deal of alteration, and, as he trusted, considerable improvement, and he hoped to be able, shortly after the recess to present it to their Lordships.

Petition laid on the Table.

ADJOURNMENT FOR EASTER.] Lord *Kenyon* inquired of Earl Grey what arrangement he proposed to make for the Easter Holidays?

Earl *Grey* said, that he should propose to-morrow that the House should adjourn from that day till Tuesday, the 12th of April, then to re-assemble for public business. At the suggestion of his learned friend on the Woolsack, he would propose that the House should continue to sit for private business until Monday next.

Lord *Kenyon* wished to know what reason there would be for the House sitting, even for private business, on Easter-eve and Easter Monday?

The *Lord Chancellor* said, he should most willingly state the reason why it was proposed that the House should not adjourn, except for public business, until Monday next. Undoubtedly, the usual course had been, to commence the adjournment, both for private and public business before Good Friday; but he did not see any thing improper in the House continuing to sit for the discharge of its judicial functions until Easter Monday. The reason why he proposed that the House should continue to sit for that purpose was, in order, if possible, to get rid of the arrear of appeals. His great object, ever since he had come into his present office, had been to get rid of that arrear, and he hoped to be able to boast at the end of the Session, that he had disposed of not only all the appeals lying over from the former Session, but of all the appeals which had been entered previous to Easter. That was the reason why he intended to sit until Easter Monday, and the mention of that arrangement would in itself be calculated to prevent new appeals from coming in. He had no objection to sacrifice his holidays, and instead of going out of town, as he might do (for the Court of Chancery had risen that day), to sit hearing appeals till Easter Monday. He should hear only Scotch appeals in that period. With regard to a precedent for Courts of Justice sitting on Easter-eve and Easter Monday, the thing was constantly done on circuit in the country, where the Courts sat upon Easter-eve and upon Easter Monday, and on Good Friday also, with the exception of the two hours spent in church. There was, therefore, nothing contrary to precedent, nor against decorum, in the arrangement which he proposed.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Tuesday, March 29, 1831.

MINUTES.] Bills. Read a first time. The Ecclesiastical Lands Exchange. Read a second time. The Land Tax Double Assessment.

Returns ordered. On the Motion of Mr. SPRING RICE, Copy of the Circular Letters issued from the Home-Office to the Returning Officers of all Cities, Boroughs, and Towns in England and Wales, respecting the Limits, Houses, and Population of the said Cities and Boroughs, and Towns; together with the statement received from the Returning Officers in reply to such Circular Letter:—Copies of any Memorials addressed to the principal Secretary of State for the Home Department, from the Corporations and Inhabitants of any Borough mentioned in Schedules A and B of a Bill now before the House "to amend the Representation of the people in England and Wales," respecting the Population of the said City or Borough:—A corrected return of the Population of each City and Borough in England from the Population Returns of 1821, distinguishing in each case whether the Population given be that of the Borough or of the Parish, or of the Borough and Parish together, and distinguishing the Boroughs mentioned in Schedules A and B of the said Bill:—The Fees received in the Office of the Registrar of Deeds in Ireland, during the quarters ended 27th October 1830, and 27th January 1831, and of the Disbursements and Allowances thereout:—The number of Gallons of Malt Spirits exported from Scotland to England in each Year, from the commencement of the allowance of Malt drawback on Spirits made in Scotland; and the Amount of the Allowance that has been refunded, in each Year, on such Spirits:—The total Amount of Money which, on the 5th of January, 1831, was in the Exchequer, or remained to be received on Account of Ways and Means:—also, the several Sums of Money which would probably remain to be defrayed on Account of the Supplies of the Years 1823, 1825, 1826, 1827, 1828, 1829, 1830; and the Surplus of the Ways and Means at the disposal of Parliament.

Petitions presented. For the Abolition of Slavery, by Lord C. TOWNSHEND from Tamworth, and twenty-eight other Places:—By Mr. G. MOORE, from Drumcliffe:—By Mr. WILKS, from Dissenters at Mile End, Gosberton, and Purfleet:—By Mr. Alderman THOMPSON, from the Congregation of Salter's-Hall Meeting House:—By Mr. ROBERT GRANT, from Norwich:—By Viscount BERNARD, from Portadown:—By Mr. WOLRYCHE WHITMORE, Mr. HODGSON, Sir JAS. GRAHAM, and Mr. BRISCOE, from Southwark, and sixteen other Places:—By Sir EDW. LLOYD, and Sir R. BATESON, an immense number, chiefly from Dissenters, from all parts of the Empire:—By Viscount GARLIES, from New Woodstock. Against the Registry of Deeds Bill, by Mr. GREENE, from Lancaster. By Mr. G. MOORE, from the Coal Meters and others of Dublin, against the Abolition of the Coal Meters' Establishment; and from Boyle and Aghana, for a General Fast. Against any alteration in the Timber Duties, by Mr. HODGSON, from South Shields. Against the Sale of Beer Act, by Mr. DICKINSON, from the Archdeaconry of Bath. For an alteration of the Tithe Laws, by Mr. WILKS, from Cadoxton. By Mr. ATTWOOD, from Bristol, for the Repeal of the Assessed Taxes. For the opening of the China Trade, by Mr. WM. DUNDAS, from the Chamber of Commerce of Edinburgh. By Mr. BROWNLOW, from Antrim and Dromore, for an alteration of the Grand Jury Laws; from Armagh, for a Repeal of the Union; from the Catholic Clergy of Dromore, against the Grants to the Kildare Street Society; and from the County of Galway, for the extension of the Franchise. By Mr. O'CONNELL, from the Inhabitants of Youghall, complaining that the Recorder of that place, who ought to be an efficient resident Officer, was an old Lady residing at some distance from the Town; against further grants to the Kildare Street Society, from Cappoquin and Achonry in Sligo; against Stamps on Newspapers, from the first Western Co-operative Society; from Woodbury, against Tithes; and from John Quigley, against the Corporation of Londonderry. By Mr. Alderman THOMPSON, from Bury Hutchinson, complaining of the East India Company interfering to prevent the Rajah of Travancore from paying a debt due to Mr. Hutchinson. Complaining of distress, and praying relief, by Sir JOHN BOURKE, from Ross, Galway. In favour of Reform, by Mr. O'CONNELL, from certain Inhabitants of Limerick, Yetlington, New Ross, Drogheda, and Navan:—By Mr. Alderman THOMPSON, from Coleman Street Ward:—By Sir J. WROTTESLEY, from Sedgeley:—By Sir JOHN NEWPORT, from Waterford:—By Sir E. LLOYD, from the Freeholders of the County of Flint; from the Inhabitant Householders of Mould, and Holywell; from the Burgesses of Flint, and from the Inhabitants of the City of St. Asaph:—By Mr. WEBB, from the Inhabitants of Wootton-under-Edge, in the County of Gloucester:—By Sir THOS. BARING, from Chipping Wycombe:—By Sir JOHN BOURKE, from Tuam:—By Sir ROBT. BATESON, from Londonderry, and from Newtown, Lunavady:—By Sir F. BLAKE, from Galway:—and by Mr. WOLRYCHE WHITMORE, from Bridgenorth. Against the Ministerial plan of Reform, by Mr. SCOTT, from Freeholders, &c. of Roxburgh. For compensation, by Sir RICH. VYVYAN, from the Coopers of London engaged in supplying the West India Colonies with casks. For the Abolition of the Pilgrim Tax, by Mr. WILKS, from Wareham. For the Abolition of Tithes in Ireland, by the Earl of OSSORY, from Kells and St. Nicholas Jerpoint.

REFORM PETITIONS.] Colonel *Lushington* presented three Petitions from the Guild of Butchers, from the Guild of Tanners, and from certain Freeholders in Carlisle, against the Reform Bill. They complained of the rights and privileges which had been secured to them by very ancient charters being destroyed and that the Reform Bill would seriously injure them. In all the sentiments of the petitioners he fully concurred.

The Marquis of *Chandos* supported the petition, but said, that he had always been friendly to Reform, and although he opposed the Reform Bill, he still was a friend to a moderate Reform. He felt convinced that it was necessary to grant some measure of Reform to the people, but he could support only such Reform as would, while it secured the rights of the people, preserve the Constitution.

Mr. *Hart Davis* said, that a very considerable number of the citizens of Bristol which he had the honour to represent, would be deprived of their franchise by the Bill before the House, and that every part of it should have his most deadly opposition. At the same time, he would not say that he was an enemy to all sorts of Reform.

Sir *A. Dalrymple* said, that the Reform Bill deprived persons of their hereditary political rights, which had descended to them from centuries ago, and which they expected to transmit to their posterity. He should therefore oppose the Bill.

Mr. *Moore* presented a Petition from the Sheriffs and Common Council of Dublin against the Irish Reform Bill. He agreed with the petitioners in thinking that the passing of the measure would place the constituency in the hands of the enemies of the Protestant Church, and lead to its destruction, as well as to the Repeal of the Union with England. The Bill would create precisely that class of voters who would return Representatives disposed to co-operate with the hon. member for Waterford in the accomplishment of the latter object. He had also to present a Petition from the Corporation of Brewers in Dublin, to the same effect, who also stated that to make the payment of 10*l.* rent entitle a man to vote, would be adequate to establishing in Dublin Universal Suffrage.

Mr. *S. Rice* would not be led into a discussion of the Irish Reform Bill till the proper opportunity, but when that should arrive, he would undertake to argue, that never had a measure been proposed which tended more directly than the present to tranquillize the public mind in Ireland on the subject of the Union.

Mr. *George Dawson* said, the Irish public was not as yet aware of the unmixed evil that must result from the passing of this measure. There might exist some difference of opinion as to the fact of the Ministerial plan of Reform being a revolutionary measure with respect to England, but there could be no difference as to its being completely revolutionary as regarded Ireland. The Protestant influence would be completely destroyed in that country by the alteration in the corporations and boroughs, for which latter, Roman Catholic Members would be almost generally returned. He had sacrificed as much as any man to do justice to his Catholic fellow-subjects; but it was now time to do justice to the Protestants of Ireland also. If the Reform measure were passed, there could be no reasonable hope of maintaining the Protestant establishment, or the connexion between the two countries.

Sir *J. Newport* expressed his conscientious belief, that the best way to prevent a separation of the Legislatures of the two countries would be by passing the Reform Bills. He had lived for more than half a century in Ireland, and was convinced that the passing of the measure would be the best means of tranquillizing that country.

Mr. *O'Connell* said, this petition, instead of being an argument against Reform, to any rational mind was an argument in its favour. It was a petition from the Common Council of Dublin, consisting of about eighty persons, who held in their hands dominion over the Representation of that city. With two or three exceptions these persons were of obscure situations in life, and no less than forty-one of the number had been discharged as insolvents, or had become bankrupts. And these were the men who were to engross the control over the Representation of the first city in Ireland; and the House was told that it would be revolutionary to alter such a state of things. If we did, we destroyed Protestantism, forsooth! They were told that the Established Church would be endangered by the Reform measure. He denied this. The Established Church would not be endangered, though its temporalities might; and justly, because they involved an evil which ought to be remedied. With respect to the Union, that had hitherto been a connexion of monopoly; try its effects after the passing of the Reform Bills, and observe how it would work when placed upon a fair footing.

Mr. *North* said, it was his firm conviction, that the effect of the passing of this measure would be to lay the Protestant Church in ruins at the feet of Catholic ascendancy.

Mr. *Grattan* was of opinion that the Reform measure would do more than any other that could be devised to allay the anti-Union feeling wherever it existed in Ireland. He denied that there was any apprehnsion of a great influx of Catholic

Members into a reformed House of Commons, or that Catholic influence would preponderate in Ireland in consequence of it.

Mr. *Owen O'Connor* said, the Protestant Gentlemen might dismiss their fears, for the Bill would have no such effect as they attributed to it. As to giving the Catholics power, had they not emancipated them for that purpose, and could they prevent them from having power?

Mr. *Chapman* stated, that in the North of Ireland with which he was best acquainted, and of which almost all the inhabitants were Protestants, the Reform measure was popular with Protestants as well as with Catholics, and declared his intention of supporting it.

Mr. *Sheil* said, that the boroughs of Ireland were Protestant, and under Protestant influence, and the Irish Reform Bill would not cause them to become Catholic; while, with reference to the counties, it would have very little effect indeed.

Mr. *G. Moore*, in moving that this petition be printed was anxious to make one or two observations, in consequence of what had fallen from the hon. member for Waterford, who had cast certain reflections on the individuals with whom this petition emanated. Now, he would undertake to say, that the names attached to the petition were as respectable as those of any other body of men in Dublin. The freemen of the city of Dublin comprised 4,000 persons, and the constituency was not confined to the freemen; for Dublin, being a county in itself, was represented in the same manner as the property of every county in the kingdom was represented—by its freeholders. He could understand why it was deemed advisable to get rid of rotten boroughs, but he could not conceive why the privileges of so large and efficient a constituency as that of Dublin should be interfered with. In his opinion, the proposed measure would destroy the Protestant interest in Ireland.

Petition to be printed.

COMPENSATION TO SLAVE OWNERS.] Mr. *G. Moore* presented a Petition from certain Bankers, Merchants, and others in the city of Dublin, connected with the West Indies, praying that the House would not interfere with the property of West-India proprietors, in any measure which might be proposed with respect to the abolition of negro slavery, without allowing to the individuals who would be affected by the measure, a full and fair compensation. The learned Gentleman stated, that the petitioners had no objection to any measure which might contribute to the abolition of slavery, but they deprecated sudden measures as likely to be injurious to the slaves themselves.

General *Gascoyne* complained, that the debates which were got up on every Irish petition greatly impeded the progress of business, and the evil had become so great, that if the hon. member for Waterford would propose the Repeal of the Union, he would vote for it, in order to get rid of the Irish Members. If the noble Lord who had brought in the Reform Bill would propose the removal of sixty-two Irish, instead of sixty-two English, Members, he would give the motion his most cordial support. Evening after evening he was prevented from presenting petitions because he found the names of two or three Irish Members always before his. The noble Lord was, it appeared, about to add to this calamity by increasing the number of Irish Members; but he should oppose that proposition when it was brought forward, because the number already in the House created considerable inconvenience. After the holidays he would move that the names on the Speaker's List be taken *de die in diem.*

Mr. *Crampton* said, that the two petitions presented by the hon. and learned member for Dublin were perfectly consistent and accordant with each other. It was not surprising that those who wished to prevent Parliamentary Reform, should be also desirous of retarding the abolition of negro slavery. The want of Parliamentary Reform, and the continuance of Negro Slavery, were the two great spots which disfigured the political character of this country; and, to place Great Britain in her proper situation, it was necessary that they should be removed, although the petitioners would much rather perpetuate them.

Mr. *Calcraft* rose for the purpose of rescuing himself and other English Members from the imputation of countenancing the observations which had just fallen from the hon. member for Liverpool, than which he certainly had scarcely ever heard any thing more illiberal. The gallant General pointed out to the Members for Ireland what course they ought to pursue in presenting petitions. Now he should like the gallant General's suggestions to be sustained by reasoning, but he attempted nothing of the kind. In presenting petitions, he had been always guided by his own discretion, and he always would; and he must say, that in the course of his parliamentary life, he had often derived as much advantage from debates concerning the interests of those who had intrusted petitions to his care, when presenting those petitions, as he had done when a field-day was set apart for the discussion of the question to which they happened to have reference. He regretted the necessity which existed for presenting so many petitions, but, in presenting them, Gentlemen must decide whether they would or would not speak in their support. He felt, that the Members of that House generally represented Ireland as well as England; and he did not suppose that any Gentleman would have expressed such illiberal principles as those which the hon. member for Liverpool had uttered.

Mr. *G. Moore* said, that he thought he was best consulting the time of the House, by reading one short extract from this petition, to show the sentiments of those from whom it came; and with that object in view, he had not added a single observation of his own. As to the observation of the learned member for Saltash (Mr. Crampton), he would only say, that the petition against the Reform Bill, and that relative to the West-India question, came from two very different classes of persons.

Mr. *Briscoe* said, notwithstanding what had fallen from the hon. member for Liverpool, he should take that course which appeared to be most proper to him in presenting petitions; and, of course, other Gentlemen had a right to do the same. He had a large number of petitions to present, on the subject of colonial slavery, but he had been prevented from laying them before the House, in consequence of discussions on other subjects. He hoped, therefore, that those who had intrusted him with them would not impute the delay to any fault of his.

ABOLITION OF SLAVERY QUESTION.] An Hon. *Member*, adverting to the important question relative to Negro Slavery, which was to be brought forward on that evening by the hon. member for Weymouth (Mr. F. Buxton), suggested to the House the propriety of setting apart another hour for the presentation of petitions on the subject.

Lord *Althorp* said, he felt to a certain extent the propriety of the appeal which had just been made; but he wished himself to make an appeal to his hon. friend (the member for Weymouth) on this subject. The question which his hon. friend was about to introduce was one that involved the greatest interests, and which was connected with the most important details; and it did not enter his expectation until within a few days, that this Motion would be pressed forward to-night. He hoped, therefore, looking to the great importance of the subject, that he was not asking too much of his hon. friend, when he requested him to postpone it. The business which had lately been before the House was such as had occupied all his attention: and perhaps it might have been his own fault, but certainly he did not expect, until within a few days, that the question would come on to-night. When it was considered that Ministers must require a little time to judge, as a Government, of the course which they were bound to pursue, he trusted that he should not be asking too much of his hon. friend when he earnestly desired that the Motion might be postponed.

Viscount *Howick* most strongly urged on the hon. member for Weymouth to acquiesce in the request of his noble friend. It was not until Friday last (in consequence of a conversation which he had had with the hon. Member) that he had ceased to suppose that this Motion would not come on until after the holidays. The hon. Member certainly had not given him any promise to that effect on which he could found a claim, but his understanding of the matter was, that the motion would be put off. It would be a very great convenience if the hon. Member would postpone his motion until Wednesday, the 13th of April. Not a single notice of motion stood for that day: and as it was the day before the Committee on the Reform Bill, there would be a vast number of Members in the House, and there would be ample time for a thorough discussion of the question.

Mr. *Calcraft*, knowing how much this Motion interested the feelings, interests, and passions of a large body of people, concurred entirely in the sentiments of the two noble Lords who had just addressed the House. He was anxious that the delay now requested should be acceded to.

Mr. *Sykes* called on his hon. friend the member for Weymouth to consider the state of expectation in which the people of England were placed with respect to this subject, and then to say whether he ought to be biassed by any personal feeling. The noble Lord had stated, very truly, that this question was one of great importance, but were they not now perfectly acquainted with it? The subject had been often before the House, and, in his opinion, they were as ripe for its discussion then as they could possibly be after the holidays. If it were postponed longer, it would be a matter of disappointment to a great number of persons.

Sir *J. Mackintosh* admitted that the hon. member for Weymouth must be governed in his decision entirely by the duty which he owed to the public, and not by any respect to individuals. But he thought that the representation of the first Minister of the Crown in that House, that the minds of Ministers were not yet made up as to the course which it would be proper to pursue,—a point upon which so much depended in the settlement of this question,—he looked upon such a declaration as that to be a public consideration of very great importance. He considered it most important that they should have time for observation and reflection, with reference to the details of any measure to which they might be favourable; even if their minds were made up, as he supposed the minds of all persons were, with respect to the general principle. But that they should have the fullest information was of the utmost importance to the effectual settlement of the question in that House. In the absence of such information, he was perfectly sure that the question would be most unsatisfactorily discussed. On those grounds he would recommend the postponement of the discussion.

Mr. *Fowell Buxton* confessed, that he felt himself taken by surprise on this occasion. He was not aware that such an application would be made until a very few minutes before. He had given positive assurance to many gentlemen, that no consideration should induce him to postpone this motion; but when he heard Ministers declare that they wanted time to consider details connected with the subject, before this important discussion came on,—when he was told how necessary it was that the utmost information should be brought to the consideration of the question, and the more it was considered, the more fairly he was certain it would stand,—looking to these points, he did not feel himself at liberty (hurt as he was by the postponement, and anxious as he was to bring his motion forward) to introduce the question. He hoped, under these circumstances, that those who were interested in the motion would see, that he had no other alternative but to postpone it, however unwillingly. He wished, however, to have an understanding with his noble friend, that no consideration of any kind should prompt his noble friend to ask, or him (Mr. Buxton) to grant, any farther postponement. Under all circumstances, the question must be brought forward in the present Parliament. Therefore, if the noble Lord would state any day on which it should positively be discussed, he would accede to it.

Sir *R. Peel* said, it was at present intended that the Reform Bill should go into Committee on the 14th of April; but as various papers connected with the population had been laid on the Table of the House, and others had been promised, which it was proper should be printed and placed in the hands of Members before the Bill went into Committee, he suggested the propriety of postponing that stage of the Bill until Monday, the 18th of April.

West India Slavery postponed till Thursday, April 14th, and the Committee on the Reform Bill to Monday, April 18th. Shortly afterwards, Mr. F. Buxton changed the day, and selected Friday, April 15th, for his Motion.

LIVERPOOL ELECTION.] On the motion of Mr. Benett the special report of the committee appointed to take into consideration the allegations contained in the petition presented to the House against the return made at the last Liverpool election, was read. The report stated, that gross bribery prevailed at the last election.

Mr. *Benett* said, he rose as Chairman of the Liverpool Election Committee, to make the usual motion when a report of the nature just read was made to the House. He said, that gross bribery had been traced by the Committee to a great number of individuals; but as he was not aware that any opposition would be offered to the motion he was about to make, he should not trouble the House by going into the details of the evidence. He thought that the fact of such a report having been made by the Committee was sufficient reason to induce the House to grant the motion for the suspension of the writ for a new election for Liverpool, until time was allowed for the House to take steps to do justice in the case. The crime of bribery had attached only to the lowest class of freemen in Liverpool; and he thought, that as the proposed Reform measure, if passed into law, would not disfranchise the present freemen during their lives, some other steps ought to be taken to deprive at once the guilty parties at Liverpool of the enjoyment of the elective franchise. He intended to call the attention of the House to the subject after the Easter recess, and in the mean time he moved that the Speaker be directed not to issue the writ for the election of a Burgess to represent Liverpool before Monday April 18th.

An Hon. *Member* seconded the Motion. He declared that a regular systematic plan, of the most gross bribery had been established at Liverpool, and he thought steps ought to be taken to punish the guilty parties.

Lord *Althorp* thought the House would not be doing its duty, after having suspended the writs for smaller places where bribery was detected, not to apply the same rule to larger places. He felt bound to rely on the statement of the Committee, that gross bribery had been practised at Liverpool, and he should not offer any opposition to the Motion.

Mr. *R. Palmer* said, that as the Motion was unopposed, he would trouble the House with only a few words. He thought that the House ought to endeavour to put an end to the bribery at elections, which so much prevailed at present, and he gave notice, that when the proposed Reform measure came into Committee, he should propose a clause, to compel Members of that House to take an oath that they had not employed improper means to procure their return. Whether he should propose that Members should take that oath at the hustings, or at the Table of the House, he had not yet determined.

Motion agreed to.

SUPPLY.—REPORT.] The Report of the Committee on Supply was brought up. On the proposed item of 155,905*l.* for Superannuations for Officers employed in the Civil Departments of the Navy being read,

Mr. *Hume* wished to know whether the right hon. Baronet had made inquiry into the correctness of his statement, that one individual was in the enjoyment of two superannuations.

Sir *James Graham* admitted, that the hon. Member's statement was correct; but he had found in the records of the Admiralty, a Letter from the late Chancellor of the Exchequer, strongly reprobating such a practice; yet stating that it would be a hardship, when many others enjoyed the double pension, not to continue in the case of one individual, what was the general custom. He promised during the Easter recess to take the subject into consideration; and he hoped the hon. Member would not make any objection to the grant at present.

Mr. *Hume* said, he should withdraw all opposition to the grant, in consideration of the promise just given by the right hon. Baronet.

The Report agreed to.

PETITIONS AGAINST REFORM.] Mr. *Hodgson* presented a Petition from Newcastle-upon-Tyne, complaining that the number of Freemen in that town would be diminished, by the proposed Reform Bill, from 5,000 to 2,000. They were favourable to the principle of the Bill, but they prayed against that part of it which would disqualify so many of them.

Sir *C. Wetherell* said, that the very respectable body from which this petition emanated, were very naturally anxious to preserve their rights, and as they, a very numerous constituency, were desirous of preserving a franchise which, as being more extensive, was less valuable than a right enjoyed by a small constituency, it was to be inferred that they were hostile to that general and sweeping disfranchisement contemplated by the Bill before the House. He hoped that other boroughs, following the example of this, would consider well the consequences of the Bill, and give a hint to their Members to oppose it. Indeed, he had reason to expect this, when the provisions of the Bill became more generally known.

Sir *M. W. Ridley* said, that at the meeting at which this petition was agreed to there were 400 or 500 free burgesses present, and not a word was said by any of them against the principle of the Bill, but they thought the continuance of the rights which they enjoyed not inconsistent with that principle.

The Petition read. In moving that it be printed.

Mr. *Hodgson* said, though he fully concurred in the principle of the Bill, and would do nothing to endanger that principle, yet he thought it by no means inconsistent with that principle, that the franchises of large towns, with a constituency so extensive as to secure their independence, should not be disturbed.

Petition to be printed.

Mr. *Hodgson* gave notice, that when the Bill went into Committee, he would move a clause to the effect he had just mentioned.

STEAM NAVIGATION.] Mr. *Charles Douglas* presented a Petition from persons interested in the Navigation of the Clyde and the Frith of Forth, praying that no tax might be laid on Steam Navigation. The importance of the Steam Navigation established in the Clyde was very great, and the advantages it had produced to the whole of the western coast of Scotland were very conspicuous. There was a capital exceeding 400,000*l.* embarked in this Navigation, which would be totally ruined if the proposed tax were imposed. He hoped, therefore, to hear the Chancellor of the Exchequer state, that it was not his intention to press a tax so injurious.

Sir *M. S. Stewart* supported the prayer of the petition. He was at first inclined to think that a small tax on Steam Navigation might be imposed without injury, but the more he considered the subject, the more he was convinced that its effects would be greatly injurious.

Mr. *Hume* said, that a Petition from Glasgow, signed by 10,000 persons, and one from Greenock, also numerously signed, had been intrusted to his care against this tax. He did hope the noble Lord would abandon the proposition. The tax, though insignificant in point of revenue, being calculated at only 75,000*l.*, would be most seriously injurious to Steam Navigation in every part of the country.

Mr. *Warburton* objected to the tax as impolitic and unjust.

Mr. *S. Wortley* said, that the remission of the Coal-tax might be some compensation for the imposition of the tax on Steam-boats in England, though he by no means admitted that it would be a fair ground for such an imposition. But in Scotland, which had been exempt from the coal duty, and which would not benefit by its repeal, the weight of the proposed tax would be severely felt.

Sir *Robert Peel* suggested to the noble Lord, that in future, before he took off any tax, he ought to be prepared with another to supply its place.

Petition to be printed.

CIVIL LIST BILL.] Lord *Althorp* presented the Bill for the Civil List. In presenting it his Lordship said, that he was commanded by his Majesty to acquaint the House, that his Majesty had declared his royal pleasure that the annuities granted to him as Duke of Clarence should cease and determine—also, that his Majesty and her Majesty, have declared their royal will and pleasure, that the annuities granted to her Majesty as Duchess of Clarence should cease and determine.—His Lordship moved the first reading of the Bill.

Bill read a first time.

SLAVERY PETITIONS.] Mr. *Fowell Buxton* presented 499 Petitions from various parts of the country, praying for the Abolition of Slavery. One of them was from the Society of Friends. He said, that he had great pleasure in presenting the petition from this body, as they had been the very first persons in the country who had promulgated the doctrine, that the buying, or selling, or holding of Slaves, was contrary to the doctrines of the Christian religion. Forty years ago they had presented the first petition for the abolition of the Slave-trade, and ten years ago they had presented the first petition for the abolition of Slavery. He also presented a similar Petition from Glasgow, signed by 19,500 of its inhabitants; and to that petition he attached considerable weight, as it came from a place more closely connected with our settlements in the West Indies than any other town in the kingdom.

Mr. *Wilks* supported the prayer of the petitions, and confirmed the statement that the Quakers were the first who petitioned against Slavery.

Mr. *Buck* denied that the Quakers were the first to petition for the abolition of the Slave-trade. The first petition to that effect came from the Colonial Assembly of Jamaica. It had been presented to the King in Council; but its prayer had been rejected.

Mr. *Goulburn*, in looking at the list of the names of places from which these petitions came (a list which occupies three closely printed folio pages), said, that he observed, that two of the petitions came from persons who styled themselves "The Inghamites of Greyrigge," and "The Inghamites of Pear-tree Chapel." He should like to know who these persons were, for he had never heard of them before.

Mr. *Fowell Buxton* confessed his inability to answer the question, but had no objection to have their petition read.

Sir *C. Wetherell.*—Are they a Corporate body, or what?

Petitions laid on the Table.

HAMPSHIRE PETITION FOR REFORM.] Sir *T. Baring* said, that he rose to present to the House a Petition from the Freeholders of the County of Southampton, in favour of the plan of Reform which had been recently introduced into Parliament by his Majesty's Ministers. He had endeavoured to present it to the House before the second reading of the Bill, but had always been prevented by the number of names which had been placed on the Speaker's list previously to his own. The petition was signed by the High Sheriff on behalf of one of the most numerous, the most respectable, and the most intelligent meetings that he had ever seen in that or in any other county. There were upwards of 5,000 freeholders, present at the meeting, and the petition had been carried without any hands being held up against it, save those of the two hon. Members for the County. He had stated to those two hon. Members his intention of presenting this petition on an early day, and he should be sorry if they were not at that moment in their places. The hon. Member read the petition, and concluded by saying, that in every sentiment which it contained, he most cordially concurred.

Sir *R. Vyvyan* said, that if he had heard aright the prayer of this petition, one of its statements was, that the petitioners were anxious for a Reform of Parliament, because the House had regularly refused to institute an inquiry into the cause of the distress of the people. He, therefore, wished the petitioners to recollect that many of the Ministers who now advocated the new plan of Reform were the very men who had denied the existence of distress in the last Session of Parliament, and who had voted against the motion for going into a Committee to inquire into the causes of it. Those who now deprecated the plan of Reform proposed by Ministers were the men who had most strenuously insisted upon the propriety of inquiring into the causes of the distress of the country, in order that they might be remedied as speedily and efficaciously as possible. Let the people, then, judge between those who were their real and those who were only their professing friends. Let them judge between those who had acted, and were still continuing to act, on their own deliberate conviction of what was due to the public safety, and those who were tamely, and he would even add, basely yielding to the ill-advised clamour which was now raised throughout the country. He was glad to find from the statement of the hon. Baronet, that there were still men in that House, who had the courage to stand up in the face of thousands at county meetings, and to tell them, even at the risk of losing their seats at the next election, that they deemed this new plan of Reform most injurious to the Constitution of the country, and that they were determined to oppose it. He was nearly in the same predicament with his two hon. friends, the members for the county of Southampton; and as a person who would never have thought of standing for the county of Cornwall under other circumstances was now canvassing it on account of the vote which he had recently given, he would only say, that had he to give that vote over again twenty times, he certainly would give it as he had already given it,—for he never would submit to the degradation of letting his opinions truckle to the base cry which was now set up by the country. He wished that the country would give itself time to ponder on this new plan of Reform. He wished that the country would give itself time to consider whether this plan contained in itself such moral and political excellence as to be the only one which it ought to adopt. He was sorry that his hon. friends, the members for the county of Southampton, were not then in the House. He knew that he had but little right to interpose upon this occasion, as the petition did not come from his county; but it was impossible for him to remain silent when he heard the petitioners alluding to the distress of the country as one of the reasons for calling for a Reform in Parliament, when they were very likely to abuse those very Members of Parliament who had voted for a Committee to inquire into the causes of it.

Mr. *Spring Rice* could not allow the observations of the hon. member for Cornwall to pass without a reply. The hon. Member had said, that the denial of the existence of distress in the country, and the refusal of the House of Commons to inquire into the sources of it, was the cause of the clamour of the people for Reform; and had then proceeded to assert, that the members of the present Government were among those who had strenuously opposed themselves to all inquiry. Now he thought that he could show in a few words which of the parties into which the House was now divided was most worthy of the confidence of the people of England They would find among the members of the present Government, those who had voted for inquiry,—among the members of the late Government, those who had voted against it. Let the people look at the List of Cabinet Ministers at that moment in the House of Commons, and then, if they were to decide who most deserved their confidence by the division on that question, they would find that those who were the friends of Reform had voted for inquiry, and that those who were the enemies of Reform had voted against it. His noble friend the present Chancellor of the Exchequer—

Sir *R. Vyvyan*—"Had voted against the motion for inquiry."

Mr. *Rice*.—No such thing—his noble friend had voted for it.

Sir *R. Vyvyan*.—No, no.

Mr. *Rice* contended that his noble friend had voted for it. The hon Gentleman was not regular in the interruption which he was giving him. He (Mr. Rice) was speaking, he admitted, from recollection only; but within the next twenty-four hours he would either re-assert this statement if correct, or retract it if incorrect. He asserted, that on the amendment to the address moved by the hon. member for Kent, his noble friend the Chancellor of the Exchequer, had affirmed the existence of distress, and had voted for inquiry; and he recollected the fact well, for he had gone out of the House along with his noble friend. An appeal since that time had been made to the country, and the answer which the country had made to it by the petitions which were already laid upon their Table, entitled him to say that the country had given a verdict in favour of the present Administration, and not in favour of the hon. member for Cornwall, and his friends. On the occasion to which the hon. Member alluded, those who supported the Address had affirmed the existence of partial distress, and those who supported the Amendment had affirmed the existence of general distress. In the first party were the members of the late Administration; in the latter the members of the present. He was quite certain, that if the hon. Baronet would only take the trouble of looking through the division, he would find that those who were friendly to Reform in Parliament had voted in favour of the amendment proposed by the hon. member for Kent.

Sir *R. Vyvyan* said, that he did not mean to deny, that on the amendment to the address moved by the hon. member for Kent, the present Chancellor of the Exchequer had affirmed the existence of general distress in the country, and had voted for inquiry; but he contended, and he believed that he was correct in contending, that on a subsequent occasion, when a motion was brought forward by Mr. Davenport, for an inquiry into the causes of the distress of the nation, the noble member for Northamptonshire, now Chancellor of the Exchequer, had voted against the appointment of any Committee of inquiry. The petition from the county of Southampton stated, that one of their reasons for calling for a Reform in Parliament was, that the House of Commons would not look into the distress of the country. He said, that upon that score the present ministers were as culpable as any of their predecessors. He thought that they had always been opposed to inquiry into the causes of our distress, and into the operation of those principles of free trade which had operated so injuriously on the country by making one class of society the prey of another, and by luring the different interests of it to attack each other.

Sir *T. Baring* was sorry to interrupt the hon. Baronet's declamation, but there was no such statement as the hon. Baronet imagined in the petition. The chief grievance of which the petitioners complained was the want of a full, fair, and sufficient Representation of the people in the Commons House of Parliament.

Mr. *W. Duncombe* contended that his hon. friend was perfectly correct in stating that the distress of the country was one of the grievances which the petitioners thought would be most effectually cured by a Reform in Parliament. He recollected perfectly well, that when a motion was brought forward by Mr. Davenport, for the appointment of a Committee to inquire into the causes of the general distress, the noble member for Northamptonshire opposed it, on the ground that it would lead to an useless inquiry into the state of the currency. Now this, he contended, was a paltry ground for opposing that motion. He denied, whatever might have been the views of some, that there were many Gentlemen who supported Mr. Davenport's motion in order to obtain an alteration of the currency.

Sir *James Graham* did not rise to prolong this discussion, but he must protest against such language being used with regard to his noble friend (Lord Althorp) in his noble friend's absence. He thought it would be difficult for any hon. member—even for the hon. member for York—to point out any part of his noble friend's conduct to which the epithet paltry, could be justly applied. The hon. Member said, that since he had voted for Mr. Davenport's motion, he had had an opportunity of facing his constituents; but so also had his noble friend, who had voted against the motion; and if they should all have a similar opportunity again, at no distant period, the respective constituents of the hon. member for York and of his noble friend would have an opportunity of showing to the conduct of which of them—if to the conduct of either—they considered the epithets which the hon. Member had used were most applicable.

Sir *Charles Wetherell* was quite sure that the epithets complained of by the hon. Baronet must have been intended to apply to the reasoning, and not to the conduct of the noble Lord. He was as sure of this as he was of the fact that most of those who had voted in favour of Reform had voted against Mr. Davenport's motion. Now no man, he contended, could read this petition from Hampshire, without seeing that the petitioners, in effect, asserted that the House had not attended to the distress which prevailed among the agricultural labourers last year; and, moreover, that the petitioners imputed that as a fault to the House. And, although he should be sorry to say anything disrespectful of the noble Lord,—although he never would say anything of the noble Lord in his absence, which he would not say in his presence,—yet he must beg leave to say, now, since the subject had been broached, that in his opinion the failure of Mr. Davenport's motion was mainly attributable to the speech which the noble Lord made against that motion. An hon. Member opposite had said, that the meeting in Hampshire was a most respectable one, which was true,—and that only two hands were held up against the petition,—which was equally true: but whose hands were those? Why, they were the hands of the two illustrious members for the county, who had had the manliness to come forward and act according to their judgment, and to tell their constituents plainly that they would so act. God forbid that the time should ever arrive in which county Members would come into that House as mere machines, acting entirely as their constituents directed them, and not as men exercising their own judgment and their own intellect. This was the true character of a county Member: and whenever the character of the Representatives was inverted he believed that Representation would be at an end, and that with that the people would be ruined. He was sorry that neither of the members for Hampshire was present now, for he highly applauded their conduct, and had read with the greatest pleasure the speeches which they made at the meeting. He wished that all county Members would follow their example. His hon. friend near him, the member for Cornwall, had kept up the character of a Member of that House by differing from his constituents. He would only add that he was glad of having had this opportunity of offering his testimony of admiration of the conduct of the two independent members for Hampshire.

Mr. *W. Duncombe* thought, that the hon. Baronet opposite (Sir James Graham) was the only Member in that House who was of opinion that he had imputed unworthy or paltry conduct to the noble Lord the Chancellor of the Exchequer. All he had said was, that the excuse which the noble Lord had made for opposing Mr. Davenport's motion was a paltry excuse,—and so it was, in his opinion.

Sir *James Graham* said, that he had understood the hon. Member to have said that his noble friend had opposed Mr.

Davenport's motion on the ground that it would lead to an inquiry into the currency with the view of affecting an alteration in it, and that, in his opinion, such a ground of opposition to the motion was paltry, pitiful, and insignificant. He thought that he had distinctly heard those words from the hon. Member. However, he was glad to hear that he was mistaken; but if he had not been, he felt assured that the hon. member for York would have been the only Member of that House who would have thought his noble friend's conduct on that occasion or on any other occasion, could be properly characterized by such epithets.

Mr. *W. Duncombe* thought that the hon. Baronet was decidedly out of order, in imputing to him what he had already declared that he had not said.

Mr. *Attwood* had understood the hon. member for York to have used the expressions as he had said he had used them, and not as the hon. Baronet had thought proper to apply them. With this understanding, he begged leave to say that he was ready to use the same expressions to the same extent as the hon. member had used them. He was confident that the people were only praying for Reform as the means of relieving their distresses, which they thought would disappear before a reformed Parliament. Upon this delusion was founded the popularity of the present Ministry; and that popularity, therefore was as ill-deserved as he foretold it would be short-lived.

Mr. Alderman *Wood* protested against the question of the currency being debated upon the presentation of a petition for Reform. This was the way that many hon. Members, who had been down at eight o'clock in the morning, to place their names on the list, had been prevented from presenting their petitions. If however, hon. Members thought by this means to put a stop to the presentation of reform petitions, they were as much mistaken as they were in supposing that they could set the people against Reform by telling them that many who voted for the Bill had voted against a motion brought forward by one Mr. Davenport. He must say, that he thought the attack which had been made upon the Chancellor of the Exchequer, in his absence, and upon a petition with which he had nothing to do, was a very unfair attack.

Sir *W. Heathcote* was sorry he had not been aware that this petition was to be presented,—for, if he had been, he certainly should have been in his place sooner. He certainly was opposed to the prayer of the petition, and in saying this he begged to declare his regret at finding himself compelled to differ from so respectable a portion of his constituents, as those undoubtedly were who composed the meeting. But, after the best and the most deliberate consideration which he had been able to give to the measure of Reform, he must say that he became day after day the more confirmed in the belief that it was a measure founded upon the most impolitic grounds, and that if it passed into a law, it would be productive of the most injurious effects. It was true that the meeting at which this measure was agreed to was of a very different opinion: but he had reason to know, from communications which he had since received, that this opinion of his was by no means universally opposed to that of the wealth and respectability of the county. He conscientiously believed, that the feeling in favour of Reform among the people was founded, to a great extent, upon distress, and upon the refusal of the House in the last Session to inquire into the causes of that distress.

Mr. *Hughes Hughes* said, that if there was strong language in the petition, it might be accounted for by circumstances peculiar to the county, and which, very naturally, excited a strong feeling in the people. The Isle of Wight—in which he resided—sent six Members to Parliament, and those members were often not even seen by their constituents. Now, with this fact before them, and when two of these Members thought proper to insult their constituents, the House, and the country, by saying that no Reform was necessary, and that no Reform was asked for by the people,—and this had been said by the two hon. members for Newport,—it was not to be wondered at that the inhabitants of the county of Southampton used very strong language in their petitions.

The *Speaker* said, the hon. Member had allowed language to escape him,—unintentionally, no doubt,—which he was sure the hon. member would be anxious to explain. First the hon. Member had said that the language of the petition might be accounted for by what the two hon. members for Newport had said. Now the hon.

Member must be aware that what was said in that House could not justify any thing in a petition. Next, the hon. Member had said, that observations of two hon. members of that House had been insulting to their constituents, to the House, and to the country. He was quite sure, that the hon. member would himself see the propriety of explaining, and be himself anxious to explain, this language, which had no doubt fallen from the hon. Member in the heat of debate.

Mr. *Hughes Hughes* said, that he really did not see what he had to explain. It must have been quite obvious, he thought, to everybody that he had not meant any thing personal to the two hon. members for Newport; that he had merely spoken of them as public men acting in their public capacity, and of the effect which it was natural that the language of those hon. Members should produce in the minds of men circumstanced as the inhabitants of Hampshire were. He said, too, that he thought that that language might justify the petitioners in expressing themselves strongly, and he must say that he still thought so; for although it was irregular to allude in a petition to any thing that was said in that House yet it was quite impossible to prevent language used in that House having the effect which the same language used out of doors would have.

Petition to be printed.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Wednesday, March 30, 1831.

Minutes.] Bills. The Royal Assent was given by Commission to the Sugar Duties' Bill, the Population (Ireland) Bill, the Witnesses' Examination Bill, the Prohibition and Mandamus Bill, the Canada Timber Bill, and thirty-two private Bills.

Petitions presented. In favour of Reform, by Earl Grey, from the Inhabitants of Aylesbury; and similar petitions from the Inhabitants of Leicester, Limerick, Waterford, Oldham, Dover, and from the Burgesses of Newcastle-upon-Tyne:—By the Marquis of Cleveland, from Wrington, Somersetshire:—By the Earl of Radnor, from a Parish in Berkshire:—By Lord Melbourne, from Oldham, and other Parishes in Lancashire:—By the Marquis of Lansdown, from Ballymeath; also from the Inhabitants of Calcutta, for relief from the unequal local Taxation by which they were oppressed; from the Chamber of Commerce at Glasgow, against the renewal of the East India Company's Charter; from the Cordwainers of Dundalk, for the Repeal of the Union; and several for the Abolition of Colonial Slavery. By the Earl of Glasgow, from certain Residents at Irving, that compensation might be given if Slavery were abolished.

Reform Petitions.] Lord *Duncan* presented a Petition from the Chamber of Commerce of Dundee, in favour of the Ministerial plan of Reform. He took that opportunity, in concurrence with the Petitioners, to express his thanks and gratitude to his Majesty's Ministers for that most excellent measure, which possessed the two important advantages of being safe and being efficient, and which had in a most unexampled degree united conflicting opinions, and given almost universal satisfaction, consolidating the Representation in Parliament, and placing it on the clearest and surest footing. But that part of the country from which he came was under peculiar obligations to his Majesty's Ministers, and there the measure was, as might well be expected, hailed not merely with approbation, but with enthusiasm. In England, however bad the system had become, there was always some real popular Representation; but in Scotland there was none, and his noble and learned friend on the Woolsack was well warranted in saying, as he did the other night, that in Scotland, even the counties were closer than English close Boroughs, and the members for the close Boroughs in Scotland were elected by close bodies, who elected each other; so that there was nothing like popular Representation. It was no wonder, therefore, that this measure was there hailed with enthusiasm; and it was remarkable that at Glasgow, when they heard of it, there was an illumination, under the direction of the Magistrates, whose monopoly it went to destroy. There might be some trifling alterations required, in order to render the details of the Bill as conformable as possible to its principle, but he hoped that Ministers would persevere in a determined resistance to any alteration that might detract from the efficiency of the measure; and in adopting that course, they would secure to themselves the almost unanimous support of a grateful people.

Lord *Farnham* wished to take that occasion to observe, that not having been so fortunate as to obtain a hearing last Monday night, he should now state the grounds on which he objected to the measure proposed by his Majesty's Ministers. The first question to be considered was, whether any Reform at all in the Representation was wanted; and supposing that question to be answered in the affirmative, then the next question was, whether this measure was the fit and proper one? He admitted that, through length of time, the Representation had got into such a state that there was need for some Reform. But if the theory of the Constitution were to be acted on as a rigid rule, admitting of no relaxation, it would be impossible to carry on the Government. There were, however, some anomalies in the practical part of the Constitution, and in the state of the Representation, which enabled the Government to carry on the public business smoothly. One of the most important of these anomalies was the Borough interest, which prevented a too violent collision between the different parts of the system, as that was the manner in which this House and the Crown were in some degree represented in the House of Commons. He considered that the Bill would operate in a manner peculiarly disadvantageous in that part of the United Kingdom (Ireland) with which he was more especially connected. His great and chief objection to this measure was, that it destroyed the close Boroughs in Ireland. These Boroughs were established in the reign of James the 1st, for the purpose of protecting the settlers from Great Britain and the Protestant interest. They had not decayed but were still efficient, and were still required to answer the great purpose for which they were established. If in these Boroughs they extended the elective franchise to every householder paying 10*l*. a-year rent, they would create a very inferior class of voters—a class which would depend on popular opinion for their existence. There was an attempt during the heat of the agitation on the Catholic Question to ruin that description of people in case they did not support the measure of what was called Emancipation, and many of them had been ruined. The summons of coercion might be used to compel them to support the Repeal of the Union, and it might be taken for a certainty, that that use of it would be made. The consequence would be, that thirty or forty of their nominees would be returned to Parliament; and they all knew that thirty or forty agitators in the House of Commons, acting as one united body for a particular purpose, might be so troublesome as to prevent the public business being carried on by the Government. They all knew that the Catholics of Ireland, wished the destruction of the Protestant Church Establishment in that country, and so many Members leagued and banded for that purpose, would be too much for any Government. The noble Earl at present at the head of his Majesty's Government had said, in reply, he believed, to a speech of his (Lord Farnham's) in the debate on the Catholic Question, that while he should deprecate the Establishment of the Catholic Church or hierarchy in Ireland, he did not think even if such a thing should happen, that it would lead to a dissolution of the two countries. He however was convinced that the effect of the Establishment of Catholic ascendancy in Ireland would be a dissolution of that Union. The proposed measure was peculiarly calculated to affect the Protestant interest in Ireland; and he could assure their Lordships that it was to the Protestants of Ireland they must look for the continuance of the Legislative Union between the two countries. If the Protestants of Ireland saw that their interests were deserted and neglected, he believed their attachment to the Union would not continue: and, if the Protestants united with the Catholics, to obtain the Repeal of the Union, they might laugh at all resistance to that measure. In case of such an event happening, he hesitated not to assert that the whole force of England would never be able to resist the united efforts of a brave and determined people. There was not one of their Lordships who would more deprecate such an occurrence, or go farther to avert it, than he would, but he felt that he should not do his duty to their Lordships or to the country, when he saw that the tendency of the measure introduced by his Majesty's Ministers was to lead to such a result, if he did not warn them against it. If pushed to the extent of the provisions of the Bill, he believed the proposed measure would lead to such a result. The measure of the Union had now his most cordial support, though he had been one of those who, with the noble and learned Lord, the present Chancellor of Ireland, had thought that the Legislature of Ireland exceeded its powers in passing such a measure. Many years, however, had elapsed, since the Union was accomplished; and he thought that thirty years' acquiescence had given that measure a kind of prescription, and that no man could properly dispute its legality, or attempt to set it aside. It was a seducing consideration, however, to many in Ireland, to induce them to attempt the Repeal of the Union, that it would ensure the residence of the nobility and gentry. He had heard, no doubt, that many of the Protestants of Ireland might be induced, on this ground, to support the Repeal of the Union, though no portion of the Protestants, he was convinced, would ever assent to the dissolution of the connection between the two countries. Whether the dissolution of the connection between the two countries would necessarily result from a Repeal of the Union, was a question which admitted of argument; but he (Lord Farnham) believed that it would. He further believed that no man who had the slightest regard for the future interests and prosperity of Great Britain or Ireland, would wish for a dissolution of the connection between those countries. Such being his sentiments, he felt that he should not have acted as an honest man, and should, in fact, have deserved the character of a traitor to his country, if he did not warn their Lordships of what he considered the probable result of the Bill that had been brought forward, as it would affect that part of the kingdom with which he was connected.

The *Lord Chancellor* regretted that the noble Lord should have gone into such subjects upon the presentation of a petition, and would not follow the noble Lord through all the topics upon which he had touched. He must however say, that he deeply lamented that the noble Lord should have indulged in that House in such language as had fallen from the noble Lord. Suppose now that he had said only one-tenth part in support of the Bill of what the noble Lord had said in opposition to it. Suppose he had said, "Beware how you reject the prayers of the people, beware how you offend Tories and Whigs, and Radicals and Jacobins, for they will be a brave, and united, and determined people; beware how you raise the people from one end of the empire to the other, by refusing to pass this measure, for if you do, you will raise a flame which will defy the whole force of Government to extinguish it." If he had said only this, if he had only said one-tenth part of what the noble Lord had said, he should in vain have attempted to defend himself from the wrath and censure of his noble opponents, who would have told him that it was altogether unjustifiable to threaten the House and the Government with physical force. Others might use this language, it seemed, without censure, but those who were advocates for Reform must weigh every word they uttered. It would have been in vain for him to have deprecated the wrath of their Lordships, if he had threatened them with lawless resistance to an act of a lawful Legislature.

Lord *Farnham*.—I made no such threat: all I said was, that under the circumstances, I supposed the people of Ireland would laugh at being menaced with the force of England.

The *Lord Chancellor* was very glad to find, that he had misunderstood the noble Lord: but he certainly thought he had heard the noble Lord say, that if this measure passed, it would unite the Catholics and Protestants together for the Repeal of the Union,; and that if it did so unite them, not all the force of England could put them down—for that they would be a united, a brave, and a determined people. Then what had laughing to do with the matter? Did men unite in order to laugh? Was it necessary that men should be brave before they could laugh? Was it essential that men should be determined for the purpose of laughing? He repeated that he should be glad to find he had misunderstood the noble Lord, though he feared he had not; but at all events he was certain that the observations to which he alluded must have fallen from the noble Lord in the heat of debate.

Lord *Farnham* said, that he had never said what the noble and learned Baron had attributed to him, nor any thing like it. He had never said that the people of Ireland would offer lawless resistance to any lawful act of the Legislature; but he had said, this measure of Reform would lead the Protestants of Ireland to unite, or rather, that it was probable the measure would lead them to unite with the Catholics, if the results which he foresaw—namely, the prostration of the Protestant interest—should follow the passing of the Bill; that then the dread which was now felt at the Repeal of the Union would pass away; and that if those who were now against the Repeal of the Union, were to unite with the Repealers, then it would be impossible for the Government to resist their united wishes.

Earl *Grey* regretted that this discussion had arisen, and he must say that if he had ever heard a speech of pernicious tendency—if he had ever heard a speech which was eminently calculated to produce those results which the noble Baron professed to deprecate—if, he said, he had ever heard a speech of that character, that speech was the speech of the noble Baron. He was glad, however, that the noble Lord had found an opportunity of putting some water into his wine, and of in some measure correcting and controlling the effects which his first speech was so likely to produce; for if his ears had not strangely deceived him—if the impression upon his mind was not as erroneous as it was strong, he had understood the noble Lord to say, that in consequence of the Reform measure, the Protestant interest of Ireland would consider itself deserted; and he did entreat the noble Lord to consider what effect was likely to be produced by such an authority declaring publicly in his place in Parliament, that by a certain act of the Legislature, the Protestants of Ireland might consider themselves as deserted by the Legislature. He called upon the noble Baron to consider whether, as a friend of peace, as a friend of security, as a friend of tranquillity, and as a friend of the Union, whether,—although he professed himself desirous of preserving that peace, that security, and that tranquillity, and that Union,—he was holding language which was at all calculated to secure the object he professed to have in view, when he told them that the Catholics being leagued together to obtain the ascendancy of their own religion, were likely to be joined by the Protestants in the endeavour to procure the Repeal of the Union, because the Protestants would have a right to consider themselves as deserted if a certain Act were passed by the Legislature. He could have no doubt that the noble Baron was a friend of the Union, because the noble Baron had declared that he was so; but he must take the liberty of saying, that if the noble Baron had been the bitterest enemy of the Union, he could not, at a time when great discontent prevailed in Ireland, have held language that had a more direct tendency to inflame and irritate the minds of those who still retained their loyalty, or language which savoured more of a disposition to effect the dissolution of that Union, which, if dissolved, he believed must end in a dissolution of all connexion between the two countries. He confessed that he hoped better things from Ireland, and in particular he hoped better things from the Protestants of Ireland. He hoped that the Protestants would view this measure in its proper light, as a measure which would give to the people in all parts of he empire a more fair and equal Representation; and allow him to say, that, if his information had not greatly failed him, this measure, which the noble Lord foretold would lead to such pernicious consequences, had been hailed in the northern parts of Ireland, where the Protestant interest was most prevalent and most firmly established, as a measure altogether satisfactory, and as one which was likely to promote the best interests of Ireland. But the noble Lord had told them, that if this measure passed, it would cause the destruction of all those feelings and opinions which now supported the Union; that the Protestants and Catholics would unite together; that, so united, they would form a brave and resolute people, who would laugh at the whole combined force of England, and who, in spite of that force, would effect the dissolution of that union which he, in common with the noble Baron, had at first opposed, but which he and the noble Baron were now alike anxious to retain. He could not believe that in thus dealing with these topics the noble Baron could have any of those objects in view, which others, who adopted no very dissimilar course, professed they wished to attain; but he must say, that this was not the fairest or the most prudent mode of stating objections to a measure under the consideration of Parliament; for nothing could be more calculated to inflame the prejudices and to excite the feelings of the people, upon whose obedience to the Government the security of the Government must depend. Having said thus much upon the observations of the noble Baron, he should reserve all other remarks upon the measure until the Bill came before their Lordships, considering, as he did, that this was a most improper and inconvenient mode of discussing the merits of it. But the noble Baron had told them, that the boroughs were a part of the Constitution. Now this he was prepared to deny most unequivocally. He contended that the boroughs were not only not a part of the Constitution, but that they were derogatory from the principles of the Constitution,—nay, contrary to the principles of the Constitution. The Constitution was founded upon Representation, not on Nomination; and this he should be prepared to support by argument when the measure came before them. But the noble Lord had told them why the boroughs in Ireland were given. According to the noble Lord, they were given by

James 1st to secure the Protestant interest in that country. Be it so; but if these boroughs were in the hands of regular traffickers, who sold them to the highest bidders, without reference to the religion, the politics, the feelings, or the opinions of the purchasers; if they were brought into the market and offered to him who would give most for them, so that the Catholic, if he outbid the Protestant, might have them, what, in the name of common sense, became of the security of the Protestant interest? His firm belief was, that this measure, if it passed into a law, would, so far from weakening the power of the Government in Ireland, considerably increase it, and place it upon such a foundation of security and strength, that no lawless attempts could prevail against or shake it. The noble Lord had been pleased to allude to what he had said in the discussion upon the Catholic Question. It was true that he had said, upon the occasion alluded to, that even if it should unfortunately happen that the Catholic Church should prove triumphant in Ireland, still he did not see why that should cause a dissolution of the connection between the two countries. Their Lordships, however, would, he was sure, recollect that he had stated this with great qualifications, — that he had accompanied it with the expression of his wish,—a wish, in which he was sure their Lordships would believe him to have been sincere, that the Protestant Establishment in Ireland might flourish and prevail; and that he had said, at the same time, that whatever danger there might be in concession, there was, in his opinion, far greater danger in refusing to concede; that if there were danger on the one hand, there was the certainty of destruction on the other. He heartily hoped and trusted that the Protestant Establishment would grow and thrive in Ireland; and when it should be improved by the reformation of abuses which had crept into it, and when it should be so exhibited to the people in the full purity and splendor of the true religion, he had no doubt that it would flourish and prevail, if men's minds were not inflamed and excited. Still, however, if that Church should perish, and God forbid that such a misfortune should ever befall them, he repeated that he did not see why the two countries should not continue united. When he looked to Scotland, and saw there a Church differing almost as much from the Anglican Establishment as the Romish Church differed from it,—when he knew that in Canada the Catholic was the prevalent religion; when he saw that in the most despotic countries in the world there were distinct Churches established, and yet all went on together in good-will towards the general support of the Government, he could not, he confessed, tell why, if that, which he admitted would be a very great misfortune, were to happen in Ireland, the Union between the two countries, upon which the prosperity of both alike depended, should be dissolved. He had gone further into this subject than he had meant to go; but after the language of the noble Lord, and with the consequences which that language was likely to produce before his eyes, he could not help rising to answer the noble Lord, and to protest against the measure of Reform being held up as a proof that the Protestant interest was betrayed or deserted by the Legislature, for in his mind that measure was calculated in an eminent degree to support, to strengthen, and to confirm that interest.

Lord *Wynford* said, that no man deprecated discussions which were not regularly brought forward, more than he did. That House ought always to set an example of order in its proceedings; and if their Lordships meant to support the station which they held in the Constitution, and in the estimation of the country, they ought strictly to observe the rules and principles of the Constitution, and not to interfere with measures which were not properly before them. It was impossible, however, that these discussions could be permitted at one side, and not at the other. The noble Lord (Duncan) who brought forward the petition, stated his concurrence in the prayer, and added, that the measure was hailed with satisfaction in Scotland. It was the most natural thing on earth, therefore, that a person connected with Ireland, should rise, as his noble friend (Lord Farnham) had done, and state his view of the effects of the measure in Ireland. His noble friend had explained what he stated. It was not for him to pretend to a knowledge of their Lordships' rules, as he had only been a short time a Member of that House, but he had been many years a Member of the other House, and always thought that when a noble Lord corrected his expressions and explained his meaning, that statement ought to be received. His noble friend said, he did not mean that physical force would be appealed to, if the measure passed, nor did he (Lord Wynford) understand him to say so. What he understood his noble friend to say was, that the effect of the measure would be such, from the preponderance of Catholics in Ireland, that it would reasonably lead the Protestants to conclude that their interests were not duly attended to. The effect of such a feeling, his noble friend argued, would be, that the Protestants of Ireland might be disposed to give up their present connections, and that they would be driven into the arms of the Roman Catholics, many of whom were now seeking a Repeal of the Union. If that measure was granted, his noble friend further inferred, that it would lead to a separation of the two countries, and perhaps the establishment of Ireland as an independent monarchy. In his own opinion, to suppose that such was likely to be the effect of the measure proposed by his Majesty's Ministers did not require the knowledge which his noble friend possessed of Ireland. The Protestants were in such a fearful minority that great alarm must naturally arise from any measure giving greater power to the Roman Catholics in that country. The noble Earl (Grey) said, that the language of intimidation was used by his noble friend. He could wish that there had been as great an abstinence from the use of intimidation on the other side. He wished that the friends of the measure had practised that sort of abstinence which they recommended to those hostile to it. True, they had not yet heard any threat of the separation of England from Ireland, but they were told that anarchy and confusion would arise from the rejection of the measure. That was the tone used on this subject by those who now deprecated anything like an expression of apprehension as to the consequences of this measure. He was sure that such statements could have no effect on their Lordships' minds. They were placed above the influence of so base a passion as fear, and would decide on this question uninfluenced by fear or hope, and in such a way, he had no doubt, as would secure to this country a continuation of those advantages which had arisen from the present calumniated system of Representation—a system which had raised this country to a greater height of prosperity than was ever before heard of. For his own part he had made up his mind on this question, but he had refrained from expressing that opinion, as the measure had not come fairly before their Lordships. He trusted, whilst those who concurred with him abstained from exercising an improper or unconstitutional influence on this subject, that the same course would be adopted by those on the other side, not only in that House but also out of doors. When the measure came regularly before their Lordships, he should be prepared to state his opinions on it fearlessly and honestly. His opinion, doubtless, could have but little weight with their Lordships, but it would have the merit, at all events, of being a candid opinion, uninfluenced by personal motives. He had no influence in boroughs, and very little property, compared with many of their Lordships; but he was very anxious that they should not give up what they knew they possessed, for the purpose of obtaining what was out of their power. If his noble friend used the language of intimidation, he was the last, and not the first, who had used it; but he must freely admit, that language of that sort ought not to be used in that place, of all others, upon a question of such magnitude.

The Duke of *Buckingham* said, that if a stranger had heard only the speech of the noble Earl at the head of his Majesty's Government, he might have supposed that some one had stood up in the course of the evening for the profligate practice of selling places in Parliament, and trafficking in corrupt boroughs. He begged to ask their Lordships, however, whether any one, in the course of the discussion, had maintained that such practices were constitutional? He was sure that none of their Lordships had. So little was he from defending such practices, that his principal objection to the proposed measure was, that it provided no remedy against them. The preamble set forth that great abuses had arisen in the Representation of the people in the Commons House of Parliament. What were those abuses? The corruption and bribery practised at elections, and the sale of boroughs. These were the only abuses, he maintained, and yet these were the only things for which no remedy was to be found in the Bill. There was not a word in the Bill to prevent the sale of boroughs; there was nothing to check corruption, or to render it more difficult to be practised—nothing to render the evidence of corruption less difficult. If any thing was done by the Bill, it was to render those practices more easy of execution. The Bill went to extend the principle of corruption instead of checking it. Bribery, he maintained, would exist to a greater extent, and be more difficult of proof, under the proposed than under the present law. He certainly should not enter into the details and objects of such a bill upon a desultory discussion. One objection which he had to entering into the discussion was, that their Lordships had no means of knowing in what shape the measure would come before them, if, indeed, it ever came before them. He did not believe, for his own part, that the Bill could come before them. He had no idea that such a difficulty would be placed before their Lordships. The principle of the proposed measure was all that had hitherto been discussed; the other House of Parliament had not yet entered into the details of the measure, and therefore it would be premature for him, or for any of their Lordships, to come to a direct and positive conclusion. From all which he had seen or heard of the measure proposed by his Majesty's Ministers, however, he could not suppose that he could ever give it his concurrence. He looked upon it as a measure overturning the oldest and best establishments of the country. It was neither more nor less than a public and private robbery; tending to throw the Representation into the hands of those in whom the Constitution never intended it should be placed. He agreed with his noble friend (Lord Farnham), that the effect produced, particularly in Ireland, might be the placing the whole Representation in the hands of those who had much practice in obtaining influence by agitation alone. He did not differ from his noble friend materially in any of those points from which his noble friend apprehended great danger as arising from this measure, and if those who brought forward a measure calculated to produce such fatal effects had learned somewhat sooner the lesson they now endeavoured to teach to others—of not using exciting language, the country would have been in a much better situation, and this measure might have created less apprehension. If those who supported this measure, and others, had not called upon Ireland, and said "Agitate, agitate, agitate!"—if language, not only tending to produce, but actually encouraging excitement and agitation, had not been used, he should not have felt the alarm he now did at the proposed measure. He had stated his intention of not entering further into its merits at that time, and he should therefore not trespass longer on their Lordships. In the measure now before the other House of Parliament, he repeated that he did not think he could ever concur. If any other measure of Reform, however, should be brought hereafter before Parliament, he should consider it on its own merits and decide on it with a reference to its own principles. He did not say that no measure of Reform would meet his approbation and support. In these times he admitted that no public man should say, on any question, "Here I take my stand, and nothing shall move me." He should decide on any measure that might be brought forward according to times and circumstances, to the merits of the bill, and the feelings of the people. He trusted that a measure of Reform might yet be proposed to which, as an honest man, he might give his approbation. On its own merits, however, he should decide whether any measure that might be proposed should have his approbation or disapprobation. He was bound in candour to state, however, that he did not see how the measure now proposed could be modified in such a manner as would entitle it to his approbation.

Lord *Goderich* said, that he had heard the last part of the noble Duke's speech with surprise and with satisfaction. With surprise, because, from the first part of the noble Duke's speech, he had not expected to hear that the noble Duke was prepared to discuss the measure with respect to the time and circumstances; and with satisfaction at learning, that the noble Duke would allow the feelings and the situation of the country to weigh with him in coming to a decision. He hoped that he should have the benefit of his noble friend's vote in favour of this Bill, for never was there a moment in which such a concurrence of public opinion in favour of any measure had been witnessed, as existed in favour of the Bill now before the other House of Parliament. He hoped that he should have the benefit of the noble Duke's vote on this occasion, as he had upon other occasions, notwithstanding his positive declarations to the contrary. His noble friend, in alluding to the objections to this measure, had observed, that nobody had been profligate enough to state that there had been any persons who had contended for the propriety of the practice of the purchase and the sale of boroughs. His noble friend was indeed ignorant of what had transpired elsewhere, if he did not know that great advantages had been ascribed to that practice,—that it had been eulogized as the most independent mode of obtaining a seat in Parliament,—and that it had been urged as an argument against the Bill, that if the practice were prohibited, it would stop up a constitutional way of returning the Representatives of peculiar interests to the House of Commons. Nay more, this practice had been panegyrized as one of the most valuable attributes of the Constitution by those who cherished every kind of prejudice in favour of the existing order of things, totally forgetting, as they did when they used so preposterous an argument, that it was denounced by the law of the land as a violent outrage upon the Constitution. He recollected that when this subject was under the consideration of the House of Commons, many years ago, and when it was proposed to pass an Act expressly against the practice, a most ingenious, independent, and eloquent gentleman, to whom the noble Duke was much attached, the late Mr. Windham, had vindicated the practice with great skill and ingenuity. He recollected that it was stated upon that occasion, that the practice was as notorious as the sun at noon-day, and that it was an inevitable incident to the possession of the borough property. He recollected likewise the language used on the occasion by the illustrious individual who then filled the chair of Speaker in the other House, and who was afterwards elevated into this House, under the title of Lord Colchester; he recollected that noble Lord saying, that notorious as the practice might be, it was a practice against which our ancestors would have started with indignation. He recollected also that that language was ridiculed at the time, as being too figurative, and that the sincerity of the Speaker in using it was questioned, and that it was even considered as nothing else but a clap-trap. But if the noble Lord did not speak the language of his own heart, what was the language which he had spoken? The language of the Constitution; and he could have had no other motive for using it than the knowledge that it was congenial to the principles of the Constitution. The Act of Parliament was passed, and the practice of buying and selling seats, which he believed to be an innovation recently introduced into Parliament, and unknown till the last century, was denounced by every branch of the Legislature. It was still, however, so notorious, that you could not go into the higher classes of society without hearing one man talking of how much he gave, and another of how much he got, for his seat in Parliament. That practice, however, which some persons now cherished as a mode of uniting together the different interests of these realms, was denounced in the Statute-book as contrary to the usage, the rights, and the freedom of Parliament, and as a direct violation of the laws of the land. His noble friend evidently entertained the same feelings respecting it as was displayed in the laws of the land; and thus all the grounds of his argument were completely drawn from under him. For his own part, he did not think these rotten boroughs necessary parts of the Constitution; and seeing how great an abuse had arisen from their existence, he saw no means of remedying it except by that total excision which was proposed in the present Bill.

Petition laid on the Table.

SITTING ON GOOD FRIDAY.] The Archbishop of *Canterbury* wished to put a question to the noble and learned Lord on the Woolsack, in order to correct a misrepresentation which had gone abroad respecting the days which his Lordship had fixed for the sittings of this House on private business. He understood that it had gone forth that their Lordships were to sit on Good Friday,—was that so or not?

The *Lord Chancellor* said, that it was not so. He knew, however, the origin of the error. He had said, that he should sit on Saturday and Monday next, which days happened to be Easter eve and Easter Monday. He had mentioned that the Judges of Assize, when on their circuits, were accustomed to sit on Good Friday, after attending divine service. He had mentioned that fact to show, that there would have been nothing contrary to the orders of the Church, if their Lordships had determined to meet on that day. But he had no intention of sitting then; he only intended to sit upon Saturday and Monday.

THE BISHOP OF ELY.] The Archbishop of *Canterbury* said, that he now rose for the purpose of doing justice to a right rev. Prelate, who, though he might be in an infirm state of body, was, beyond all question, in a sound state of mind. The right rev. Prelate read two letters to the House, one from a Dr. Clerk, physician to the Bishop of Ely, stating that his patient was at present fully capable of understanding any business that might be communicated to him; and the other from a Mr. Pickering, stating, in reply to a note from one of the Bishop's sons, requesting him to give an opinion as to the Bishop's ability to transact business since his attack in May last, that since the second week in June, he considered the Bishop, not only competent to transact any ordinary business, but also to direct any business connected with the administration of his See. He had thought it necessary to read these letters, as a doubt had been thrown out by the noble and learned Lord on the Woolsack as to the soundness of the right rev. Prelate's mind. Their Lordships were aware that a charge had been made against the Bishop of Ely, for accumulating his patronage on the members of his own family; but out of nine only two preferments had been bestowed upon the members of his Lordship's family in the course of several years, and that circumstance might tend to show how much exaggeration there was in the reports which had reached their Lordship's ears.

The *Lord Chancellor* said, that he was sure that the right rev. Prelate who had just sat down would do him the justice to recollect, that the observations which he had made on a former evening, respecting the right rev. Prelate, were in reply to an attack which had been made upon himself individually for an improper disposal of the Church patronage belonging to the Great Seal. He had heard certain reports respecting the bodily infirmities of the right rev. Prelate, and those reports, fortified by the circumstance of his having received a letter, bearing the signature, but evidently not in the writing, of the rev. Prelate, giving one account of his right to the presentation of a certain living, and of his subsequently receiving another letter, giving quite a different account of it, under the idea that he had not received the first letter, led him to suppose that the right rev. Prelate was in such a weak state of bodily health as might also impair the faculties of his mind. He had now no doubt that the right rev. Prelate was in a sound state of mind. He contended, however, that it was quite clear that the right rev. Prelate had not written both the letters which he had received.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Wednesday, March 30, 1831.

MINUTES,] New writs. On the Motion of Lord ALTHORP, were issued for the Queen's County, in the room of Sir H. PARNELL, who had accepted the Office of Secretary at War; and for the Borough of Launceston, in the room of Sir WILLOUGHBY GORDON, who had accepted the Chiltern Hundreds. And on the Motion of Mr. SPRING RICE, for Malton, in the room of Sir JAS. SCARLETT, who had accepted the Chiltern Hundreds.

On the Motion of Lord ALTHORP, it was ordered that the House at its rising do Adjourn till April 12th.

Bills. Dean Forest Boundaries read a second time.

Returns ordered. On the Motion of Lord ALTHORP, the Salaries and Allowances heretofore paid out of the Civil List in England, but which it is proposed to charge upon the Consolidated Fund:—On the Motion of Lord NUGENT, from the Vestrymen, Churchwardens, Overseers, and Governors of the Poor, of the Parish of St. James, Westminster, an account of all Monies received from the Commissioners of his Majesty's Woods and Forests, in respect of deficiency on the Poors' Rates, arising from Houses and Buildings shut up, taken down, or used by authority of the Act 53 Geo. 3rd, c. 121; specifying the Sums received in each respective Year; also the situation of each House and Building, with the rental for which the same was Assessed for the relief of the Poor, stating the Pound rate in each Year; and all Monies paid by the said Vestrymen, Churchwardens, Overseers, and Governors of the Poor, to his Majesty's Commissioners of Woods and Forests, under and in Pursuance of the 43rd Section of Act 53 Geo. 3rd; specifying the times at which such Payments were made; also, if the whole of such Sums were paid from the Surplus Rates, as directed by such Section, and, if otherwise, by what authority such other Monies were paid to the said Commissioners:—On the Motion of Mr. WILKS, the number of Houses Assessed to the Inhabited House Duty at and above 10*l.* and upwards in the Tower Hamlets, including the Parishes in the Tower Division of Ossulston Hundred, Middlesex; also, in Finsbury, including the Parishes of the Finsbury Division in Ossulston Hundred, Middlesex, and the Parishes of St. Andrew, Holborn, and St. George the Martyr, and St. Giles in the Fields, and St. George, Bloomsbury, and the Liberties of Saffron Hill, Hatton Garden, and Ely Rents, all in Middlesex; also, in Mary-le-bone, including the Parishes of St. Mary-le-bone, St. Pancras, and Paddington, Middlesex; and also, in Lambeth, including the Parishes of St. Mary, Lambeth, St. Mary, Newington, Bermondsey, and Rotherhithe, Surrey; distinguishing in each division the number of Houses Assessed from 10*l.* to 19*l.* inclusive, and from 20*l.* to 30*l.* inclusive, and from 31*l.* to 39*l.* inclusive, and at 40*l.* and upwards; and the Receipts of the Pilgrimage Tax at Juggernaut, and of the Disbursements thereof, since 1805; and also, Copies of any Correspondence which has taken place respecting the said Tax between the Court of Directors of the East India Company and the Government of Bengal, and also, between that Government and their subordinate Officers, since the Papers which were presented to Parliament in 1813; and Copies of the Correspondence (so far as can be conveniently given) between the Court of Directors and the authorities in India thereon; also of the number of Persons employed in and about the Metropolitan Police on each quarter day during the Year 1830, and at the present time; distinguishing their respective grades, and specifying the number of Men in each grade, their Pay, and Allowances:—On the Motion of Vis.

count Lowther, from the Population returns of 1821, the Population of the following places.—Brighthelmstone, Parish of Brighthelmstone, Sussex — Bolton-le-Moor, Townships of Great and Little Bolton, Lancashire—Blackburn, Parish of Blackburn, Lancashire—Bradford, Parish of Bradford, Yorkshire—Cheltenham, town of Cheltenham, Gloucester—Dudley, Parishes of St. Edmund and St. Thomas Dudley, Worcestershire—Frome, Town of Frome, Somerset—Gateshead, Parish of Gateshead, Durham—Huddersfield, Parish of Huddersfield, Yorkshire—Kidderminster, Town of Kidderminster, Worcestershire — Kendal, Town of Kendal, Westmorland — Macclesfield, town of Macclesfield, Cheshire—Stockport, Town of Stockport, Lancashire—South Shields, the Town of South Shields, Township of Westoe, County of Durham—Tynemouth, Parish of Tynemouth, Township of North Shields, Northumberland—Warrington, Town of Warrington, Lancashire—Whitehaven, Town of Whitehaven, Town and Parish of Workington, Parish of Harrington, Cumberland—Walsall, Borough and Foreign of Walsall; distinguishing the numbers in respect of the Borough, and of the Parishes and Townships or Hamlets in each place; also, the Amount of Law expenses, with the Salaries of the Solicitors of Taxes, or their Clerks, and the charges for business done in respect of Taxes, in the King's Remembrancer's Office, or other Departments in the Exchequer in England and Scotland, for the Year ending 5th January, 1831, distinguishing the Amount of charges under each head in each Kingdom:—On the Motion of Mr. Hughes Hughes, the Charges and Expenses paid or incurred by his Majesty's Commissioners for Building new Churches, between 25th March, 1830 and 25th March, 1831:—On the Motion of Mr. Buller, the Number of Gallons (Imperial measure) of Foreign Brandy entered for Home consumption in Great Britain, the rate of Duty affecting the same, and the entire Nett produce of the Duty, each Year, since 1780; the Number of Gallons (Imperial measure) of Geneva entered for Home consumption in Great Britain, the rate of Duty affecting the same, and the entire Nett produce of the Duty, each Year, since 1780; similar accounts of the Brandy and Geneva entered for Home consumption in Ireland, the rates of Duty affecting each, and the entire Nett produce of the Duties in each year, since 1800.

Petitions presented. In favour of Reform, by Mr. Bayntun, from East Shilton, Leicestershire:—By Mr. Ruthven, from Bainbridge:—By Mr. Leader, from Galway:—And from the Members of the Irish Bar connected with Connaught:—By Lord Morpeth, from Ottey, Stansfield, Haworth, and Dewsbury:—By Mr. Ward, from Guildford:—By Viscount Duncannon, from Inhabitants of St. Patrick, Kilkenny; and from the High Sheriff and Grand Jurors of the County of Kilkenny: By Viscount Palmerston, from Diss, and Romney Infra, and Romney Extra. Against Reform, by Mr. Monteith, from the Incorporated Trades of Lanark. By Lord Morpeth, from the Managers of the Sheffield Savings' Bank, for an alteration of the Savings' Banks Acts; from the Worsted Spinners of Halifax, against the Cotton Factories Bill; and from Freeholders in York, against the Registry of Deeds Bill:—By Lord Lowther, to the same effect, from Whitehaven; and from Kirby Kendal, against the Punishment of Death for Violations of the Right of Property. By Col. Sibthorp, from the Owners of Steam Vessels Navigating between Lincoln and Boston, against the proposed Tax on Steam Vessels. By Mr. Littleton, for the Repeal of the Duty on Boracic Acid, from Workmen in the Staffordshire Potteries. Against the Grants to the Kildare Street Society, by Mr. Dominick Browne, from Parishes in Sligo:—By Mr. Leader, from the Catholics of Kilkenny:—By Mr. Wyse, from the Catholic Clergy of Kilmacthomas. For the Repeal of the Union, by Mr. M'Namara, from Kilfeenaghty. Against the Truck System, from Newcastle under Lyne, by Mr. Miller. By Lord Leveson Gower, from Sir Abraham Bradley King, to have his case taken into consideration.

Reform Petitions.] Mr. *Bayntun* presented a Petition from the Inhabitants of the City of York, in favour of the measure of Reform brought forward by his Majesty's Government, praying the same might pass into a law. He stated, that it was agreed upon by the most respectable and most numerous meeting of persons of all parties. He stated, that he had already expressed himself in favour of the measure, but he would take this opportunity, and he felt, as their Representative, he was bound to state, that a great number of his constituents, freemen of the city, not unfavourable to Reform, viewed with dissatisfaction and regret those clauses of the Bill which tended to disfranchise their posterity of their rights of voting, by patrimony and by servitude, which they had so long enjoyed and exercised in such a becoming manner. He trusted, therefore, that as the measure professed to extend, and not contract, the elective franchise, his Majesty's Ministers, in the Committee on this Bill, would see the necessity of giving the greatest possible latitude to claims so just, consistently with the general principles of a measure fraught with so many benefits to the country.

Mr. *Schonswar* concurred entirely with the hon. Member, and knew that the freemen of York had exercised their franchise in a very proper manner.

Mr. *Thomas Dundas* supported the prayer of the petition.

Mr. *Dominick Browne* presented three Petitions from different parts of Connaught, and one from Clare, in favour of the Reform Bill; also, one from the town of Galway, praying that another Representative might be given to that place. The hon. Member expressed a wish that some additional Representatives might be given to Ireland. If the fate of the Reform Bill had depended on the votes of the Members for Great Britain it would have been lost. It was carried by a majority of Irish Members, which, however, shewed its utility, because those Members had constituents, whose wishes they were obliged to attend to. Of the Scotch Members, twenty-six voted against the Bill, and thirteen for it: of the English Members, 238 voted for it, and 240 against it. Of the Irish Members, fifty-three voted for, and thirty-seven against it. Its triumph, therefore, was due to the Irish Members. He was not surprised at the votes given by the Scotch Members, because they represented only themselves, but the Irish Members represented the people; as for example, in Mayo, which he represented, there was 300,000 inhabitants. After this explanation he was sure it would be more just in the hon. and gallant member for Liverpool to disfranchise the corrupt voters of that borough than the people of Ireland.

General *Gascoyne* did not wish to contract the Representation of Ireland, or to disfranchise its people; on the contrary, he meant to propose that four Members should be given to every 150,000 inhabitants, but he did wish that the proportional number of Representatives from the three parts of the Empire, as settled by the Acts of Union, should not be altered.

Petition to be printed.

Mr. *Ruthven* presented a Petition from the county of Down, agreed to at a meeting convened by the High Sheriff. The petition was signed by 13,000 persons, either registered, or entitled to be registered, as 10*l.* freeholders, and had been intrusted to his care, because the county Members had declined to present it. The requisition for the meeting was signed by thirteen or fourteen Magistrates, and the petition was principally signed by Protestant freeholders. The petitioners prayed for Reform, for the duration of Parliament to be shortened, and that every Member should be required to make oath that he had not employed improper means to procure his return.

Mr. *H. Gurney* said, that if any proposition should be made to encumber Members of Parliament with more oaths than at present, he should give it his most determined opposition.

Petition to be printed.

Mr. *Leader*, in presenting Petitions from Montmellick, in favour of the Irish Reform Bill, observed, that he considered the fears of those who imagined that the Bill would give an undue influence to the Roman Catholic interest in Ireland as groundless. The greater portion of his constituents were Roman Catholics, and yet he was quite sure that, were he under the necessity of calling on them for their votes, in the event of a dissolution of Parliament, those votes would not be withheld from him. He believed that the agitation which prevailed in Ireland arose from the state of destitution and distress in which the great body of the people in that country were placed, and he was convinced that any English gentleman who in that House would advocate the interests of Ireland, would, though a Protestant, be returned for an Irish county or city as soon as an Irish Roman Catholic gentleman.

Mr. *Monteith*, in presenting a Petition from Selkirk, in which the petitioners objected to the details of the Scotch Reform Bill, observed, that the borough of Falkirk, which it was proposed to add to the district of burghs to which Selkirk belonged, was no less than sixty miles distant. In his opinion the Bill ought to be referred to a Select Committee of gentlemen connected with Scotland, who could modify and improve its details.

Mr. *Kennedy* said, that he saw no weight in this objection, seeing that several of the burghs, under the present system, were further apart.

Lord *J. Russell* begged of Gentlemen, as this was the last day of sitting before the holidays, not to consume time in the discussion of the English, Scotch, and Irish Reform Bills, but to confine themselves to the presentation of petitions.

Mr. *Keith Douglas* thought that it was most desirable, in the present state of the subject, that the House should pay some attention to it. He believed, and he had always admitted, that in Scotland there was a strong desire for a considerable extension of the elective franchise; but he did not believe that such an alteration as was proposed would give satisfaction. The great question was, whether the plan introduced by the noble Lord was a convenient or an expedient one for Scotland. He was of opinion that it was neither the one nor the other.

General *Gascoyne* wished, as the House was that evening to be adjourned for the holidays, that some day should be fixed, before the Reform Bill was considered in Committee, for receiving petitions respecting that measure. There were hundreds of petitions to be presented, which could not be laid before the House, unless some such understanding took place. Would the noble Lord set apart the first day after the House re-assembled for that purpose?

Lord *Althorp* could not set apart the day mentioned by the gallant General; but a day should be appointed for the presentation of petitions only.

TWOPENNY POST OFFICE.] In answer to a question from Sir J. Shelley, relative to a new arrangement for the delivery of letters in particular parts of the town,

Lord *Althorp* said, that the subject had been taken into consideration by his noble friend, the Postmaster-general. The first proposition which had been made to him he had declined, because it would be beneficial to the rich, and not to the poor. His noble friend had, however, taken a *radius* of three miles circuit, which included Belgrave-square, Lambeth, and Bethnal-green, comprising a much larger portion of the metropolis than the plan at first suggested. He intended to extend the limits of the Twopenny Post to the whole circumference of that circuit. The expense would be 25,000*l.* a year, but he thought it a very proper expense. The arrangement would take place on the 5th of April next.

SALARIES OF PUBLIC OFFICERS.] Mr. Baring brought up the Report of the Select Committee appointed to inquire into the salaries of certain Public Officers.

Mr. *Goulburn* said, it was not usual, on presenting the Report of a Committee, to offer any remarks on the proceedings which had taken place in it; but there were peculiar circumstances in this case, which rendered it necessary to take a different course. A declaration had been made by the noble Lord opposite, that he would adhere to any proposition which the Committee, whose Report was now brought up, might think fit to recommend to the House. The Report, however, he knew, contained matter which did not strictly come within the line of inquiry to which the attention of the Committee ought alone to have been directed—matter involving a constitutional question of the first importance. To that point he wished to call the particular attention of his Majesty's Government, and of that House, before an attempt was made to give effect to the recommendations of the Committee, by the introduction of a Bill on the subject. The Committee was appointed to inquire as to what reduction could be made in the expense of offices held under the Crown by Members of either House of Parliament. He had stated to that Committee, as he was a member of it, that it was not his intention to interfere with their deliberations. Personal reasons rendered it unfit that he should appear in any other character save that of a witness. Now that to which he was about to call the attention of the House, did not fall within the directions under which that Committee acted, and was introduced at the conclusion of the Report. The superannuations and allowances on retirement from office were there adverted to in a manner not authorized. He admitted that, in considering the subject which they were appointed to inquire into, the Committee had a right to advert to any ultimate advantage which was likely to accrue to persons in office. On the one hand they had a right to consider all the inconveniences that were connected with the holding of office; and on the other, they were bound to look to the emoluments that would arise from retiring allowances. He did not object to their stating what they considered as the proper amount to be granted with reference to retiring allowances. But the Committee had gone a great deal further, and recommended that no such allowances should be granted hereafter, except with the approbation of that House. This he conceived to be an invasion of the Constitution, and an inroad on the dignity of the Crown. The Committee declared, that it was expedient to repeal the Act which enabled his Majesty to recompense the services of persons who had held certain high official situations. The preamble of that Act declared, that it was expedient to abolish certain sinecure offices, and to allow a sum of money to enable his Majesty to provide for individuals who had held particular official situations. And how did the Committee follow up their notice of that Act? It recommended that that Act should be entirely repealed; and further, that any and every case of public service, which might be considered deserving, should in future be submitted to the decision of that House. This was, in effect, recommending that there should be transferred from the Crown (which was hitherto the fountain of grace and honour) to the House of Commons, the right of remunerating public servants. This, he contended, was a great and manifest invasion of the Constitution, and he trusted that the House would not adopt such a proceeding, in compliance with the recommendation of any Committee. He stated his opinion in the Committee; and having done so ineffectually, he thought it his duty to draw the attention of the House to the subject, in order that when it came regularly before them, they might well and maturely weigh the important principle which this recommendation involved.

Mr. *Baring* said, that the right hon. Gentleman was himself aware, that to make observations on a Report which was not yet printed was very irregular. The question was certainly important, and it was hardly fair in the right hon. Gentleman to discuss it then. He might have attended the Committee, and given it the benefit of his arguments, and there they might have had due weight. It should be remembered, that the measure recommended by the Committee was not something which the Government could carry into effect on its own authority—it must have an Act of Parliament. Before the Ministers could take any steps, they must come down to the House with a Bill, and the right hon. Gentleman might discuss that at all its stages. The first question the Committee had to determine was this, whether there were to be any superannuations or retiring allowances at all; and the next was, whether those retiring allowances were to be given under any legal sanction, or whether those who were to receive them were to be left to take care of themselves, without any responsibility? All those who had given the slightest attention to the subject must have perceived how heavily the weight of the superannuation and half-pay list pressed on the resources of the country, difficult to deal with at any time, but peculiarly difficult to deal with in their present situation. It could not, too, be forgotten, how often that House had been subjected to the reproach—a reproach, he admitted, not without justice—that it was continually giving its assent to the cutting off all the allowances granted to the lower class of public servants, while it left the higher totally untouched. The Committee had accordingly come to a determination to enable the Government to grant allowances as pensions, but to subject the grant afterwards to the approbation of the House. Whether that determination was right or wrong, it was not for him now to say, because sufficient opportunities would no doubt offer themselves to vindicate hereafter the course they had adopted. Upon the subject of the Bill alluded to by the right hon. Gentleman, the member for Armagh (Mr. Goulburn) he would merely say, he agreed with him, that the alteration was no trifling matter, and that it required serious consideration. The Act to which the Report of the Committee referred, gave the power to the Crown to grant a pension to certain public Officers after two years' services; and he was bound to admit, that the power thus granted had not, as it appeared, been hitherto abused; but it was quite impossible to overlook the consideration, that it was a power which it was much better to place under the control of Parliament. All the Committee said in their Report was simply this, that the power of the Crown to give pensions should remain, but that in the consent to the payment of these pensions the House of Commons, as in all money matters, should be at liberty to determine on the propriety of the grant. The sanction and approbation of that House with respect to payments of public money was indeed justified on every principle which governed it in the application of the money of the people to public purposes in any other case, and the Committee, being of that opinion, recommended the adoption of that course which was explained in their Report.

Lord *Althorp* denied, that he had pledged himself to abide by the recommendations contained in the Report of the Committee. All he had said was, that he was willing the question of Pensions should be inquired into; and now that the Committee had made a Report, he pledged himself to give its suggestions all the consideration in his power; but he did not pledge himself to adopt all that it recommended.

Sir *H. Hardinge* did not rise to prolong the discussion; but he felt it his duty to protest against one part of the recommendations in the Report of the Committee, which placed the Officers of the Army in a disrespectful and degraded situation as compared with the Officers of the Royal Navy. He protested against that part of the Report in the strongest manner, because he thought it unjust, and because it was besides neither wise nor politic to raise distinctions between those who were, in point of service to their country, on terms of perfect equality. By the Report of the Committee, the Crown was recommended to allow certain classes of Naval Officers to enjoy their pay along with their allowance for discharging the duties of a civil office, while the Officers of the Army were wholly excluded from the same privilege; and he repeated, he thought it cast a slur and indignity on the Army which it did not deserve, and which he trusted the House would not sanction. He hoped they would consider well before they adopted a custom so repugnant to the feelings of that branch of the service, and one which was at variance with all that had been done from the time of Marlborough down to the present, and which created most unjust and disrespectful distinctions. If no other person called the attention of the House to the subject, and if the Government did not express its intention to abstain from carrying this part of the recommendation of the Committee into effect, he now gave notice that he would, immediately after the Easter Recess, bring under the consideration of the House, by a direct motion, the question connected with this matter, together with that of the half-pay of the Army Officers when taking civil situations—a point which, on many considerations, he thought required the attention of the House. It appeared, indeed, that the right hon. Baronet, the First Lord of the Admiralty, could recommend Officers of the Navy, holding their half-pay, to civil situations, while the King himself, by the Appropriation Act, could not do that with respect to the Officers of the Army.

Mr. *Kennedy* was aware of the inconvenience of anticipating the discussion of the terms of a Report which had not been printed, and with which Members could not be acquainted but by hearsay, and he therefore was anxious that it should terminate as soon as possible; but he could not avoid apprising the right hon. Baronet (Sir H. Hardinge) that he was not correct in his statement of the principle of the recommendation of the Committee. The Report did not make any distinction between the services, except in one instance, and that was with respect to the Naval Lords of the Admiralty, the Committee thinking it better that they should retain their half-pay than that they should be allowed to draw a larger salary. He would merely add, that he thought the observations of the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Goulburn) with respect to the Bill, in the present stage of the proceedings, rather unfair; for he did not favour the Committee with his attendance at its previous sittings; but in the eleventh hour, and when they were about coming to a conclusion on the subject of the Pensions, he made his appearance to protest against it.

Sir *H. Hardinge* thought, though the indulgence might be confined, as the hon. Member stated, to the Lords of the Admiralty, that it was unfair to make even that distinction: and he did not see on what principle the same indulgence should not be extended to Army Officers holding high situations in the Ordnance.

Sir *G. Warrender* said, that the Committee were anxious to give the naval Lords of the Admiralty a higher allowance by a different method, but they were precluded from doing so by the nature of the reference which had been made to them. They recommended, therefore, the continuance of the practice which had always hitherto taken place in the Admiralty, through the means of memorials; but he denied most positively that they had made, or intended to make, any distinction between the army and naval service. With respect to the other point—that of the Pensions—he for one did not consider the Chancellor of the Exchequer or the Government pledged to adopt the recommendations of the Committee: indeed he confessed he should be very sorry to hear that they were so pledged. He was one of those who were parties to the compact entered into with the Crown on the subject of sinecures, when, two-and-twenty years ago, they agreed to allow pensions to be granted after two years' service, in lieu of the sinecures which had been bestowed on retiring public servants, and which were from that moment abolished. Feeling that the Bill which the Committee, by their recommendation at this moment wished to get rid of, was a portion of that compact, and knowing too, as they had heard it admitted, that the powers which it gave the Government had not been abused, he should feel himself bound to resist the repeal of the Act, if it should be proposed.

Mr. *Irving* recommended that the discussion should be postponed.

Sir *George Murray* defended the observations of his right hon. friend (Sir H. Hardinge), and contended, that the principle inculcated by the Committee was in the highest degree unjust and ungenerous toward the officers of the army. He thought, too, that the practice of compelling officers to give up their half-pay when they accepted a civil situation was equally unjust, and by no means even economical. During the three years he held office he had frequent opportunities of employing military men to advantage in the colonies, and with a great saving to the public, because they would have been willing, on condition of holding their half-pay, to accept a very moderate salary; but in consequence of the strictness of the regulation applied to officers of the army, who would not consent to give up their half-pay, he was obliged to employ civilians at much larger salaries. The half-pay he considered to be a sum given as a reward for long and laborious service; and he certainly could not see any reason why it was to be taken away from those who might afterwards be called to discharge the duties of a civil situation.

Mr. *R. Gordon* defended the conduct of the Committee, and denied the assertion of the member for Honiton (Sir G. Warrender), that the Pension Act was intended to be given in lieu of the power to confer sinecures formerly possessed by the Crown. The Parliament took away that power, and it was for the Parliament to determine to what extent the granting of pensions was to be exercised, and on whom they were to be conferred. This was, in effect, the recommendation of the Committee.

Sir *C. Wetherell* said, that after the House of Commons had entered into a compact with the Crown, to give it the power of granting pensions under certain conditions, in the place of the sinecures which it had formerly bestowed on meritorious public servants, this Committee proposed in its report that no pension should be granted under the power the Act conferred on the Crown, unless the House of Commons approved of it. This was, he regretted to say, too much like some other anti-monarchical propositions which they had lately heard offered to the consideration of that House. It was, like them, a plan for striking at the just prerogatives of the Crown, and striking at them, too, through the medium of a public compact entered into between the Crown and the people.

Mr. *Hobhouse* defended the course adopted by the Committee, and contended that it was somewhat unfairly treated, as much by the observations of the right hon. member for Armagh, as by the right hon. and gallant Officer below him (Sir H. Hardinge), who had found fault with a distinction between the army and the navy which the Committee had not made, and did not intend to make. He thought, too, that the right hon. and gallant Officer's observations were a little uncandid, because he had already given a full statement on the subject, in evidence before the Committee, which would of course be printed and circulated with the report. He trusted that the House would await the publication of that report before it proceeded to make any further observations on its contents. But, with respect to the assertion of the hon. and learned Gentleman (Sir C. Wetherell) near him, that its propositions were anti-monarchical, he would take leave to say, that the recommendations of the Committee were as little anti-monarchical as that plan to which the learned Gentleman no doubt alluded. If the learned Gentleman made no better use of history than to seek in it for the defence of abuses, and reasons for giving opposition to all attempts at improvement, then he must say, that it would be far better if all histories were thrown into the fire. He might, indeed, say to the learned Member, as it was eloquently expressed elsewhere, that he valued the coin, not for the beauty of the stamp, but for the sake of its antiquity, and the rust that covered it. He concluded by entreating the House to abstain from further discussion till the report was printed.

Lord *Stormont* condemned the expression of "uncandid," used by the member for Westminster, as exceedingly unparliamentary. The statement which called it forth did not require such an expression. He could well understand why it was that the member for Westminster wished all histories thrown into the fire. They would then get rid of all the wisdom derived from experience. They would have no practice, but plenty of the theories which he was daily advocating.

Lord *Morpeth* protested against the continuance of the discussion on a report, of the details of which they knew nothing.

Mr. *Hume* defended the Committee for merely suggesting the propriety of repealing a particular Act; and in reply to the member for Boroughbridge (Sir C. Wetherell), contended, that the greatest enemies of the monarchy were the defenders of its abuses. That was his opinion.

Sir *C. Wetherell*, on rising to reply, was assailed with a cry of "spoke"; they might call "spoke," but they should rather say, do not speak to the hon. member for Middlesex. He (Sir C. Wetherell was not a defender of abuses, but he was an enemy to republican breaches of faith.

Sir *H. Hardinge* said, he knew the hon. Member who used the word "uncandid" would be the last to utter any expression towards him in an offensive sense; and he had, therefore, nothing to say on that point; but he repeated his intention to bring the question of the half-pay, in connexion with the civil service, before the House, on a regular motion.

The Report laid on the Table, and to be printed.

REFORM — CAMBRIDGE PETITION.] Viscount *Palmerston* expressed a hope that the House would permit him to present the Petition from the University of Cambridge. He thought he should best discharge the duty he had to perform, by reading to the House the sentiments of the petitioners themselves. They began by stating, that they understand "your honourable House to be at present employed upon a most important object—namely, the introducing into the mode of electing the Members of your honourable House such changes as time, and the altered condition of the country, may be found to have rendered expedient. That your petitioners acknowledge it to be right and wise thus to watch over the Constitution; but they humbly conceive that all alterations should be made with much caution and deliberation. They are persuaded that sudden and sweeping changes in a Constitution which has been so long and so deeply associated with the principles and feelings of Englishmen, are likely to be attended with great and incalculable evils: that such changes lead men to cast off the scrupulousness which has always been held to be a duty in dealing with the institutions of their country and the interests of their fellow-citizens: that in every Government a belief that alterations in its forms will be made slowly and cautiously is necessary to mutual confidence and public prosperity: and that this is eminently necessary in an empire, the wealth and greatness of which, up to the present time, have resulted from the joint and gradual growth of various classes and interests, and could not fail to suffer by any abrupt change in their mutual relations. That it appears to your Petitioners that the Bill now before your honourable House will give the elective franchise to a very large proportion of the male population of the country, and to numerous classes of persons of very small property, not hitherto possessing, or expecting to possess, this privilege: that such a privilege placed suddenly and unexpectedly in the hands of such persons would be liable, especially under exciting circumstances, to be exercised less calmly and scrupulously than might be desired in the discharge of so important a duty; and that it may thus lead to other changes, calamitous to the peace, honour, and prosperity of the country. Your petitioners humbly beg, therefore, that in the changes which it may seem good to your honourable House to introduce into the mode of electing the Members of your honourable House, care may be taken to mark strongly your sense of the caution with which such changes are to be made, of the reverence with which the Constitution is to be touched, of the seriousness of the responsibility which the elective franchise involves, and of the duty which is incumbent on the Legislature of bestowing its protection on all classes and interests, and of justifying their confidence in its considerateness and wisdom." Having stated thus much of the opinions of the petitioners, he should not further enforce its prayer than by expressing his conviction that its eloquent language, and the tone of moderation which prevailed in it on a subject which called forth so much excitement, would have its due weight with the House, and likewise ensure the petition that attention to which, on every other ground it was so fully entitled.

Mr. *W. Bankes* congratulated the noble Lord upon having been at length delivered, painfully delivered, no doubt, of the petition now before the House, after an unexampled gestation of nine, not of nine months, but nine days. That period had now elapsed since the petition was agreed to, and transmitted to the noble Lord from Cambridge; and he could assure the noble Lord, that for several evenings past, he and his hon. friends, the members for Armagh and Boroughbridge, had been waiting the result with the utmost anxiety, and the noble Lord ought now to "return thanks for the honour of their obliging inquiries." He dared to say, the noble Lord would remember that when at school at Westminster it was said of the boys who were not ready with their lessons, that they were coming from the country by the slow waggon. Now he must say, that the Cambridge University Petition had come up by the slowest waggon that ever travelled. Why, if it had come from the University of Padua, of Pavia, or of Gottingen, in these days of railways and steam coaches, it would have reached the House in less time than had been consumed in bringing it from Cambridge. But if it had proceeded from another University, from the University in Gower-street, very different, no doubt, would have been the speed with which it would have found its way to that House; it would have travelled by the swiftest Omnibus. The distance from Cambridge to London was about fifty-two miles.

> "Nine times the space that measures day and night"

had been fixed upon by the great Poet as the time occupied in the fall of a being from one world to another. This was the exact time consumed by the petition in its progress; and if the great mathematicians of Cambridge were to put a calculation of the time and distance to paper, he believed the result would be, that it had travelled six miles per day, and a small fraction—as the mathematicians would call it, a small uncertain quantity. He believed, however, that if the history of its progress could be told, it must appear that the delay had not taken place upon the road through Ware and Edmonton, where other journeys of extraordinary speed had been performed. He had no doubt that the coaches travelled with their ordinary regularity. No; it was the last stage of the journey—it was in getting from Downing-street to that House, notwithstanding that the road was so evenly Macadamized, that the petition had been so long impeded. But the noble Lord, in travelling that journey, was under the influence of a drag-chain, in the shape of a petition from his own constituents against a measure of his own and of his colleagues. Perhaps the nicest mathematical heads in the observatories of Cambridge would find it difficult to calculate the exact ratio in which such a drag-chain in his pocket would impede the progress of a Cabinet Minister. The petitioners were members of the Church of England, and he was not surprised that they should view the measure with apprehension and alarm. There could be no doubt that innovations had long been meditated against the property and just influence of the Church of England, and they were now beginning to be executed. What was the object of their petition? It was a petition against a measure which was intended to add to the numerical power in that House, of Presbyterian Scotland, and of Catholic Ireland, while from Protestant England it took away eighty-two Members. He was not surprised that such men as the petitioners should view such a measure with apprehension and alarm, when he connected it with the doctrines he was accustomed to hear from some of the benches near him. He was not to be deceived by the conduct of those who occupied the benches he had alluded to now. He did not expect to be interrupted by the hon. member for Middlesex now. That hon. Gentleman was not so poor a tactician as to put forward his doctrines while this measure was in suspense. They should have no sneers at the Church now. Perhaps what he said might even gain a cheer from the hon. Member. But he was not to be deceived. The hon. Member had sent forth his hint to his friends to be quiet on the Ballot—and he would now doubtless be quiet himself upon the subject of Tithes. But if this measure should be carried, the noble Lord would soon see what would be said of the body whose petition was before the House, and of all the rights and interests of which they were the protectors. He trusted, however, that a different result would attend the prayer of the petitioners, and that every man to whom it was addressed, would retire to his chamber impressed with the conviction that the preservation of those high and important interests depended upon his own conduct.

Colonel *Wood* begged to say a few words. He had voted for the second reading of the Bill, because he thought it would not be right to cut short the progress of a Bill of such importance on the Motion for the second reading. He was confident that if the House, in the Committee on the Bill, proceeded circumspectly with regard to its various details, the people, who were almost unanimous in its favour, would be satisfied. [" *No, no!*"] The hon. Gentleman might deny it, but he knew that in the part of the country in which he resided, and he believed that most other hon. Gentlemen would say the same with respect to their own particular districts, such was the fact. But he also believed that the people of England, from the mixture of good humour and good sense in their character, were more easily to be led, and from their high spirit were with more difficulty driven, than any people on the face of the globe; and that if there should appear to be in the Bill any dangerous and objectionable provisions, which he and other hon. Members might think it their duty to reject, the petitioners in favour of the Bill, if fully satisfied of the character of those provisions, would tranquilly acquiesce in their rejection.

Mr. *Warburton* believed that the petition correctly represented the opinions of the resident members of the University, to which the hon. member for Marlborough and himself belonged. It would seem from the hon. Member's speech, that he thought the members of the University good calculators of space, time, and velocity. No doubt they were; as a proof of which he referred to this simple fact, —that on Saturday evening at six o'clock, notice was given of a Grace to be brought before the Senate on the Monday, with a view to this petition, its promoters knowing full well that the contemplations of the members of the University would not be disturbed by the passing of the ordinary vehicles of communication on the Sunday, so that no opportunity was afforded to the non-resident members to go down and take a part in the proceeding. Thus, he said again, the attendance of the non-residents, who had often outvoted the residents on similar occasions to the present (for instance upon the Catholic Question) was altogether precluded by the nice mathematical calculation of the resident members of the University. The petition bore the signatures of 150 residents. The number of non-residents who attended was necessarily few. In fact, it was impossible that the large body of non-residents could attend in time. Only twenty or thirty were present, and of those only four signed the petition.

Mr. *Praed* begged to state the facts of the case. He happened to be at Cambridge a few days before the petition was prepared; and at that time the general conversation turned on the expediency of petitioning. If the resident members of the University had been desirous of opposing the proposed measure as a change and innovation, simply because they were hostile to all change and innovation, they would not have waited until its details came regularly before them. Those details, however, they did not receive until the 16th. They then found that the second reading of the Bill stood for Monday, and apprehensive that the time would be too short for a more extensive petition, they proposed that the petition should purport to be only that of the undersigned members. But many of the members of the University who were against the Bill, declared that they would not sign any petition upon the subject which had the air of being a private petition. It had been said, that the determination of the University of Cambridge, to petition against the Bill, was consequent on the decision of the House of Commons with respect to the Timber duties. A more gross misrepresentation had never been made. The notice of the meeting had been sent from the University Press three hours before the news of the decision of the House on that subject arrived at Cambridge. The hon. member for Bridport said, that no time had been allowed for the non-resident members of the University to attend. The petition professed to be only the petition of the resident members of the University; but there would have been time for non-residents to go to Cambridge if they had chosen to do so. It appeared by the petition itself, that four non-residents had attended; and others might have done the same. With respect to the petition itself, nothing could surpass the moderation of the tone in which the petitioners expressed their sentiments. The majority of them, indeed, were prepared to use stronger language, but it was thought better to unite the suffrages of all who condemned the Bill, although in different degrees. The petitioners were men who looked on public affairs with an impartial eye, and whose opinions on such subjects were most valuable. They were not opposed to all Reform, but they looked at the Bill before the House with the most grave and serious alarm.

Mr. *Saville Lumley* believed, that the petition was made known after the coaches had left on the Saturday; the Mail might pass through afterwards, but much time was not allowed to circulate or act upon the information as far as concerned the non-residents. The petition was only open for signature forty-eight hours: perhaps if more time had been allowed for the arrival of the non-resident members, it might have been carried the other way.

Mr. *W. Cavendish* remarked, that the petition was directed—not against Reform generally—but only against parts of the proposed measure; and, more especially, against giving the elective franchise to individuals possessed of so small a qualification, as living in a house of 10*l*. a-year. He denied that the University was averse from the whole measure.

Lord *John Russell* complained of the injustice of what had fallen from the hon. member for Marlborough, on the delay which had taken place in the presentation of this petition. Every one knew how difficult it was to obtain the opportunity of presenting a petition. He himself had had in his possession, for the last nine days, a Petition in favour of the Bill, from the Nobility and Gentry of Dublin, signed by the Lord Mayor, the Duke of Leinster, Lord Cloncurry, &c.; and, though he had been down at the House at ten o'clock that morning, for the purpose of putting his name down on the paper, he was apprehensive that even now his noble friend would not allow him an opportunity of presenting it. The hon. member for Marlborough was not justified in insinuating that there was any unwillingness to present the petition. He could not consider it as a petition against the measure generally. It was a petition from the resident members of the University, couched in moderate and becoming language, and directed against the measure; but it did not term it, as it had been termed by others, a Revolutionary and Jacobinical attack on the Constitution. The prayer of the petition was—"That in the changes which it may seem good to your honourable House to introduce into the mode of electing the Members of your honourable House, care may be taken to mark strongly your sense of the caution with which such changes are to be made, of the reverence with which the Constitution is to be touched, of the seriousness of the responsibility which the elective franchise involves, and of the duty which is incumbent on the Legislature of bestowing its protection on all classes and interests, and of justifying their confidence in its considerateness and wisdom." In the sentiments expressed in that prayer he entirely concurred. Connected as the petitioners were with the Church, and the other institutions of the country, the prayer that the House would use caution in making any changes by which they might be affected was a becoming one. But as to the proposed qualification for the elective franchise, to which the petitioners objected, men who lived more in the world were perhaps better judges on that point than the resident members of the University of Cambridge, who were immured in their cloisters, comparatively uninformed of what was going on in the world, and perhaps ignorant of what had for some years been taking place in the House of Commons. They did not perhaps know, that the addition of six, or even of two Members to that House had been strenuously opposed. They did not perhaps know, that when he proposed to add six Members to the House, he had been told, "the House is already too full, do not add one Member to it, or you will overturn the Constitution." When, on the other hand, it was proposed to retrench the number of Members, it was said, "Oh! do not take one away, or you will do irreparable injury." Thus every obstacle was thrown in the way of the gradual Reform which the University of Cambridge desired. It was the duty of those who knew the facts of the case to propose those changes, the necessity of which the retired residents in Colleges could not possess the means of fully ascertaining.

Mr. *Goulburn* maintained that, the opponents of the petition had been completely unsuccessful in their attempts to undervalue it; and that their cavils were wholly destitute of foundation. He expressed his astonishment that the noble Lord should imagine that the resident members of the University of Cambridge were in such utter ignorance of what took place in the House of Commons. There was no society of individuals in the country better informed on all subjects discussed in that House, as well as on all subjects of general learning. There were particular circumstances which entitled the petition of the University of Cambridge to great weight. In the first place, the measure could be judged of only by its probable consequences on the institutions of the country. Now, whatever class of men was the best instructed, was the best able to lay aside popular feeling, and pronounce by that criterion. In the second place, the Bill proposed to deal with every elective franchise in the country except the elective franchise belonging to the Universities. Non-resident freemen were objected to by the Bill, but not non-resident Masters of Arts. If the Bill passed, therefore, the Universities might boast that they were the only bodies of freemen in the country whose qualifications would remain unchanged by it. If, therefore, they had any prejudice on the subject, that prejudice would induce them to support the Bill rather than to oppose it. The petition was further entitled to the attention of the House, in consequence of the moderate, though firm tone in which the petitioners expressed their sentiments. The noble member for Tavistock said, that he did not consider that the petition was hostile to the Bill.

Would he say that it was in favour of the Bill? It called upon the House to abstain from so sudden and wide a change in the Constitution; and it expressed the alarm of the petitioners lest the measure should lead to other changes, calamitous to the peace, honour, and prosperity of the country. As to the objection that means had not been taken for giving the non-resident members the means of expressing their sentiments, his hon. friend near him had sufficiently shown its futility. He repeated, that the petition was the legitimate expression of the wishes and feelings of the resident members of the University. If it were wished to ascertain the wishes and feelings of the non-resident members, it ought to be remembered that they were scattered over the face of the country, and that to endeavour to collect them would be as vain as to attempt any other impossibility.

The *Attorney General*, after observing that the petition had been supported by two hon. Members who had been members of the University of Cambridge, and who might probably wish to renew their acquaintance with it, and by another hon. Member, who might probably wish to form an acquaintance with it, went on to remark, that it turned out, as had been originally stated, that no notice of the meeting of the Senate had been given until Saturday, and that the meeting took place on Monday. It was impossible, therefore, that the non-resident Members could be present; for, because it happened that four non-resident Members in London knew what was going forward, it did not follow that four hundred were also in the secret. What did the petition recommend? Nothing, but that which every grave and respectable body of persons—what every man, in considering a great constitutional question, was bound to do; nothing but what his Majesty's Government did, before this much calumniated Bill was brought in; nothing but what he trusted, the House would do before they adopted it—cautiously to weigh the character and value of the measure. It had been said by the hon. member for Marlborough, that the University was alarmed at the prospect of disturbing the existing proportion of English, Scotch, and Irish Representatives. No such alarm was expressed in the petition. The petition did not characterise the proposed measure as a "Corporation robbery." The petitioners did not say one word of the alleged perjury of those who, having sworn to defend certain rights, were now prepared to relinquish them. Some allusion had been made to the University in Gower-street. He thought the members of that University had done themselves no small honour in abstaining from interfering in the discussion; for he did not conceive that the Universities, who were not at all affected by the Bill, ought to come to the House and give their advice upon it. He did not observe that the University of Oxford had thought proper to put itself forward in hostility to the Bill; and, in his opinion, it did that University as great honour as the change which, in support of its consistency, it some time ago made in its Representation. One hon. Gentleman had attributed the general demand for Parliamentary Reform to the neglect by that House of the agricultural distress; another hon. Gentleman, the hon. member for Boroughbridge, had in a grave and solemn tone ascribed it to the neglect by that House of the state of the currency. He did not believe that it proceeded from either of those causes. As he was formerly a Member, though not a distinguished one, of the University of Cambridge, he must say, that he highly commended the tone in which the petition was couched. It recommended only caution, and warned the House only against precipitation. He was sure that when the measure had received that attention in a Committee of the House which its importance demanded, it would be regarded with perfect satisfaction, not only by the University of Cambridge, but by all other learned and corporate bodies in the kingdom.

Sir *C. Wetherell* asked his hon. and learned friend whether he was quite sure that what had happened at Oxford might not happen at Cambridge? His hon. and learned friend had spoken with approbation of the change which had some time ago been made in the Representation of the University of Oxford. Peradventure a similar change might be made in the Representation of the University of Cambridge. He hoped the noble Lord would not suppose that he meant to trench upon the general principle of courtesy established in that House by making this remark; but he thought that before his hon. and learned friend had permitted himself to indulge in the observation which had fallen from him, he might have considered what might possibly occur elsewhere. He congratulated the noble Lord on having been at length delivered of the petition, and he would not inquire if it had come up by the Cambridge van, and had been nine days on the road, or if it had arrived by the Telegraph, or some other light coach, and had been detained elsewhere. His hon. and learned friend censured the University for petitioning the House on the subject. It should be recollected, however, that neither the University of Oxford nor the University of Cambridge ever petitioned that House with reference to any party question, with reference to any change of Ministry, or subjects of that nature. But, whenever a great constitutional principle was at stake, then, and then exclusively, the Universities thought it their duty to express their sentiments to Parliament. They had done so on the Catholic Question; they had done so on other occasions which had no connexion with party. He was sorry, therefore, that his hon. and learned friend had thrown at least an indirect censure on the University of Cambridge for its conduct in the present instance. His hon. and learned friend had said, that the University of Oxford had not petitioned on the subject. But it had frequently happened that one University petitioned when the other did not. It showed that they were independent; that they acted without any reference to party feeling or cabal. Again, his hon. and learned friend observed, that the petition did not complain of the violation of corporation charters; that it did not complain of cutting off sixty-two Members of that House. And because the petitioners did not enter into such details, and because they said nothing about the currency, his hon. and learned friend held that they pronounced no opinion hostile to the proposed measure. He entirely concurred in the value of the moderation of tone which the petitioners had adopted; and he entirely concurred in approving their abstinence from stating what, in their opinion, ought to be done. But did those circumstances diminish the force of their disapprobation of the measure? His hon. and learned friend had alluded to a statement which had been made by the hon. member for Boroughbridge; but as he said it had been made in a grave and solemn tone, he (Sir Charles Wetherell) was sure that his honourable and learned friend did not mean to allude to him. With reference to an observation of the noble Paymaster of the Forces, he wished to remind him that one of the cloistered monks of Cambridge was Dr. Paley. He was, in fact, the Blackstone of that University, and one of the most luminous writers upon the subject to which he had directed his attention. And he (Sir C. Wetherell) considered that the petitioners of Cambridge were men of equal liberality and knowledge of the world with those who were implicated in the contentious scenes of the House of Commons. The petitioners, like the members of the University with which he was connected, were not persons who had taken an active part in politics; they remained, too, altogether untouched by the present measure in their rights and privileges, and were, therefore, perfectly impartial; and he accordingly was of opinion that their petition should, were it only for this reason, have great weight. They were anxious only for the maintenance of the Church and the civil institutions of the country, and he hoped their petition would be taken as a signal for other corporations to pursue the like course, and that, when they did petition, it would not be thrown in their teeth that the terms in which they expressed themselves were too moderate.

Mr. *Attwood* felt himself called on to disclaim the imputation of having ever asserted that the people had called for Reform as a measure to which they were attached of themselves; but he had said that a general feeling of distress in certain quarters had prepared those classes to look to a change as desirable, in the futile hope that it would give employment and wages to some, and bread to others who had it not. He could have wished that the hon. and learned Attorney General had restrained that disposition to put strongly and powerfully what rested on assumption, and have abandoned that habit in which he was too frequently found to indulge, of uttering libels in that House. [*Order, order, by several Members.*]

The *Speaker* said he had only waited to give the hon. Member an opportunity to conclude his sentence, in the hope that he would be able to add that which would explain away whatever might be considered disorderly in the former part of the sentence, taken disjointedly and apart.

Mr. *Attwood* said, he had no intention of making any improper allusion to the habits of the hon. and learned Member which would in the slightest degree infringe on the orders of that House and as he found the word "libels" was objectionable, he would drop it. His argument had been that the system worked well, whilst the people, finding they were subjected to a distress, from inquiring into which Parliament seemed to shrink last year, became desirous of a change, and insisted now that it worked ill. He did not charge, in this instance, the Ministers, in the part they had taken, with wishing to deceive the people, but he had said that the people rested on their promises, and when they found out that they were deceived, the Ministers power would vanish quicker than it had grown up.

Mr. *Grove Price*, as an old member of the University, expressed his satisfaction at the course which that learned body had pursued in reference to the proposed measure of Reform. It had been truly stated that they habitually stood aloof from faction, and intermeddled not in the intrigues of party, and therefore it was that their opinions were entitled to especial consideration. The petition against the present proposition of Ministers was the more remarkable, as having come from those very persons who agreed with the noble Lord opposite on most other subjects, and on account of that general similarity of sentiment had elected him as their Representative in Parliament. He would take this opportunity to state, that the feeling of the Bar in favour of Reform by no means prevailed to the extent that had been supposed: in proof of which he might mention, that of the forty-two barristers on the Home Circuit, to which he belonged, but thirteen had signed the Reform petition, whereas twenty-nine had objected to do so and but four or five of the subscribing parties were connected with the University of Cambridge. That University, in his opinion, had performed its duty in a most portentous crisis, and be the consequences what they might, it at least would enjoy the proud consciousness that it had not been found wanting in the hour of danger to the Constitution.

Lord *Morpeth* did not consider the petition opposed to the measure. Those who signed it prayed that no sudden or ill considered changes might be made which this Bill certainly did not make.

The Petition read.

Viscount *Palmerston*, on moving that it be printed, denied that he had wilfully delayed presenting it to the House. In fact, he had received it just that day week and had attended daily for the purpose of fulfilling the wishes of his constituents, but it so happened that an opportunity of doing so had never been afforded him, except at an extremely late hour of the night when it would hardly have been consistent with the respect due to the petitioners to have presented it. Indeed, his being enabled to lay it on the Table even now, was entirely owing to the indulgence of the House. He could scarcely regret the delay, however; had it not occurred, hon. Members would have been deprived of the pleasure they had received from the elaborate pleasantry of his hon. friend the member for Marlborough, who had favoured them with the many facetious impromptus which he had employed seven days in concocting. With respect to what had been said relative to the discrepancy of opinion on this subject between the University of Cambridge and himself, he should merely observe, that he never believed that by honestly performing his duty as a public man on a great national question, he should forfeit the confidence which his constituents had reposed in him. At the same time the hon. Gentleman opposite was mistaken in asserting that this petition had originated with those to whom he was principally indebted for his seat, since many of those whose signatures were attached to it had formerly opposed him on the policy of Catholic Emancipation.

Mr. *Goulburn* remarked that the petition certainly appeared to him to have received much less respectful treatment than it would probably have experienced had it been in support of Reform instead of being against it.

The *Attorney General* stated, that he would yield to no hon. Gentleman present in respect for the University of Cambridge and it was therefore most unfair to interpret any of his observations as in the least degree disrespectful to that learned and venerable body. He did not wonder at the importance which some Gentlemen attached to every petition presented against the Bill before the House, as it was natural that they should wish to make the most of the little opposition which was made to the measure. An hon. Gentleman opposite had alluded to him, and to some of the former transactions of his life. He did not envy the hon. Gentleman any state of feeling which could prompt those allusions. He had no apology to make, and had never made any apology, for what he had done, and had been compelled to do, on behalf of the illustrious but unfortunate client whose interests had been confided to him. Personalities, it was true, had been uttered; but his most painful duty to his unfortunate and much injured client rendered such personalities unavoidable. But since this unhappy subject had now been invidiously obtruded on the notice of the House, he would not shrink from declaring, that an illustrious individual, whom it would be unparliamentary more particularly to allude to, had in his person given a more signal example of generous magnanimity than history had ever recorded of any sovereign since the time of Henry 5th, when that high-minded and chivalrous monarch presented the sword and balance to the Chief Justice who had personally offended him.

Mr. *Attwood*, in explanation, said he had only stated that the Attorney General had employed inflammatory language which might be productive of the most injurious consequences in the present excited state of the public mind. He would put it to the hon. and learned Gentleman, whether, if an individual should be prosecuted for a libel by that House, through the intervention of the Attorney General, that individual might not place him in an awkward situation, were he to read to the jury language as inflammatory as his own, which had been used by that very Attorney General himself, in his place in Parliament? Why should the hon. and learned Gentleman make use of expressions there for a similar use, of which it was possible he might hereafter be called upon to punish others?

The *Attorney General* said, he could by no means admit that the public mind was in that state of excitement which the hon. Member described, although, certainly, attempts had been made to inflame it. He thanked the hon. Gentleman for so kindly cautioning him as to the performance of his duty, at the same time that he considered his gratuitous suggestions on the present occasion wholly unnecessary, for he had only asserted that a great portion of that House could not give an impartial or disinterested vote on the question of Reform, and that assertion he did not hesitate most emphatically to repeat.

Mr. *H. Twiss* said, it seemed to be considered by some that the House of Commons were not to be the judges of this great question, because some of the Members might be affected by its result, and the University of Cambridge were not to be judges because they were men secluded in their closets. If neither of these bodies then, were to have a voice, who, he would ask, were to be the judges? Those promiscuous assemblies to whom some of the hon. Gentlemen opposite were so much in the habit of appealing, and whom they could easily get to second their views?

Sir *John Sebright* said, that it was not a fair and correct argument to say that many of those who had voted against this measure had a direct interest in opposition to it.

Mr. *Grove Price*, in explanation, said, he should have no wish to sit in that House after the passing of a Bill which would destroy the Constitution.

Sir *R. Vyvyan*, after alluding to the predicament in which the Attorney General might be placed in prosecuting parties for libel, as already stated by the hon. member for Boroughbridge, referred to the recent rumours of an approaching dissolution, and animadverted on the declaration of the hon. and learned Member the Attorney General, that it was the undoubted prerogative of the King, in such an event to issue no writs to certain boroughs which at present enjoyed the right of returning Members. He could not, however, for one moment believe it possible that Ministers would presume to advise his Majesty to adopt such a monstrous alternative after their recent experience of the result of an unconstitutional interference with the right of election in a neighbouring kingdom. In reference to his assertion respecting the vote given by the noble Chancellor of the Exchequer on Mr. Davenport's motion, for an inquiry into the distress which then prevailed in the country, he observed, that he was happy to repeat in the noble Lord's presence what he had said in his absence —namely, that he had voted against the Committee, and had spoken in justification of that vote.

Lord *Althorp* said, it was true that he had voted as the hon. Member stated, but he had at the time assigned the reasons upon which he acted. They were, that he did not think that the inquiry would tend to alleviate the distress. Most of the hon. Gentlemen who voted for the inquiry went into a discussion upon the currency, upon which subject he entertained different views from their's, and he did not consider that the agitation of that question would have any tendency to alleviate the distress. These were the grounds of his vote. Whether they were right or wrong, it was not for him to say; but he would only observe that he was not now convinced of their not being sound and substantial.

Mr. *George Dawson* said, that the menace of a dissolution was a most offensive attempt to intimidate members, for the purpose of deterring them from the discharge of their duty. Ministers might as well say to Parliament "We despise your opinions, for we shall soon have an opportunity of kicking you out of the House."

Sir *J. Sebright,* in illustration of his assertion, observed that if the question was whether Hertfordshire should be disfranchised, he, as a Hertfordshire man, and having a seat for the county, could not give a disinterested vote. He did not mean to say they had not a right to vote, but he could not think that they were impartial observers of the nature of the measure; for he confessed, that if a Bill was introduced to disfranchise Hertfordshire, he should not be an impartial listener to the proposition, but should oppose it with all his power.

Sir *G. Murray* said, the hon. Baronet had attempted to explain his observations by what he had just uttered; but the very tendency of the explanation itself was, to throw a degree of discredit upon the opinions and votes of those who were now sitting in that House for places which were about to be disfranchised. The hon. Baronet seemed to think that the interests of none were affected except of those who opposed the measure of Reform; but in that he was mistaken, for there were persons who supported the other side of the question who had full as strong motives for their conduct as those who opposed it. A number of objections had been urged to this measure, but there was one of a very strong kind that had been passed over, namely, that if this Reform were granted, those who wished for Reform of a more extended nature would say afterwards that this was not sufficient, and could not be supposed to be so, for it had been voted by a Parliament that did not represent the people. It carried with it, therefore, the elements of further change, and opened the door to a great variety of innovations.

Mr. *H. Twiss.*—I wish to know from the hon. Baronet, how he would vote, should it be proposed to disfranchise the county which he represents, or reduce its Members to one, the principle of disfranchisement being the same as in those boroughs which the Bill he supports goes to deprive of their Members?

Sir *J. Sebright.*—Most decidedly I would oppose the proposition.

The *Attorney General* begged leave to say what he had said touching the King's prerogative extending to the power of omitting to send writs to places returning Members to Parliament, had been misunderstood. At present all writs were sent in the King's name; and though he had his doubts whether his Majesty constitutionally possessed the power of omitting to send writs to every place which may have returned Members, he had no doubt of the improbability, amounting to an impossibility, that such a *coup d'état* would ever be had resort to. He was inclined to think the King did possess that power; it certainly was exercised in ancient periods of our history, and had not been formally curtailed; but, as he had said, need not be apprehended. By the Bill the power thus formerly exercised would be defined and exercised by an act of the Legislature.

Mr. *H. Gurney* could not let that opportunity pass without making one observation upon what the hon. and learned Gentleman opposite (the Attorney General) had stated with respect to the right of the Crown to suspend the writs. He believed that if the Crown ever did suspend the writs, the rights of the boroughs did not cease upon that suspension, for whatever length of time might have elapsed since the borough had received the writ, it would still be entitled to insist on the revival of the right at the first opportunity. There was one change which amidst all the others that their Bill proposed to make, had been overlooked, but which, in his mind, ought to be made—he meant that law which had been passed upon a private occasion—the expulsion of Mr. Horne Tooke from that House—should be abolished with respect to the two Universities; for as the Bill professed to act on the principle of giving a representation of local interests, he did not see why Clergymen should be excluded from holding seats for either of the Universities.

Sir *H. Hardinge* begged to say, with respect to the boroughs that were to be totally disfranchised, that the one he represented, which was among the number, had now a population much more numerous than at the Revolution of 1688; and yet, by this iniquitous Bill, it was to be deprived of its right to send Members to Parliament. The tenure by which the right of voting was given was the same now as it had been then; it was the burgage tenure; and there was nothing in the constitution of that borough which varied now from what it was at the time of the Revolution; and therefore he asserted that any Act which took away the right of sending Members from the borough of Newport was contrary to the principles of the Revolution of 1688.

Mr. *Hume* was not surprised that those Members who represented boroughs should stand up for the right of voting by burgage tenure; but at the same time, he must be permitted to ask them, whether it was consistent with common sense, that the owner of certain fields—for the fields alone gave the right of voting—were to be allowed to send Members to Parliament, while such large towns as Birmingham, with extensive and important interests, were excluded from that right? Some Gentlemen thought that everything that was old ought to be maintained; but the change of circumstances often rendered old customs unfit for application, and that was the case with these votes of burgage tenure. The objection of the right hon. Baronet (Sir George Murray) to this Bill being a change in itself, and being likely to open the door to other changes, was applicable to every new law and new regulation; and if it was a proper objection, it applied to some new regulations which had been introduced by the right hon. Gentleman himself.

Mr. *Hoy* was opposed to this measure, and thought it would be highly injurious to the country. One of its objects was to disfranchise the out-voters; and he wished to observe, that the first person who would suffer under the operation of this provision was his most gracious Majesty, William 4th., for he was an out-voter of Southampton. He had examined the Bill, and he asserted that it did not restore the rights of the people, but destroyed them. He denied, besides, that any rights had been taken from the people: so that the consequence was, there were none to restore. There had been a Committee appointed to examine the petitions, and what was the result? There were 600 petitions for Reform generally, 287 of these were for the Ballot, a number for the abolition of tithes, and the reduction of taxation, and the abolition of sinecures, and for everything but for this particular Bill. He urged this country to take a warning from France and Belgium, and not to allow the introduction of revolutionary doctrines. He had stood near the noble Lord when he almost introduced the tri-coloured flag in that House, by the eulogium he passed on the conduct of the people of those countries; and in that course he had been followed by the hon. members for Bridport and Middlesex. The present Cabinet were said to be unanimous, but how had their unanimity been obtained? Not indeed by the proscription of their relations or friends, but by the proscription of principles. This measure was called a conservative measure. He denied that it deserved that title; for instead of preserving, it went to destroy everything. He asserted the excellence of the present system of Representation, and declared that the men returned to that House acted conscientiously, and for the good of the country; and he was sure that if a gulph should open in the State, as a gulph had once opened in front of the Roman Forum, that House contained many Members who, for the good of the country, would readily plunge into it.

Colonel *Sibthorp* said—I should not have trespassed upon the House upon a petition from the University of Cambridge, had I not considered it my duty from circumstances that have this day occurred. The fact is, and as long as I have the honour to be a Member of this House, I wish everything that falls from me to be strictly, truly, and unsparingly stated, that I found, upon conversing with one or two of the most respectable independent constituents, out-voters, or non-resident freemen of that city, for which I entertain, and have shewn, I trust, every feeling of regard, and am still Representative of, I trust disinterested and honest Representative—that this Bill--this Reform Bill, as it is termed—is unknown, and misunderstood; and well it may be, for it is a curious, indescribable, unintelligible Bill, and so intended. Sir, it was understood to give important extension—general, liberal, fair extension of elective franchise; and these honourable constituents—I rank none dishonourable--who have hitherto supported me, believing as I hope I can prove, that I shall act on every measure an open, honest, consistent, and disinterested part, such as my family, for years and years, Sessions and Sessions, representing that city, have ever done; these constituents of mine have, since my vote in this House upon the Reform question, declared they did not approve of my vote, and have stated that they considered I was voting against the city, the country, and the sovereign. Sir, they are this day, having seen the Bill in black and white, converted; and the fact is, they have requested me to come down to shew the fallacy of the Bill in its true colours. There was an expectation that the elective franchise would be extended in the good city, according to the Returns now before the House. The Bill gives what? To the city of Lincoln, out of a population of 10,367, census 1821, 434 voters, formerly 1,233. And what will be the census in 1831? Is this just? It cuts off, without judge or jury—mark ye, for no fault, no conviction of bribery or corruption—799. Liberal, fair, just, popular Bill! In what state is poor Grimsby, mutilated Grimsby! population 3,064 in 1821: 304 voters formerly, now thirty-four. And what is Westminster and London? How stand they? And these measures are popular, giving to the people popular representation, annihilating hosts who have done no harm, committed no fault, and by destroying rights, giving to those who never had any right! Sir, I shall not now advert to the former opinions of the noble Lord who introduced this popular Bill. But, Sir, in 1819 and 1823 these opinions were very different. That noble Lord said of the House of Commons in 1819, "The principle of the construction of the House is pure and worthy:" and he also said, "I cannot agree to the wholesale plans of Reform before me." Such were stated to be the noble Lord's opinions in 1819. What are the noble Lord's Bills now? Counties will be close boroughs; cities cut up root and branch. Sir, I am a Reformer, and would Reform much. I approve of the extension to leaseholders, copyholders, in counties; to the extension of elective franchise to those highly respectable individuals who have not enjoyed it in counties corporate. I do not object to the extension, but I object to the deprivation of honest, independent men; and will this satisfy the unjust, partial deprivation without fault, without misconduct, without corruption alleged or ascertained? This Bill goes to disfranchise by a nice calculation, 286,000 individuals, according to the statements of the Returns comparatively taken. Sir, I will vote for any just, fair, and proper Reform that will be generous and liberal—just to my city, liberal and fair to the people—not partial, uncertain, and mysterious, undefined, but will ensure benefit, and not concealment for the errors of late and present Governments to soothe the people for disappointment, or promises for disappointment; as to giving relief from taxation or distress, the Bill is a fallacy throughout. I will do my duty; I trust I have done it; I will not sacrifice my conscience to gain any popularity; and the more the Bill is known the more its fallacy and deception will be proved.

Mr. *R. Grant* said, that the petition was undoubtedly one which contained matter of great importance. It was not in favour of the Bill to its full extent, neither was it against it, as might be supposed from the observations of hon. Members who had spoken on the opposite side of the House. The petition had taken a middle course. It was obvious, from what had taken place in that House, that, at all events, those hon. Members who had opposed the Reform Bill were friendly to a moderate Reform. He was anxious to say a few words with respect to the opinions of the great body of constituents whom he had the honour to represent. He had made inquiry of persons who well knew the fact which he was about to state, considering it right to set the matter in a correct point of view, because it had been insinuated that there was a general objection in that city (Norwich) to the principles of the Bill. If there had existed such a feeling he should certainly regret the circumstance; but it was not so, and therefore he felt it to be his duty to state, from the best information upon the subject which he possessed, that not only was the measure highly satisfactory to the population generally, but to the freemen who formed his constituency. It would probably be in the recollection of the House that he himself had had the honour a few nights back, of presenting a petition from the city of Norwich, in favour of Reform, which was signed by 7,000 of the adult male population of that city, and only the day before yesterday a meeting was convened, by the Mayor of Norwich, for the purpose of considering, amongst other matters of business, the subject of a petition against the measure now pending. After the two or three subjects of business had been disposed of, one of the Tory party, a person, who was one of the chief promoters of the anti-Reform petition, got up and moved the postponement of that question, *sine die*. His motion was seconded and supported by a respectable person of his own party, and he was joined by a third; so that the matter was put off without one word being uttered in favour of the counter-petition against Reform; a fact which would tend to prove that the city of Norwich was not opposed to Reform. He was disposed to think that the freemen of Norwich would be inclined to support the Bill, though they would be deprived of their franchise under its operation; but he also thought that they would receive that franchise in another form, and would be included under the class of persons holding property of a description which would enable them to retain their votes.

Petition to be printed.

Viscount *Palmerston* presented another Petition, from the University of Cambridge, in favour of the Reform Bill, signed by the Bachelors of Arts resident in that University. The petitioners stated it to be their opinion that the Bill was calculated to give stability to the Throne and security from danger to the Constitution. Amongst those who signed it were to be found the names of many individuals who had highly distinguished themselves in their academical studies.

Sir *R. Vyvyan* begged to say, he had felt on a former occasion great regret in understanding, from an expression which had fallen from an hon. and learned Member opposite, that the prerogative of the Crown extended, in that hon. and learned Member's opinion, to the extent of suspending at pleasure the issue of writs for boroughs, which it might be deemed necessary to deprive of Representation in that House; he, however, rose on the present occasion to express the satisfaction with which he had since heard, that in the hon. and learned Member's opinion, as one of the Law Officers of the Crown, the kingly prerogative did not extend to the suspension or intermission of writs to any boroughs.

The *Attorney General* said, that his observations only went to show that the power which the Reform measure was to give the Parliament was only a power which had been formerly possessed by the Crown. There was a resolution of the House of Commons, in the time of James 1st, which declared the Crown not to possess the power of withholding the writs for certain boroughs, or of sending those writs to other places;—but then that was only a resolution of the House, and not a law; nor was there, as far as he knew, any doctrine laid down to that express effect. The suggestion, however, of suspending the writs for any boroughs whatever was not likely to be acted on under any circumstances, however advantageous it might appear to be.

Mr. *Hudson Gurney* observed, that but one writ had ever been intermitted since the time of Richard 2nd, and that was the case of Fareham. He was clearly of opinion that the Crown could by its writs call on places to send Members which had never sent them before, as it could create new Peers; and he was inclined to think, as the Crown could not deprive a family of its peerage, so it was not in its power to deprive a place once possessing the right of sending a Member to the House of Commons.

Mr. *C. W. Wynn* concurred in the observation which had fallen from the hon. Member who spoke last; he begged to remind the House, that this was no light matter of consideration, but concerned one of their most important privileges. In the reign of James 1st, the Law Officers of the Crown had settled the point which was brought under their consideration, and the learned Selden was one of those whose judgment, aided by the House, decided that the Crown had not the power to intermit or suspend the issue of writs to any one borough that had formerly sent Members to that House. The House of Commons asserted their rights on this point, the suspended writs were issued to those boroughs which James 1st. attempted to deprive of Representation, and one of the Members who were returned to that House under those writs was John Hampden.

Mr. *Charles Wood* observed, that, in his opinion, the hon. and learned Member who sat below him did not, on the occasion to which the hon. Baronet, the member for Cornwall, alluded, assert that the prerogative of the Crown extended to the power of suspending the writs for boroughs; the hon. and learned Member had certainly said, that it was once in the power of the Crown to do so, and that the Reform measure now proposed to do by Act of Parliament, what was formerly in the power of the Crown to effect without any Act of Parliament—namely, to deprive certain boroughs of the right of sending Representatives, and transfer that right to other places.

Mr. *M. Fitzgerald* said, that the present was not a question of prerogative, but one of the parliamentary constitution of that House. If the Crown were to possess an influence over the constitution of that House, as one of the doctrines of Reform, he conceived that the House of Commons would receive a fatal stab; the question ought to be set at rest, and he trusted that it would not be suffered to remain in the present state, or to be discussed only in a loose conversation. The matter was one which the Crown lawyers, and not county Members, ought to decide upon, and thus set the House of Commons at rest on one of the most important points connected with its constitution.

Mr. *Capel* said, that the petitioners in favour of the Bill were under a delusion which he hoped would soon be dissipated. He represented a borough which had of late only conquered its independence and now it was to be disfranchised without having committed any crime whatever.

Sir *Charles Wetherell* remarked, that he had certainly understood the hon. and learned member for Nottingham to assert that the prerogative of the Crown did extend to the right of omitting and suspending the writs for boroughs, and that the reign of Richard 2nd afforded precedent for the intermission. This was not, however, a question to be discussed as a postscript to a petition from any University, whether the petitioners were Doctors of Law or Bachelors of Arts; nor was it a time to meet an illegal and an unconstitutional statement of that nature. If the hon. and learned Member would rise and state that, in a barbarous time, the Crown had usurped a power to which it never had a right, and which it used in the most illegal manner—if the hon. and learned Member would rise and state this, he would say that he was satisfied; but he could not condescend to enter upon a subject of this high importance on an occasion like the present. He hoped that the hon. and learned Member, as one of the Law Officers of the Crown, would not leave the matter where it stood, or suffer a proposition which left the Members of that House in such doubt as to its constitution to remain in uncertainty, but that he would come forward at once and say that it was not law, and never could be law, that the Crown possessed the power of suspending the writs for boroughs.

Mr. *Sadler* said, that nothing could be more unconstitutional than to leave the Crown the option of issuing or suspending the writs for boroughs at its pleasure. Such a power would place all the institutions of the country in jeopardy, and would hazard all that had been gained from the Crown by the glorious Revolution of 1688.

Sir *R. Vyvyan* could not refrain from expressing also his sense of the dangerous consequences of the doctrine of the hon. and learned Attorney General. It was by the exercise of the power which, according to him, the Crown was still in possession of, that the county of Cornwall came to have so many Members; for writs were sent to places in it for the purpose of carrying into effect the plan of the Government of the time being, whether that plan was to attaint an innocent person, or to raise supplies to carry on needless and expensive wars, or any other purpose of the monarch hostile to the interests of the subject; so that it became of double importance just now, on the eve of a threatened dissolution (which, by the way, he did not expect), that it should be distinctly known whether the Crown might still issue new writs here, or withhold them there, as it might enable Ministers to retain the reins of power. He said he did not expect an immediate dissolution, because he thought that Ministers knew too well that a new Parliament would be still more hostile to them than the present?—that the boroughs which they proposed to disfranchise would be opposed to them to a man, and as the late election for the county of Clare showed that Ireland was in such a ferment on the Repeal of the Union question, that it would not be safe to increase the excitement by a new election. In a new Parliament, Ministers would not have to propose their Reform measure, but to fight for their places, whence they would doubtless be ejected in the event of a dissolution. In saying this he was not actuated by any factious opposition, but by a sense of public duty, which he would ever assert, be who might the Minister; and he hoped he should never again see the day when a Ministry must have recourse to an excitement of the public mind as their only means of retaining office.

The Petition to be printed.

SUPPLY.] Lord Althorp moved the Order of the Day for the House to go into a Committee of Supply on the Ordnance Estimates.

Sir *H. Hardinge* wished to know whether it was the intention of the noble Lord opposite to go *seriatim* into the whole of the Ordnance Estimates at the late hour of ten o'clock. He thought it would be found most convenient for the noble Lord to take some particular item, which was more necessary for the public service than any others; he was only desirous to suit the convenience of the noble Lord, for he had no intention at present of opposing any of the Estimates which might be brought forward.

Mr. *Tennyson* said, that he should proceed through the estimates regularly, as they were set down on the paper, up to the time at which it might be convenient to adjourn.

RELATIONS WITH SPAIN.] Mr. *Grove Price* said, that before the House resolved itself into the Committee of Supply, he wished to put two questions to the noble Secretary for Foreign Affairs, involving the honour and reputation of the nation. 1st, Whether the noble Lord (Palmerston), as a member of the government, had given any authority for the removal from Gibraltar of persons calling themselves Spanish Refugees, who for a long period had been harboured in the fortress, and had been guilty of a violation of the rights of neutrality? 2nd, Whether there would be any objection to lay upon the Table any correspondence between the Governor of Gibraltar and the Spanish authorities, relative to that violation? The hon. Member adverted to the circumstances under which a small band of refugees had entered Spain, and expressed some fears that they had been encouraged in that design by the public authorities at Gibraltar, and that the British Government had pursued towards a weak State a different course of policy to that which it would have adopted towards a powerful ally.

Lord *Palmerston*, in answer to the question of the hon. Gentleman, would first mention, that the subsisting relations between this country and Spain were those of perfect friendship and good understanding. The preservation of those relations was essential to the interests of both countries, and the British Government would consider itself liable to the most severe censure if it had connived at, much more encouraged, any attempt of the kind referred to by the hon. Member. He had learnt with great regret the occurrences of the month of January last, when no more than about thirty-four persons (for the number had been greatly exaggerated) secretly made an attack upon the Spanish lines, and being compelled again to seek refuge in the fortress, were disarmed, treated as prisoners, and ordered to quit Gibraltar. Others known to have been incidentally parties to the attempt had also been sent away, and he did not believe that one individual concerned now remained in the garrison. So much did the Governor disapprove of the design, that he had defeated a similar plan ten days before, and had called upon the Spanish authorities to point out persons who they suspected entertained any such project. It was a standing regulation in Gibraltar that no foreigner should permanently reside there, without the permission of the Secretary of State for the Colonies. The Governor could only give a temporary permission of the kind, and since the affair alluded to, he had been called upon from home to put in force the powers he possessed. His Lordship trusted that he need say no more to convince the hon. Member and the House, not only that the British Government had in no respect been privy to the breach of neutrality, but had taken the most effectual means that the fortress should not become the place from which attempts should be made to disturb the tranquillity of Spain.

Mr. M. Fitzgerald confirmed Lord Palmerston's statement, and the subject was dropped.

After a few words from Mr. G. Dawson, Sir H. Hardinge, Lord Althorp, and Mr. Hume, the Ordnance Estimates were postponed; and the House resolved itself into a Committee of Supply on the issuing of Exchequer Bills for the Relief of Ireland.

DISTRESS AND RELIEF OF IRELAND.] Lord *Althorp* hoped that it would not be necessary to detain the Committee long in explaining the plan which Government intended to submit. Hon. Members were aware that the greatest evil at this time pressing upon Ireland was the want of employment. That country presented an extraordinary state of things: with a most fruitful soil, upon which capital could be most advantageously employed, and connected with a country in which capital was so abundant, it nevertheless did not flow into Ireland with any thing like the expected rapidity. The object of Ministers, therefore, was, to adopt such a course as would encourage the flow of capital into Ireland. It had been said that it would be imprudent, and contrary to the principles of good government, for England to advance money for this object; for that if the works contemplated were likely to be profitable, capital would be devoted to them without any extraordinary impulse. But experience of the condition of Ireland showed that such was not practically the fact there; capital was, indeed, increasing but not to the extent that must be desired by every well-wisher to the United Kingdom. It would, therefore, not be thought contrary to principle, or to those views that ought to guide an enlightened Government, to give an artificial direction to capital by the application of the powers of the Legislature. He was very far from saying that the people of England ought to be taxed for such a purpose—that would not be a justifiable proposition; but he thought that the security of the country might be given to assist those who needed capital to be applied to the improvement of Ireland. To him there seemed nothing wrong, therefore, in advancing money in the way in which he proposed, although he was aware that every such advance should be made with great caution, being liable to great abuse. It was necessary that great precaution should be exercised, both as to the manner in which the money advanced might be applied, and as to the hands through which it might be allowed to pass. Great care was necessary to prevent its being applied more to the furtherance of private and local interests than to that of public objects. There was one great danger attending the application of public money which must necessarily be placed under local superintendence, viz. that it might be too much subjected to private or merely local influence. It was, therefore, proper to place as much as possible the control of the sum for which he applied in the hands of the Government in this country. But in reserving that control, it was at the same time necessary that those who should have in their hands the immediate application of the money should possess the most intimate local knowledge of the places in which the expenditure was to be made, as without that knowledge it was not possible to direct the application of the money with effect. Another thing which was particularly to be guarded against in the application of the public money in Ireland was, that it should not be made subservient to political or party purposes. In coming to Parliament for the advance now required, his Majesty's Government had taken all those particulars into their consideration; and the manner in which he hoped to secure all the necessary precautions would be explained, he trusted, to the satisfaction of the House when the Bill came before them which it was the intention of the Government to propose. As, however, it was not intended to introduce that Bill immediately, he should not occupy them with a statement of its details, but confine himself to a general explanation of its leading provisions. It was intended to appoint a Commission in immediate communication with the Treasury in Ireland, but acting solely under the control of the Government here. To this Commission would be intrusted the disposal of the money granted by Parliament for local improvements in Ireland, and all matters at present subjected to the direction of the Commissioners of Inland Navigation, the Board of Works in Ireland, and the Commissioners of Post Roads. The superintendence of the works at present under those Boards would be committed to the Commissioners under the Bill which it was intended to introduce; at the same time that they should not have the control of the money applied under their direction as was the case with those Boards. Thus, by the appointment of the Commission, instead of an increase, there would be a considerable diminution of expense, by the reduction of those Boards, independently of the advantage to the public of having the outlay of the sums granted entirely under the control and upon the responsibility of the Government. At the same time he wished it to be understood, that whilst the proposed Commission was to be in communication with the Irish Treasury, it should not be at all under the control of the Irish Government. It should not be supplied with the means of undertaking, or be permitted to undertake, any work without the express consent of his Majesty's Government in England, in order to prevent the influence of any political or local interest from directing the application of the public money. In the consideration of every application made to them for assistance, and in their communications to the Treasury, the Commissioners would be expected to have regard to the public benefit to be derived from the projected works, and to have regard also not only to the immediate, but to the future employment of the labouring population, in the districts in which it might be proposed that works should be undertaken. Above all things, they would be expected to have regard to the security on which they should propose to advance the money. The main object of the Bill would be to grant loans of money for the promotion of local improvements upon available security; but not upon the principle on which former loans were granted. In former loans, when the money advanced had been repaid, the fund ceased; but it was now the intention of his Majesty's Government that when any sum advanced by the Commissioners should be repaid, the Commissioners should continue to apply it, with the rest of the fund under their direction, to the improvement of Ireland; with this condition, however, that the interest was to be paid to the Government. The way in which it was proposed to raise the money was by Exchequer Bills, of which the interest would be received by the Government; the fund being in all cases of repayment, left in the same state—the principal sum being continued to be applied to the improvement of Ireland. Reports from the Commissioners should annually be laid before Parliament for their approbation, stating the sums advanced, and the repayments received, as well as the nature and situation of the works conducted under the Commission, within the year. Persons borrowing that money would become Crown debtors. One kind of security to be accepted by the Commissioners was the county rates. But also in places where tolls were exacted, the tolls would be taken as security, and in some cases money would be permitted to be advanced on the security of private property, great care being taken to ascertain that it be adequate. In that way there could be no doubt that the repayment would be secure; for on all former occasions of the advance of money by Government, the loan had always been repaid. Nor was the Government merely indemnified for the advance, but in all such cases, the improvement of the revenue in the districts in which the money lent had been applied would of itself repay the advance. He believed, that when the general measure should be laid before the House, the results which had been proved from former loans would be shown to be such as to remove every rational objection to the Bill. The Committee must be aware, from the outline which he had given of the general purposes of the Bill, that it must be one of considerable length, and that an examination of its details would occupy a long time. Therefore, if his Majesty's Government were to wait until the Bill should have been fully discussed, and should have been passed into a law, the time for its application, in the present year, would have long passed. With that consideration, he thought that he was justified in asking for a smaller grant in the mean time. The Committee must be aware that the months in which labour would have most opportunities of employment in Ireland were April, May, and June. But if the Government were to postpone their assistance for the employment of labour until the Bill could pass, much of the season in which the assistance might be beneficial would be lost. The state of Ireland at present was such, that the necessity of some immediate remedy was of extreme urgency. It might be objected that the assent of the Committee to the Resolution which he should propose would be of no effect, because it could not be reported until after the holidays. But it must be obvious to the Committee, that his Majesty's Government could not bring the grant into operation without some time to consider it. Therefore, it was necessary that the consent of the Committee should be obtained as early as possible, in order that the Government might make the inquiries necessary for its immediate application. He had said that it was the determination of the Government to take every means for preserving the proposed Commission free from political or local influence; but yet he did not think that the objections to which he had referred were of so much weight in respect to a temporary measure, as they would be to the permanent operation of the Bill itself. They certainly were not such as could induce the House to reject the Resolution which he had to move for, especially when it was considered, as he had already stated, that the time for bringing the Resolution into operation would be gone by unless it were now agreed to. His intention was, to advance the sum of 50,000*l.* in Exchequer Bills, to be placed at the disposal of the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland under the restrictions to which the Commission would ultimately be subjected—that is, for the purpose of being applied, in the way of loan, to the promotion of public works in Ireland, with the sanction of the Treasury in Ireland in the first instance, and with the consent afterwards of the Government in England. He did not stipulate that condition through any want of confidence in the present Lord Lieutenant of Ireland; but he thought that if the measure would require the precaution to be exercised in the whole course of its arrangements, as he had explained, it was indispensable that it should be exercised in the beginning. He believed that he had now made the objects of the Resolution understood by the Committee; and he thought that he and his hon. friends near him would be able to answer any questions which might be put, to the satisfaction of the Committee. The money which he proposed to ask of the Committee would be lent upon private freehold property, as well as upon the security of the county rates and upon tolls, in districts in which tolls are collected. The noble Lord concluded by moving, "That it is the opinion of the Committee that a sum of not less than 50,000*l.* should be placed at the disposal of the Lord Lieutenant and the Government of Ireland, to be applied to local improvements in Ireland."

Mr. *Wyse* said, that he had yesterday postponed a Motion respecting the employment of the poor of Ireland, on the understanding that the Government themselves had prepared and were bringing forward a measure upon that subject. He felt that he could congratulate the country upon the prospect which the Government had opened of bringing into action the resources of Ireland, which had so long lain dormant. Although the proposition of the noble Lord would only comprehend a part of that which he (Mr. Wyse) had intended to bring forward, he was willing to relinquish any opportunity of gratifying his own personal vanity. The present state of Ireland was such as the House and the country were scarcely aware of. The people were in some places in such a condition as to bring society to the verge of disorganization. The elements of society were in disorder, and in Meath and Clare, in disunion. The system was falling to pieces in large masses—and unless it were immediately repaired, the evil would soon be past recovery and cure. The state of Ireland was the anomaly of anomalies in the history of nations. Its population was hardy, intelligent, numerous;—greater than that of nineteen States in Europe—smaller only than seven. Its soil not requiring the skill or manure of England, was capable, as had been stated by Arthur Young, of sustaining 100,000,000 of souls; its climate was the happiest medium, its fisheries were mines under water—its south-west districts contained the richest mines, according to Griffith, in the empire; its apposition was such, that it was the link between two hemispheres, so that a ship could reach America from its western coasts before she was out of soundings departing from London. Such was the Ireland which God created. What was the Ireland which man had made? Other countries had risen and fallen; Ireland had never been but as at present; she had had vicissitudes, but only vicissitudes of ill; hope, which comes to all, never came to her; with her population, she was powerless except for evil; with her soil, her climate, her fisheries, periodical visitations, sure and quick visitations of famine had been her history; with her mines, her ports, her coasts, she had no shipping, no trade; in one word, endowed with every physical blessing she was the prey of every moral ill. The frequent famines in her early history were known and, according to Spencer, the frosts in the year 1539 and 1560, carried off one-third of her population. The dearths of 1741 and 1762 were as bad. But, alas! our own times could parallel these accounts. Three famines, with their consequent trains of epidemics, had swept over the land since the peace, and the people were crouching now before the fourth. The awful visitation of 1822. and the dreadful state of the counties of Mayo, Galway and Clare, at that period, must have made the most selfish and profligate shudder with awe. In Sligo the starving peasantry of an absentee landlord lay perishing about the doors of a poor clergyman. In Mayo numbers were seen stealing the sea-weed which was brought for manure. In Cork many grew mad and delirious with hunger—numbers died for want of food. Did the evil cease there?

No; plague trod on the heels of famine—scrofula, typhus, mania followed up in fierce succession, gathering what hunger had left. Each of these diseases was only the manifestation of sheer want. Scrofula, it was well known, was indigenous to those countries where extreme poverty compels the use of crude food, exposure to damp air, and great fatigue. It is the malady of the Highlands of Scotland, the remote districts of Switzerland and Egypt—it leads to typhus and insanity. The typhus is the famine—plague of Ireland. Dr. Stokes, in his reports of the Cork-street Fever Hospital in Dublin, had distinctly traced it from its first insidious advances to its final fastening upon the heart of the people. Baron Larrey when he visited the Dublin hospitals, started back in horror at the scene, it was not disease, but starvation. Then it was, that 11,681 patients passed through the Government Hospitals, and 200,000 through the other establishments of Dublin. In 1815, when great scarcity prevailed, the number of in mates in the Lunatic Asylum of Cork rose from 74 to 210. A scarcity of grain in the Netherlands in the years 1816 and 1817, and a want of bread in France, produced a similar phenomenon in their respective establishments. But these evils could not be slowly exorcised. Famine in Ireland was occasionally suspended, but never extinguished. In Carlow, one of the most flourishing districts of Ireland, where seven families are often cooped up in one cabin, disease was, of course, produced, and, on the average, out of thirty families ten survive at the end of a twelvemonth. But why refer to that, with the existing famine of the barony of Erris before the public? The facts detailed in the letter of Mr. John M'Donough, dated the 22nd of February last, would give the House a pretty good idea of the calamities of that place. Men perishing at sea in their boats, being too weak to row them; others nearly expiring while begging coffins for their wives. The doors barred, that the scanty meal might not be seen by the passing strangers, and the Irish peasant must endure much before he would close the door of hospitality—might give the House some idea of the calamities now suffering by the Irish. What was the cause of all this misery? Was there no food? There was food, but no money to purchase it; and, what was worse, no means of earning money. There were many mouths and many hands, but no means to feed the one, or employ the other—want of employment was the chief cause, but why did that exist? The process of deterioration had been going on among all, without any means to stay or prevent it. Manufactures had expired. The people of Erris complained that they had lost their employment, and that their small manufactories in flax, wool, &c., had utterly failed. But was it not the same in other parts of the country? It was true that the exports of oxen, sheep, and swine had enormously increased since 1800. Exports of wheat and flour had also augmented, though in a small proportion; but the exports of beef and pork had declined, as well as the import of tallow, and there was a diminution of the consumption of malt, tea, sugar, wine and tobacco. Cottons were imported to a great extent in 1800, the imports amounting to 976,466 lbs.; and in 1825, to 2,702,523lbs., but it must also be remembered, that the linen trade had in the same period considerably declined. The augmented import of coals, of which nearly half was confined to Dublin, was attributable principally to the introduction of steam. The Marine Insurances effected in 1815, amounted to 3,000; in 1830, to not more than 2,198. Seven-eighths of the shipping trading with Ireland were British and foreign, and three fourths of the Irish trade was carried on exclusively by British shipping. Even Scotland had the advantage of Ireland, which had nothing but the manufacture and export of food; but would it not be a better evidence of prosperity, if that were consumed at home? England consumed her own produce, and six millions of foreign produce besides. What was the result of this?—Why the whole population was thrown on the cultivation of the soil; but the soil was gradually becoming pasturage, and the employment was lessening. The root of this misery was mal-administration; penal laws, the sweeping disfranchisement of the Catholic freeholders in the reign of George I., like those under the present Disfranchisement—and Subletting Acts, and the exemption of pasturage from tithe, depopulated and desolated the country. Henry Boyle, the first Earl of Shannon, saw this in 1748; but new insurrections added new evidence every day. In 1759, the price of cattle was raised, the demand for pasturage increased, tenants were ejected, and the White-boys desolated Ireland; in 1763, Grand Jury cess was the grievance, and the Hearts of Oak made their appearance; in 1770, the refusal of renewals on a large estate in Down and Antrim caused the Hearts of Steel to come forth; and, in 1784, the pressure of tithes gave rise to the Peep-of-day and Right Boys—the Rebellion of 1798 was Protestant and aristocratic, but the servile war was only suspended. The exactions on the Courtney estate brought it again into action in 1823; and at this moment, in Clare, the same exciting principle was bursting forth in the fiercest gusts. The cause was one and simple—the rich and poor have been and are separated. The rich are absentees, the poor are unemployed. No wonder they should be divided, no wonder they should be hostile, no wonder such hostility should endure, no wonder it should wrap in common injury every order in the community. What then should be done? Employ, and make the persons most benefitted contribute to this employment. Let not the occupant bear all; the landlord was more benefitted than the occupant. Let not the absentee escape by throwing the burthen on the occupant. Irish mendicancy at this moment costs us enormously; there were about 500,000 paupers, who could not be supported for less than 1,800,000*l.* Add the Grand Jury cess, 800,000*l.*; the expense of an army, 23,000*l.*; of a police, 50,000*l.*, &c., which would bring it up to not less than 2,870,000*l.* annually, one-fourth of the rental, and one-twentieth of the entire consumption of the State. The poor-rate in England did not amount, though high, to one-fortieth of the entire consumption. His estimate did not include English expenses for Irish paupers, which amount to some hundreds of thousands in the year. Such sums, properly laid out, or even a portion of them, would go far to give employment to the whole of the poor labourers of Ireland. But would there be no return? Take any of the various sources of production with which Ireland abounds. There are five millions of waste, but reclaimable, land in Ireland, capable of supporting two million persons. Mr. Nimmo engaged to drain it at 1*l.* 1*s.* per acre—the total expense would be 9*l.*; which allowing 3*l.* 3*s.* surplus or profit per acre, would increase the national revenue 9,000,000*l.* Mr. Kelly's evidence was not less flattering. But was this calculation only? Mr. Nimmo had it put to the test of experience. It cost Government only 150,000*l.* to make 1,000 miles of road in the Highlands—what was the result? Mr. Telford's evidence was conclusive on the subject. In 1742 there were no roads in Scotland; every inconvenience was suffered from this want of communication. The late improvements have, in his language, "advanced the country one hundred years." The effects in Ireland are not less striking. Mr. Nimmo, by the order of Government, expended on roads, &c., in Connaught, 167,000*l.*: seven years fully repaid it. Mr. Griffith expended, in a similar improvement in the South, 60,000*l.*, and the revenue had since been benefited not less than 50,000*l.* annually. By similar exertions, the *Marais de la Vendée* was made one of the most fertile districts in France, and the soil of Belgium had been converted into the garden of Europe. The soil of Belgium, Sir H. Davy remarks, has the very same substratum as the bogs of Ireland. As to inland navigation, what country in Europe offered equal advantages? but how much neglected! Any one who cast his eye over the map of the comparative inland navigation of both countries, could not but feel mortified. England was intersected with conduits like the living human body; Ireland had only great arteries in her rivers, yet it had been ascertained that thirty rivers in Ireland might be rendered navigable, which would bring not less than 6,400,000 square acres within five miles of water carriage. Her coast extended 1,737 miles, but was comparatively waste and idle. Any one who referred to the fishery reports might see how much had been done; but also, how much remained to be done. Sixty safety-tiers had been built along the western coast, at a very trifling expense; but such was still the deficiency, that the Dublin fishery boats often catch, off the coast of Mayo, the treasures of which the inhabitants themselves could not profit by for want of deep-sea boats. The Fishery Board expended little more than 5,000*l.* a-year, and 3,000,000*l.* had been voted for the Rideau Canal, and 1,500,000*l.* for an absurd palace. A tithe of these sums would have contributed to the improvement and tranquillity of Ireland! He said tranquillity; for idleness, hunger, and discontent, must bear misery and anarchy, as the wild tree bears its bad and bitter fruits. Such policy was a bribe for crime; gaols were like palaces, and cottages were wretched hovels. What was the result? Better to be well housed, well clothed, with 2*d.* per day, than rotting in rags with scarcely twopence. Such was the reasoning of the peasant, which meant, that it was better to be a criminal with these advantages, than an honest man without them. What, then, was the remedy? These evils had originated in want of employment, high rents, and partial burthens; substitute, then, employment, lower rents, and more equal burthens. The resolutions which it was his intention to have proposed yesterday, went first to the establishment of a Board on the principle just sketched by the noble Lord, consolidating all previously-existing Boards, but constituted on somewhat a different principle from his. It was intended to suggest, that it should be composed of three or more Members of Parliament, from each province, and an equal number of persons appointed by Government, as is the case in America. This body should be divided into three sections: the first for public works; the second for public charities; the third for public education. The province of the first should be all such works as the noble Lord has just stated, which come under the head of works of general utility, such as roads, bridges, &c. The other departments of the Board should attend to charity and public education. The hon. Member then entered into a rapid explanation of his own plan, and which was nearly coincident with the arrangements explained by the noble Lord, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, except that the hon. Member's Board was to be permanent, responsible to the rate-payers, and to engross into its own hands the functions of Grand Juries and parish officers.

Mr. *Sadler* said, that no adequate relief could be given to Ireland by a measure of the description of the one proposed, and he hardly knew whether or not to give it his approbation. There were 150,000 persons on the verge of destitution and actual starvation, and the loan of 50,000*l.* would afford no adequate relief to the distresses of such a mass of people. If the population were 8,000,000 it would afford about 1½*d.* a head. That was not the way to relieve such deep-seated distress. He had heard a good deal of Irish labourers taking the bread out of the mouths of Englishmen, but he did not hear much said against those absentee landlords who took the bread out of the mouths of the Irish peasantry. He thought some measures ought to be taken to compel those culpable absentees to support the poor in Ireland, and until the House adopted some moderate system of Poor-laws for that country, he did not think it would have done its duty. He must urge Ministers to proceed in a more decided course, being satisfied that temporary and palliative measures would be of no use, and that they must, to restore Ireland to prosperity, be guided in their measures by the great principles of justice. They should consult these, not the voice of shifting expediency, or the theories of political economists. Let them advance 500,000*l.* and nothing would be done effectual. They would place the people in debt, and ultimately increase the discontent of a high-minded population. Nothing but a system of Poor-laws would relieve the distress of the people. The gentry of Ireland often rose in that House and exclaimed, what does Ireland get by this or that measure? But he never heard those honourable Gentlemen say, what do we give? With regard to the Poor-laws of England, he would say, they never could dispense with those laws. A moderate system of Poor-laws introduced into Ireland some time ago, would have afforded relief; but loans of 50,000*l.* would produce no useful effect. At the same time he did not oppose the loan proposed, but implored his Majesty's Government to have recourse to a more enlarged mode of assistance.

Colonel *Tyrell* said, he had pledged himself to his constituents to advocate retrenchment and economy; and he wished to know, from the noble Lord opposite, whether, considering the sufferings of the poor of this country, he should act consistently with his promise if he supported the present vote for 50,000*l.*? He hoped the noble Lord would take the distresses of the people of this country into consideration. He was sure that this country could not exist without Poor-laws, and therefore he was of opinion that Ireland would never be well off till she had such laws.

Lord *Althorp* explained, that no part of the 50,000*l.* would come from the pockets of the people. It would be raised by Exchequer Bills, and repaid by the people to assist whose labours it was intended.

Mr. *O'Brien* was of opinion, that the Government greatly deceived themselves if they imagined, that by the advance of this money they would afford any permanent relief to Ireland. To assist that country effectually, they must come to a qualified system of Poor-laws. He felt how annoying it was for Irish Members to come begging to that House, but he did not see how that could now be avoided. The present loan was only an extension of the eleemosynary system, and its most beneficial effect, he was afraid, would be only to encourage speculation.

Sir *R. Wilson* said, that the adoption of a well-regulated system of Poor-laws was the best thing that could be done for Ireland; and though he believed his noble friend (Lord Althorp) was opposed to that system, it must be established.

Mr. *Grattan* was quite satisfied, that some plan of Poor-laws must be carried into effect with respect to Ireland. Permanent good could be effected by no other means.

Mr. *G. Dawson* gave the Government credit for an anxious desire to do full justice to Ireland; but still he considered the present proposition as a complete delusion (and he did not mean to use the expression in an offensive sense) on the people of Ireland. No gentleman would like to become a Crown debtor, and to have his estate made accountable for money borrowed to forward works in his neighbourhood. Irish corporations, or Irish gentlemen, if they saw the necessity of borrowing money, would rather seek it from other sources than from that which was contemplated under the plan of the noble Lord. When they came to find that they must apply to Commissioners, Solicitors, and all those who were connected with the machinery of this measure, they would at once reject the aid which was to be thus obtained. Gentlemen in Ireland would not be able to procure the assistance which the noble Lord proposed to give, without mortgaging their estates. This they never would consent to; and therefore he again said, that the plan was a delusion. He objected, whether the sum to be granted was 50,000*l.* or 500,000*l.*, to have it placed under the control of a Board of Commissioners, because he believed that a system of jobbing would be the inevitable result. He meant not to cast any reflection on those who might be appointed Commissioners—of course he knew not who would be placed in that situation; but of this he was certain, that they would be exposed to the arts, to the trickery, to the cajolery, of designing persons, who might wish to get this money into their possession. They would be but men, and with the best intentions in the world it was very likely that they would be deceived. He believed that not a month would elapse before these gentlemen would find themselves in a very inconvenient position. The great question was, how the poor of Ireland could be raised from their present deplorable state of destitution to one of decency and respectability? Having considered the subject much, he had come to this conviction, that unless some system of Poor-laws were adopted, their situation could not be permanently ameliorated. He believed that machinery could be found in Ireland quite sufficient for carrying such a plan into effect. Every Member for Ireland ought to be anxious to have something effectual done for the poor of that country; for it must be most distressing and annoying to a gentleman of feeling to find his country constantly brought before the British public as an object of charity. It was, however, but just to this country, and to their English fellow-subjects, to say, that whenever the misery of Ireland was brought before them, the appeal never failed to excite feelings of sympathy and of generosity. The hon. Member then adverted to the report of the Committee appointed last Session to inquire into the state of the Irish poor, and observed, that though that Committee had recommended several plans for the relief of the poor of Ireland, none of them (with the exception of the present) had been attempted to be carried into effect. As a sincere well-wisher to Ireland, and believing that the Gentlemen opposite were most anxious to do as much as they could to promote the prosperity of that country, he called on them, as the only way in which that prosperity could be secured, to introduce a modified system of Poor-laws.

Mr. *Stanley* defended the Government from the charge that this proposition had been brought forward for the purpose of obtaining a temporary popularity in Ireland. The right hon. member for Harwich had depreciated the report of the Committee of last Session which had been drawn up by his hon. friend, the member for Limerick, but he must maintain that it was a very able, comprehensive, and masterly document. The right hon. Gentleman had said, that of the nineteen bills recommended in that report, none had been brought forward by the Government. Now several of those bills had been already introduced, and several had been prepared and would have been introduced before this time but for the great and important measure which now almost exclusively engrossed the attention of the House. He would not pledge himself to resist the introduction of any species of Poor-laws into Ireland, but, not intending to enter upon that question at present, he should content himself with saying, that he had never known any measure of that kind as yet prepared which did not appear to him to be calculated to be attended by results that would counterbalance any advantages which might be derived from it. He was sure that this proposition would be accepted with gratitude in Ireland by persons who had opportunities for employing capital to advantage there, but who did not possess the means of doing so without the assistance of Government. It had been said, that if money should be advanced in this way, it would never be repaid to the Government. Now several sums had been already advanced in a similar way, for similar purposes, in Ireland, and such had not been the case; and he held in his hand a statement, from which it appeared, that of the 500,000*l.* which had been advanced to Ireland in 1822, both of principal and interest, there remained only 15,000*l.* not repaid. The advance which it was proposed to make in the present instance would be only a fair advance of money, which any private capitalist would make upon equally good security. It appeared from the report of the Committee of last Session, that the most beneficial effects had resulted from the advances which had been already made from time to time for the carrying on of public works in the south-western districts of Ireland; and he was confident that the advance which it was now proposed to make, was calculated both to relieve distress and to increase the revenue, as had been the case in the former instance.

Mr. *Goulburn* was sorry to say, that he did not think that as much good as was expected by those who proposed it, would be derived from this advance, and he did not believe that this sum of 50,000*l.* would at all go to the extent which was anticipated towards alleviating the distress which existed at present in some districts in Ireland. It was not from those districts that the Government might expect to have applications sent to them for portions of this loan. Such applications would come from the more prosperous districts, where speculations of various kinds were more likely to be afloat. This proposition, therefore, if acceded to, would do very little towards removing the distress which prevailed in some parts of Ireland.

Mr. *M. Fitzgerald* said, that so far as this measure went, it should have his complete concurrence; and if a compulsory assessment had been also proposed, he should be most willing to give his assent to it. The right hon. Gentleman contended, that if the proprietors of land in the distressed districts did not consent to charge themselves with the relief of the poor in their vicinity, they would disgrace themselves. It was said that large advances had been made to Ireland; so there had, and they had been repaid. Out of a sum of 1,600,000*l.* advanced to that country for public works, only 20,000*l.* remained now unpaid, and that was in the course of re-payment. He gave his cordial approbation to the proposition, which he was convinced would do much good in Ireland.

Mr. *T. P. Courtenay* agreed that the present was not the fit opportunity for discussing the question of the application of Poor-laws in Ireland; but he hoped the noble Lord opposite would provide an early opportunity for the discussion of the motion of the hon. member for Ennis, for making some provision for the poor of that country by legislative enactment. Unless some compulsory means of relief were adopted, no temporary measure of this kind would be effectual. The relief would not be given by works which were to be finished in a given time; on the contrary, the works should be permanent, and of such a nature that they should be carried on or discontinued as occasion might require.

Colonel *Trench* feared, that if money were to be lent out only to borrowers upon adequate security, it would not answer the end in view. Immediate relief was what was wanted. An immediate application of relief would alone be effectual. If, instead of giving this money as a loan, a sum was made applicable to the immediate relief of the distress now felt, and which would be more severely felt in the course of the next month, some good would follow; but he feared that the tedious process of looking out for security for the money advanced would defeat the object of advancing it.

Mr. *Attwood* deprecated a discussion on the question of providing security for the insignificant advance of 50,000*l.* at a moment when distress existed which required immediate relief. He would not believe, that the proposed sum was intended to court popularity; but he must say, that it would be inadequate for the relief of the distress which existed. The present Ministry had held out hopes of relief to the distresses of the people, which he feared they would never realize. After all the hopes held out, the only measure of relief proposed was this insignificant loan of 50,000*l.*, and the emigration plan, in which Ministers themselves seemed to have not much confidence.

Mr. *Dominick Browne* regretted to find that some hon. Members should attempt to throw cold water on a proposition of this kind, and talk of a Poor-law at a time when instant assistance was required. When he heard the members for Waterford and Limerick, and the right hon. member for Tamworth, object to the Poor-law system in Ireland,—when this objection was made by men who had no community of opinion,—he must pause before he assented to the proposition. He did not concur with the right hon. Secretary for Ireland, that this plan of lending money on security would afford relief—that immediate relief which was wanted. If they wished to avert all the horrors of famine in several parts of the country, particularly the district of Erris, to which he had before called the attention of the House they should give immediate and gratuitous assistance.

Mr. *Leader* spoke to the following effect:—Sir, I should have expected that the right hon. Gentleman, the member for Armagh, instead of declining to express an opinion on the measure now proposed by the Chancellor of the Exchequer, would have been the first to have urged his Majesty's Ministers to pursue towards Ireland the same conduct he adopted himself in 1822, when he was Secretary for that country, and when it was very nearly under the same unhappy circumstances as it is at present. In 1822 the right hon. Gentleman came down to this House and asked—on the part of Ireland, what was instantly conceded—a grant of 50,000*l.* for the purpose of spreading employment in the mountainous and distressed districts of the south and west of Ireland, and a loan of 200,000*l.*, repayable with interest, on public security, such as the funds of corporate bodies, canal companies, or Grand Jury presentments, to promote such national works as would have the effect of giving immediate and profitable employment in those opulent districts of Ireland which could afford paying for their further improvement. This expenditure, and subsequent loan, of money, repayable never under four per cent interest and five per cent principal, materially relieved Ireland, and now enable her to repay, by a permanent increase of revenue in the districts where the improvements were carried on, the full amount of the original advance. As the right hon. Gentleman must be perfectly aware that an annual increase of revenue equal to the amount of the sum expended has been the result of his advances, I could not possibly have expected but that he would have been the first to have applauded the Chancellor of the Exchequer for the measure he has now brought forward. Sir, on grounds of public policy, it is impossible to dispute the justice and the expediency of making small grants for the purpose of spreading colonization and intercourse in deserted portions of the United Kingdom, where the result would be an accession of profitable territory to the State, and of making even large loans for the further improvement of opulent and cultivated districts when the repayment was well secured. I believe it to be an undoubted fact, that, at this moment, there is not a single public work executing at the public expense in Ireland. Far be it from me to argue that because there has been a lavish expenditure in palaces and public yards, and great undertakings in England, that, therefore, the improvement of a fertile and populous portion of the empire, like Ireland, ought not to be overlooked. I disclaim this kind of reasoning. I am one of those who are happy to see everything done to improve England, provided some little attention is paid to promote the prosperity of Ireland; and whether the Chancellor of the Exchequer proposes a loan, or imitates the conduct of his predecessors by calling for a grant in aid of local improvements, I am satisfied that, by the people of Ireland, either measure will be received as a very useful and timely relief to the country.

Sir, the measure of the Chancellor of the Exchequer is loudly called for by Grand Juries and public bodies in Ireland, who have made large presentments in aid of local improvements—who offer security which cannot be questioned—and who, by this measure, would immediately take out of the market of labour the redundant hands which are now idle and unemployed. I consider this loan of 50,000*l.* in aid of public works, re-issuable for other works as the instalments are paid into the Treasury, a great improvement on the plan of the loans which were heretofore advanced in favour of public works in Ireland, and calculated, I trust, to prevent the humiliating necessity of Irish Gentlemen, year after year, coming down to this House to solicit the smallest advance in aid of districts which may be visited with sudden or temporary calamity. I regret that there should be the smallest difference of opinion respecting the measure which the noble Lord has thought it his duty to recommend in the present instance; for I cannot help saying, that, in my opinion, if the public bodies of Ireland brought their securities into the money-market of England, and proved, as the fact undoubtedly is, that their engagements for a succession of years were punctually discharged, but that ample funds might be speedily raised on those most ample securities. I think there is nothing extraordinary in a Parliament doing, for the public benefit, what individuals would be found to do even for private advantage. These advances have been of signal benefit to Ireland, and have not been attended with the smallest loss to Great Britain. I should, however, deceive the House if I disguised the fact, that the present alarming condition of Ireland requires a far more searching and more extended remedy than a mere loan of 50,000*l.*, repayable with interest. Sir, if I am asked to what it is I ascribe the more than usual redundancy of unemployed labour, and the discontent, which exist at this moment in Ireland, I say it is my conscientious opinion, that the sudden suspension of loans for aiding and encouraging the extension of public works has caused a great deal of discontent, and impressed a large portion of the working poor with the opinion that even measures of the most admitted public utility were no sooner introduced into Ireland than they were abandoned. When the late Secretary of State for the Home Department introduced for the first time the system of aiding and developing the natural resources of Ireland, by an advance of capital to public bodies giving adequate security, and also of assisting with public grants districts quite incapable of giving security for repaying advances—the obvious benefit of this system rapidly displayed itself, and Ireland became progressively enriched, without Great Britain being at all impoverished or inconvenienced. Why, then, was a system which worked so well discontinued? If any Gentleman who has filled the office of Secretary for Ireland will rise in his place and declare that this system of loans, repayable with sufficient interest, was unprofitable to Ireland or injurious to England, I will not trouble the House with another observation. But when it is admitted on all sides that there was no loss sustained by these loans, and that they acted as a stimulus on Irish industry, and reacted beneficially on the commerce and manufacturing industry of Great Britain, by making Ireland a greater and wealthier consumer, is it not to be regretted that any interruption should be given to a system which increased the revenue of the State, and increased the comfort of the labouring poor of that country? Now, although it is contended by the right hon. member for Armagh, that when the 50,000*l.* is advanced, the instalments, by which it is to be repaid, will afford only a very small fund for future employment, I must say that, let the fund be what it may, still it will be to all intents a national loan-fund, to which distressed districts may resort on urgent necessity. Sir, the instalments may be small, but still the advantage of the proposed measure of the Chancellor of the Exchequer is, that a national loan-fund is created, which will enable those intrusted with its management to take care that those districts of Ireland, which from accidental causes may require small temporary relief, through the medium of employment, shall, on security, be always certain of obtaining it. I consider this measure of the Chancellor of the Exchequer calculated to be of great utility; and having given that opinion, I should have closed with that observation, if the hon. members for Newark and Boroughbridge had not, I am satisfied with most excellent intentions to Ireland, zealously and fairly submitted—that measures of a very different character were absolutely necessary for the relief and tranquillity of that country. These two hon. Gentlemen, along with other Gentlemen, have fearlessly declared, that a provision for the Irish poor cannot be longer delayed or evaded. I hold in my hand a paper which I received this day from Ireland, containing a letter from a highly informed and educated gentleman, addressed to the Marquis of Anglesey, in which he says, that though the bones and muscles of the Irish peasantry fertilize the fields, create the national wealth, and provide funds for rents and taxes and tithes, yet that peasantry, who produce everything, consume nothing; and that, unless measures, the most prompt and energetic, are adopted to improve the condition of the Irish labourer, and to furnish him with regular employment so as to enable him to procure comfortable food and decent raiment, Ireland will become a wilderness; and he fears, ere long, a country in which no person could happily reside. In that letter it is asserted that the war of poverty against property has already commenced—that formerly it was the war of religion, or the war of political opinion; but that it is now, unhappily, the war of gaunt famine, leading to desperation, and striving for an improved existence. I confess I fear that this description of the country is too true a delineation of its present condition, and that it is well calculated to confirm many Gentlemen in the opinion of the necessity of introducing a provision for the poor in Ireland. On this subject I allow there is a great discrepancy of opinion. I admit at once that it is my firm and conscientious belief, that the frightful evils of a desolating absenteeism, and the immense drain for the payment of the interest of millions advanced on the security of landed property, are the causes of the great distress which exists in Ireland. I admit, that the Irish absentees are probably amongst the first class of landed proprietors in Europe; and that a country which produces an annual stock of wealth from the produce of her own soil, cannot be in a sound or healthy state whilst loans of money are requisite to be raised in another country, to be remitted to that country to discharge the functions of capital. When I make this admission, I beg Gentlemen will consider, that even if the proprietors of great estates in Ireland remained at home, still the rental of the country is small, and the population very great. The accumulation of wealth in the hands of a few is in every country accomplished at the expense of the many, inasmuch as each community possesses only a certain amount of property. When these masses of wealth are reinstated where they are collected, the evils are mitigated; but when these masses are taken out of this country, a general disorganization of society is the unavoidable result. Sir, while I am favourable to any measure which will retain the wealth which a country produces in that country for its ulterior improvement, be assured that it is impossible for any individual to proceed with greater care or caution than I am disposed to do, in endeavouring to effect so important a purpose. I am one of those who like to draw from authorities which are venerated for their intelligence and worth, and from legislative enactments, where I can find them, authorities in favour of, and precedents which are in point for, measures which may be considered calculated to relieve the distresses of my country; and I avow that the recommendation of Dr. Woodward, the Bishop of Cloyne, published sixty years ago, and then submitted to the consideration of the Parliament of Ireland, always appeared to me highly deserving the most serious consideration of such persons as were disposed to pay attention to the affairs of Ireland. That eminent and distinguished scholar and divine laid down these principles:—"That the poor are so inadequately provided for by voluntary contributions in Ireland, as to stand in need of some legal title to a maintenance. That it is the indispensable duty of the rich to grant to the poor some competent provision; and That it is eminently the interest of the commonwealth that this duty be discharged in a suitable manner." These were the principles of an Irish Protestant Bishop, Dr. Woodward, sixty years ago, and are the principles of a Catholic Irish Bishop, Dr. Doyle, an eminent divine and distinguished writer, at the present moment. It was said by Dr. Woodward, sixty years ago, "That the lower class of the people of Ireland are ill accommodated with lodging, raiment, and even food; and that their poverty is likely to continue with but little mitigation, from the following, amongst other causes—the exorbitant rent extorted from the poorer tenants, ever loth and afraid to quit their ancient habitations; by the general method of letting farms to the highest bidder, without any allowance for a tenant right; the oppression of duty-work, which calls the cottager arbitrarily from the tillage of this little spot which he holds at so dear a rent; and the low rate of wages for labour; these circumstances, combined with some others, reduce the Irish cottager below the peasant of almost every country in Europe. Such is his hard condition in the most plentiful season, and in the prime of his health and strength: what, then, must be his state in time of dearth, under the pressure of years, infirmities, or even a very numerous young family? His expenses admit of no retrenchment; he is a stranger to luxury, or even to decent accommodation, and yet his wages seldom afford any reserve. On the death of such a father of a family, dependent on his labour for their main, or perhaps entire, support, how forlorn must be the situation of his widow and orphan children! It would shock a tender mind to imagine (if imagination could paint) the miseries to which the bulk of the inhabitants of Ireland are continually exposed by the slightest reverse of fortune. By a single bad season; by an accidental loss; by an occasional disease; and even by the gradual decay of nature, these evils exist in a great, although not equal number, and cannot be doubted or denied by any but those who shut their eyes or steel their hearts against them." These were the words of an Irish Protestant Bishop, addressed to an Irish Parliament sixty years ago, and to a Parliament which actually commenced legislating at his instance, and on his recommendation. These sentiments have, I candidly admit, always left a deep impression on my mind, as well deserving most serious consideration. Dr. Woodward contemplated the creation of a fund for supporting destitute children, providing the sick poor with medicine, and the aged poor with a small fund in aid of their labour. Dr. Woodward likewise proposed a regular contribution of one per cent on all property, to make such provision for the poor as would take away all imputation of neglect or injustice. The gentleman (Dr. Grattan), an extract from whose letter to the Marquis of Anglesey I read to the House, certainly goes farther than Bishop Woodward, for he is for creating a national loan-fund by the imposition of a tax, not upon income, but upon actual property of every description, increasing in a ratio proportioned to the property of the individual, so that those who have a larger property shall pay a higher poundage than those whose property is smaller; the entire produce of the tax to be expended in Ireland for the purpose of providing regular employment for the poor, and encouraging undertakings of useful and productive labour. Sir, I have not ventured to lead, but I have humbly presumed to follow and support public opinion in Ireland on these important topics. Every one knows how easily the able-bodied peasant disposed to work, and who cannot obtain the means of subsistence, is reduced to a condition as bad as that which proceeds from age or even infirmity. In my opinion, it ought to be a favoured measure to extend employment, even at the lowest rate of wages, to the working poor of Ireland; it may be said to be the religion of the Irish people, for the young and hearty labourer of every family to support the aged and infirm of his family. I do not say that the Irish peasant ought not to be relieved of this burthen, but I say it is a burthen he is willing to endure when he can obtain employment. I will support the national loan-fund in aid of public works in Ireland, as proposed by the noble Lord, as I will every other measure calculated to extend employment in Ireland, whether it be by grant, by loan, by assessment, by labour-rate, or by Poor-laws. I, for one, will never differ about the mode in which the fund is raised, or the name which is bestowed upon it. As an incipient measure, this proposed measure of the noble Lord is entitled to my most warm and hearty concurrence; it precludes no other project being resorted to in aid of the same principle, and it lays the foundation of a system which I trust will prove, as I am confident the noble Lord and his Majesty's Ministers intend it should prove, the means of extending employment to the people of Ireland, without the smallest injury to Great Britain; and answer a most beneficial purpose, until measures of a more extensive nature may be carried into execution for ensuring the peace and improvement of Ireland.

General *Hart* supported the Motion, and regretted it did not go farther.

Sir *J. Bourke* expressed his gratitude to the Government for this measure of relief. The application of such grants to the improvement of the roads in the western district of Ireland would be, in his opinion, the best system of Poor-laws that could be introduced.

Motion carried, and the House resumed.

A number of Petitions were then received, and at three o'clock the House adjourned to Tuesday the 12th of April.

HOUSE OF LORDS,
Tuesday, April 12, 1831.

Minutes.] Petitions presented. For Reform, By the Duke of Richmond, from Amlwick, in the isle of Anglesea:—By the Earl of Limerick, from the Chamber of Commerce of the City of Limerick:—By the Earl of Tankerville, from Glendale:—By Earl Grey, twelve, from Cork, Newry, Stromness, Orkney, Hastings, Hackney, and other places in England and Ireland. By Lord Durham, from Johnshover. For the Abolition of Slavery, by the Bishop of Bristol, from New Sarum, and from Protestant Dissenters at Devonport. By the Bishop of Chester, from Dissenters at Colne, Ipswich, and East Walton. By Earl Grey, from an Individual at Bristol, praying that his rights of Property might be respected in any Act of the Legislature for the Emancipation of Negro Slaves; and from the Presbytery of Dunblane, that Ministers of the Church of Scotland might be allowed to vote for Representatives in Parliament.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,
Tuesday, April 12, 1831.

Minutes.] The Lord Advocate took the Oaths and his Seat for Malton; Mr. Maurice O'Connell took the Oaths and his Seat for the county of Clare.

New Writ issued for the borough of Shaftesbury, in the room of Mr. E. Dugdale, who had accepted the Chiltern Hundreds.

Bills. To promote Public Works in Ireland, read a first time. To prohibit the Growth of Tobacco in Ireland, Committed. Lunatics, and Post Office Sale, read a second time. Indemnity, read a third time.

Returns ordered. On the Motion of Mr. Spring Rice, the dates on which the Duties on Slates, Tiles, and Bricks, were first imposed in the United Kingdom, and the several alterations which have since taken place; stating the gross and nett receipt of revenue in each year, on each article, in each kingdom; the number of Tiles made in the year 1830, in the United Kingdom; stating the number of each kind, and the rate of duty charged per thousand in each; also, the gross amount of the duty for the year, and the amount paid for drawback on Tiles exported, distinguishing each country, and the number of Tiles exported; also, a copy of a Minute of the Board of Treasury, dated 24th December, 1830, relative to the discontinuance of unnecessary oaths in the departments of the Customs and Excise.

Petitions Presented. Against the Tax on Steam Boats, by General Gascoyne, from the Hundred of Wirral (Cheshire). In favour of Reform, by Lord Althorp, from Newport, Pratt, Lutterworth, South Kilworth, and Berwick:—By Mr. Spring Rice, from the Chamber of Commerce at Limerick:—By Sir William Ingilby, from various parts of Lincolnshire:—By Mr. Lefroy, from Drumhone, county Donegal, in favour of the Kildare Street Society. Against it, by Mr. Spring Rice, from Tullors. Against the Reform Bill, by General Gascoyne, from the Corporation of Liverpool:—By Mr. Wilson Patten, from Manchester and Salford. By the same hon. Member, from Cotton Spinners and Manufacturers of Bolton, complaining of parts of the Cotton Factories' Bill; from Weavers and others engaged in the Cotton Trade, in Wigan, Blackrock, and another place in Lancashire, complaining of Distress, and praying for the imposition of a Duty on the exportation of Cotton Twist. By Mr. Saunderson, from the town of Cavan, praying for the right of returning a Member to Parliament.

Petitions Against Reform.] General *Gascoyne*, in presenting a Petition from Merchants, Bankers, and others of Liverpool, against the Ministerial Plan of Reform, stated, that the petitioners, though by no means averse from a plan of moderate Reform, nor hostile to the principle of the Bill, disapproved of many of its details. They objected to such a sweeping disfranchisement as was proposed by the measure, and particularly to the alteration which it would effect, in the established proportion of Members from the different parts of the United Kingdom. He fully agreed with the petitioners in the validity of this objection, and thought, however enthusiastic the people of England might be in favour of the Bill, that their opinion would undergo some alteration when they considered how large a number of Members was to be taken from this country, for the purpose of bestowing a portion of them upon Scotland and Ireland. The Bill would give additional Members to Ireland and in the conduct of its inhabitants he saw nothing to deserve such a mark of favour. He was convinced that when the people of England, who were now clamorous for the Reform Bill, understood that it deprived that part of the empire of seventy-two Representatives, they would oppose it. The petitioners did not oppose the transfer of the elective franchise from insignificant places to large and populous towns and cities; but, as before stated, they were hostile to so sweeping a disfranchisement as was now intended.

Mr. *O'Brien* regretted, that any observations should be made which might tend to sow dissensions between England and Ireland. He thought that Ireland was entitled to have a greater number of Members than at present. He was not aware of any reasons why, if Ireland was not fairly represented, the international compact should not be reviewed.

Petition read. On the motion that it be printed,

Mr. *O'Connell* observed, in reference to what had fallen from the hon. and gallant member for Liverpool, that it would greatly increase the discontent and dissatisfaction which already prevailed in Ireland, if it were known that such language with respect to that country had been used within those walls as they had just heard. He contended, that Ireland ought to have many more Representatives. In that respect, the Union was a most unjust and unfair measure towards Ireland. That part of the empire, considering its great population, ought to have more than 100 Representatives. There ought to be a number of Representatives adequate to the protection of the essential interests of Ireland in that House.

Lord *Encombe* said, that before the Easter recess he had called the attention of the House to the necessity of having laid before them new and more perfect returns of the population of the different boroughs in England that were likely to be affected by the Reform Bill. Certain papers had, he observed, been produced, but they did not appear to have been drawn up on any satisfactory system. In some instances the population of the parish, in others the population of the borough, was given: and certain notes which were appended to the population return of 1821 were omitted. Now, though in the hurry of making up the documents which had been first submitted to Parliament, those notes had been left out, it was not fit that they should be omitted in those that were subsequently produced. He therefore wished to know, on what ground it was, that the new return was called a corrected return.

Lord *J. Russell* said, he should be most happy to give his noble friend every information in his power, with reference to those returns, and the basis on which they were founded. Ministers had endeavoured to procure as correct a return as possible of the population of each city and borough which sent Members to Parliament. That return was made out at the Home Office; and, as soon as it was obtained, a letter was addressed from the Home Office to the returning officer of each borough, for the purpose of ascertaining whether the limits of the borough continued the same as they were at the time of taking the population return in 1821. The sum of the information thus received, which was not altogether very accurate, was to be laid before the House in a separate paper. The papers to which the noble Lord alluded were corrections of the population returns of 1821, so far as had been required, stating merely, in the first and second line, the population, sometimes of the borough, and sometimes of the parish. All that was to be found in that book of the population, with respect to particular places, had been made use of; and therefore the noble Lord would find, in the line of observations, many of those remarks which were contained in the notes to which he had referred. The letters which had been received from the parties thus applied to, and which would be laid before the House, were now in the course of being printed. Ministers had selected from the population return every thing that regarded each particular borough, the more especially, in consequence of the notice which had been taken of the borough of Calne, in order, as far as it was possible, to come to a just and proper determination, and to place each particular borough on its due footing. Any memorial coming from any particular place, and complaining of inaccuracy in the existing population return, would be anxiously attended to by his Majesty's Ministers. He thought it right to state this, because he believed the fact was not generally known to the parties interested. Ministers had also felt it to be their duty to consider well the petitions presented to the House on this point. There were, then, four *data*, on which they meant to proceed in ascertaining the number of inhabitants in different boroughs:—1st. The original population returns; —2nd. The corrected population returns;—3rd. Memorials laid before the Secretary of State, by persons well known, complaining of inaccuracy in the existing returns;—and 4th. The petitions presented to the House on this subject. Carefully looking to all the documents, Ministers hoped that they should be able to make an efficient correction, with reference to the places contained in the schedules A and B; so that a fair and equal course should be adopted with respect to the different boroughs concerned. He now begged leave to mention an instance or two, to show the way in which this would be done, and how information, which was at present deficient, might be enlarged and finally acted on. There was now before the House a petition from the burgesses of Buckingham, showing very clearly that certain parts of the town of Buckingham were not contained, as they ought to have been, in the population return—and which, if added to the existing return, would, they believed, raise the population to 3,000. The whole of this statement was so particular and so clear, that it contained, in his opinion, sufficient reasons for taking the borough of Buckingham out of the schedule A. Again, with respect to the borough of Truro, a memorial had been presented to the Secretary of State, which would also be laid before that House, showing in like manner, that the whole population of the town of Truro was not fairly represented in the returns of 1821. On the other side, a memorial had been presented from the town of Guildford, stating that it contained a greater number of inhabitants than was set forth in the returns. That document averred that some streets which ought to have been included in the returns were omitted. The memorialists did not, however, state what part of the town those streets were situated in, neither did they say what was the total amount of the population, according to their view, in 1821. Under these circumstances, unless some other petition was presented to the House, or a different or more explicit memorial was laid before the Secretary of State, it would be quite impossible to omit Guildford from the schedule B. He mentioned this to show to the House on what grounds he meant, on Monday next, to remove from the schedule any borough which could make out a proper case. He thus gave notice to such boroughs as could make out a clear case that their population had been under-rated, and that they contained more than 2,000, or more than 4,000 inhabitants in 1821, in order that they might apply, in a proper form, to the House. With respect to taking the population, in relation to the borough or parish, Ministers thought it right to adopt the same rule with regard to all boroughs; because, in many places, it was impossible to distinguish the borough from the parish, especially when the parish bore the same name as the borough. There were one or two other points on which he wished to say a few words. The whole Bill had, during the recess, been maturely considered by his Majesty's Ministers. They had examined it most attentively, to see whether they could make any improvement in it. With regard to the wording of the bill, considerable alterations had been made, but nothing whatever had been done to alter the principle of the measure, as it had been originally laid down. In substance, three or four points, of no importance as to principle, but all of importance as to particulars, were altered; and these he would explain in detail on Monday next. He was ready to explain those points at the present moment, but he thought it would be more expedient to do so on Monday. There were three or four notices of instructions to the Committee on the paper, which it was right to say had been done under the consideration of his Majesty's Ministers. One of those instructions related to continuing the right to vote, under certain restrictions, to persons who might have acquired that right by birth or servitude. Now without going so far as that instruction went, the question would receive that determination by which Ministers hoped to reconcile that which was due to justice and equity with the essential principle of the Bill. With regard to another, and a much more important part of the measure, —namely, the number of Members of which that House should consist—he could not deny that while many persons represented themselves as favourable to the Bill they objected to having the number of Members reduced. The Government, however, looking to the whole subject, with reference to the advantage of the public interests, and to the prompt and speedy execution of the public business in that House, were persuaded that a reduction of Members would considerably assist in attaining those desirable objects. But, at the same time, they were not prepared to say that this was a question of such essential and vital importance, that if the feeling of the House were strongly shown in a desire to keep up the present number, they might not be induced to relax their determination on that point. The hon. and gallant General had referred to many details of the Bill, and he had no fault to find with the hon. and gallant General for any criticism which he might offer on the measure, because he had for some time past expressed himself favourable to plans of Reform. He, therefore, listened with every kind of respect to the suggestions of the hon. and gallant General, which were certainly worthy of consideration. But while he said this, he wished to terminate his observations by distinctly declaring, that with respect to all that was essential to the principle of the Bill, his Majesty's Government saw no reason whatever to alter the determination which they originally came to; but, on the contrary, from what they daily and hourly heard and saw, they were more and more convinced, that the principle was eminently calculated to promote the liberty, the happiness, and the prosperity of the people of this country. An hon. Baronet, it appeared, wished to keep up the whole of the existing boroughs. To such a proposition as that, Ministers could never agree. They had, he thought, adopted a safe and a wise course, by continuing such boroughs as had a certain degree of importance attached to them, and doing away with those which were the most insignificant and inconsiderable.

Sir *E. B. Sugden* said, the statement which had just been made by the noble Lord, proved the justice of what he (Sir E. Sugden) had observed on a former occasion, when he asserted that it would be impossible to proceed with the existing population returns. He now found that it was intended to restore some of the boroughs originally marked out for disfranchisement, or partial disfranchisement. This arose from the extreme imperfection of the information which had been laid before them, and if they proceeded in this way, they might, in the end, alter the whole scope and tenor of the Bill. He should be very sorry to say any thing harsh with respect to Ireland, but he certainly did object to increasing the number of Representatives for that country, and the more especially in conjunction with decreasing the number of Representatives for England. Let them look to the Act of Union, and he would ask, was not that question most fully considered? Was it not then decided that 100 Members was the largest number which Ireland was to have in the Imperial Parliament? When they took Representatives from one part of England, and gave them to another, he could perfectly comprehend that species of legislation. But he could not understand why a portion should be taken from the English Representation generally, and given to the Irish Representation. Ministers had over and over again declared that they would stand or fall by the Bill which they had originally introduced. Now, however, he found, that they wished to alter it. This clearly showed, as he had formerly observed, that they had not brought forward their plan with that due consideration which ought to belong to so important a measure.

General *Gascoyne* said that he was really a friend to safe and prudent Reform at all times; and he was glad to hear that the suggestions which had fallen from him and others with respect to this Bill, would be taken into consideration. He could not, although he was a friend to economy, go quite so far as the hon. Member for Middlesex wished to go, and though he was favourable to Reform, he could not proceed to the extent meditated by this Bill.

Lord *John Russell* said, he seemed to have been misunderstood by the hon. and learned Gentleman opposite (Sir E. Sugden). Ministers had not altered their minds on the subject of the number of Representatives. What he said was, that if it should appear to be the sense of the House that the whole number of 658 members, should be retained, the Government would not feel that they were altering a vital or essential part of the measure by agreeing to that proposition. With respect to the number of Representatives for England, Ireland, and Scotland, he denied that that question was finally fixed at the period of the Union. At the time of the Union with Scotland it was proposed by the Scotch that they should have fifty Members, the English Commissioners wished to reduce the number to thirty-eight; but finally the compromise was forty-five. But it was not stipulated that no change should be admitted under any circumstances.

Mr. *O'Connell* said, the gallant General always declared that he had a great regard for Ireland; but, in truth, he had a very odd way of showing it. The hon. and learned Gentleman had informed them that the question of the number of Representatives was definitively settled at the time of the Union. The contrary was the fact; and if the hon. and learned Gentleman would look into the act of Union, he would find there an express provision, with a view to some alteration to be hereafter made. They had no right, he contended, to treat this part of the subject as the hon. and learned Gentleman had done, as if it were an abstract question. Was there not, he asked, an identity of interest between the two countries? He could see no reason why they should not deal with Ireland, an integral part of the empire, as they would deal with Yorkshire. If the hon. and learned Gentleman treated this as an English subject, he certainly had an equal right to treat it as an Irish subject. He could see no reason whatever why, in considering this question, the large population of Ireland ought not to be taken into the account.

Sir *E. B. Sugden* had never said, nor thought, that there was not an identity of interest between England and Ireland.

Mr. *G. Bankes* wished to ask the noble Lord (Lord John Russell) whether it was the intention of Government to press the Bill into a Committee on Monday next. After what the noble Lord had announced of his intention of making a statement on

Monday, to point out how the inhabitants of those boroughs might act in regard to which the returns made were erroneous, it would, he thought, be altogether inconsistent to press it on till the boroughs could avail themselves of the opportunity thus to be offered to them. The alterations now proposed by the noble Lord were the natural results of that secrecy which had been observed respecting the measure. If Ministers had intimated their intentions they would have acquired information on the subject; but they were acting in the dark, and the House now saw the result.

Lord *John Russell* said, the hon. Member was altogether mistaken in supposing that he had promised any such statement as he mentioned. He had done no such thing. He stated on a former occasion that Ministers had gone, in the proposed disfranchisement, on the population returns of 1821, and he added, that if any material errors were pointed out in those returns, so as to make out a case for any borough, Ministers would be disposed to pay every attention to it, and to correct it. Some returns had been laid on the table, and others were asked for and were ready, to give more correct accounts, of which any borough that could make out a case strong enough to shew that it was not properly included, might avail itself.

Lord *Encombe* was glad that the conversation had arisen, as it had shewn that the Returns on which the Bill was founded were erroneous.

Lord *G. Somerset* gave notice, that when the Bill was in Committee, he would move that Members be given to some of the large towns in Lincolnshire.

Sir *Charles Forbes* contended, that so far from adding to the prosperity of the country, it would have precisely the contrary effect. What had been its effect in Scotland? Why, from being the happiest people in any part of the British dominions, they had now become the most discontented and irritated, and the country from one end to the other was in a flame.

Mr. *Hume*.—With the illuminations.

Sir *Charles Forbes*.—The hon. Member said, with the illuminations; but who set those things on? Those who thought they had achieved a great triumph. But see the effect; the damage done in one night in Edinburgh by the mob was estimated at 20,000*l*. Great efforts had been made to procure signatures to a petition from Edinburgh, complaining that the Bill did not go far enough. The petition was placed in the gin-shops, and persons were stationed there who told those who signed, that the effect of the measure would be that they would have whiskey for nothing; that there would be no gaugers, and that all would be quite free. The petition which no doubt would come before the House in a short time, signed by some thousands, prayed, he understood, that those who by this Bill should be excluded from voting should also be excluded from the militia, and from the payment of all taxation direct and indirect; or that if drawn for the militia, they should have the power of choosing their own officers by Ballot. This was only a specimen of what they might expect, if, unfortunately for Europe and the world, Ministers should succeed in forcing this revolutionary measure on the House. In fact, when the noble Lord introduced this measure, many Members believed that he was only in a joke, and he had no doubt that if at that time it had been grappled with, it would have been rejected by a large majority.

Mr. *Hume* denied, that the measure was now a new Bill. He should like the Bill as it stood, but the change, if change it could be called, went not to the principle of the measure. He owned the conduct of hon. Members opposed to the Bill was not a little inconsistent. They first complained that part of the Bill was founded on returns which were inaccurate, and when Ministers expressed their readiness to correct those returns, having no wish to injure boroughs which they would affect, the same hon. Gentlemen turned round and said, that the Bill was a new Bill, and objected to it because it corrected the errors of which they complained. His hon. friend (Sir C. Forbes) was quite mistaken as to what was passing in Scotland. It was beyond a doubt that the people there were in favour of the Bill from one end of the country to the other. He admitted that in the Scotch counties, which were as much close-boroughs as any of those included in schedule A, those who hitherto had the monopoly of the franchise were anxious to keep it, but they were only as one in 10,000 compared with those who were favourable to the Bill. The disturbances in Edinburgh and Dundee, he believed, were chiefly caused by the anti-Reformers; but, with the exception of them, there was nothing in the state of Scotland which could create alarm.

Colonel *Sibthorp* congratulated the House on the proposed change in the dress of the Bill, which he must say was not a little inconsistent, after what had been stated the other evening, that any alteration would make the measure inefficient. The population returns for some places were wholly erroneous. In Grimsby, for instance, that before the House was 3,064, but a census by the people there made it 4,000; and he hoped that since then some accouchements had added to the population, so as to make it beyond the number which would continue both Members for the borough. Though he was glad of a change in the Bill, he would not vote for it unless a still greater change were made in it.

Mr. *Keith Douglas* said, he had been lately in Scotland, and he could state that the effects produced by the Bill there were inconvenient and mischievous. The noble Lord (Lord J. Russell) had said, the other day, that the Bill could undergo no change, and Members were called upon by their constituents to support the measure without any modification; but now the Bill was changed in its spirit at least. He could state that the greatest irritation had been produced in Scotland by the Bill. He regretted that the proposed alteration had not been made in the Bill at a much earlier period.

Mr. *Hunt* said, they had three statements as to the state of Scotland with respect to this Bill,—one was, that it was in a flame from one end to the other; another, that Scotland was all joy at it; and a third, that it had been productive of very inconvenient irritation in that country. Now he had been lately in the country, and much amongst the people; and he could tell his hon. friend (the member for Middlesex), that the people were not quite so mad for the Bill as he imagined. The country had now had time for reflection, and there was a re-action of opinion. [*Cheers from the Opposition.*] Notwithstanding those cheers from those who he knew would not support his view of the Bill, he would state what he knew to be the fact as to the opinion of the people. He had been recently in Staffordshire and Warwickshire, and other populous places, where he was called upon to address the people, and he knew the sentiments of 200,000 of them, and he had not met one man who was left out of the franchise who approved of the measure, and not one who was included who did not approve of it. So that he might say there were 700,000 or 800,000 in favour of the measure, and 700,000 or 800,000 against it. [*Renewed cheers from the same side.*] Let not those Gentlemen who cheered him, imagine that in this he was objecting to the Bill: he would give it his support. All he objected to was, that it did not go far enough. If it had extended the franchise to all who paid scot and lot, there would be some principle in it, but now there was none. At the same time he hoped it would pass, for it would make one great inroad into that accursed system which had brought that House into contempt with every man of common sense and with the whole world. So far he rejoiced at the measure, but he must own the truth, that a great re-action had taken place in the public mind on the subject of the Bill. He had met the people of Manchester, of Birmingham, of Bolton, of Preston, and other places, and notwithstanding what fell from the hon. member for Middlesex, that the people were all run mad for joy on the subject, he must say, that with one exception, the people thought they were deluded by it. They thought that they should have got something for themselves by it; that they were going to get meat or clothes cheaper by it; but when they found that it would have none of these effects, they were naturally disappointed at the whole measure. He asked the people whom he had met, whether, if they were excluded from the right of choosing Representatives for themselves, they would like to have Representatives chosen for them by that class of persons which would possess the elective franchise under the noble Lord's Bill,—the 10*l.* voters. They uniformly replied "No!" They said that they would much rather see their Representatives chosen by the gentry and the higher classes of society than by that class which was immediately above themselves. He had lately received a deputation from the Spitalfields weavers, and he was told by them that they were not now so mad as they had been; they found that they were not to be represented, and they did not, therefore, expect that the Bill would do them any good.

Colonel *Davies* had listened with pain to the extraordinary speech which had just been delivered. The hon. member for Preston professed himself to be a Reformer, and yet he had done as much as the worst enemy of Reform could do against the

Bill. The hon. Member had told the House that the people were recovering from their frenzy, and from their delusion. It was to be hoped that the good people of Preston, at least, had recovered from their delusion. They fancied that they had sent a Reformer to Parliament; but they would now find that that Reformer was doing every thing in his power to defeat Reform. He would inform the hon. Member of the remarks, not heard, perhaps, by the hon. Member himself, which were made upon his speech in his own neighbourhood. [Colonel Davies and Mr. Hunt both sat on the Opposition side of the House.] Some Gentlemen sitting around him thought that speech "the best which had been made against Reform," and others said that "it had done more for their cause, and against Reform, than any speech yet delivered." The hon. Member had said that the people of Preston had discovered that they would not have bread, meat, or clothing cheaper in consequence of this measure. If he thought that it would not have the effect of making all those articles cheaper, he, for one, would not vote for it. By whom had the abominable system of taxation existing in this country, and the enormous establishments which ground down the people, been upheld? The hon. member for Preston had himself answered the question in 150 speeches which he had made out of that House and had declared that a Reform in Parliament was wanted to do away with that system which had so long been the curse of the country. He was convinced that with a Reformed Parliament no Administration could stand six weeks unless they proposed measures of economy and retrenchment. The hon. Member had said that the people had recovered from their delusion; and that now when they found that they were to receive no benefit from the Bill, they were all to a man against it. He flatly contradicted that statement,—a different feeling pervaded the country. People were to be found, he asserted, who were willing to make a sacrifice of the privileges which they held to be most valuable for what they considered a public benefit. It was impossible for him to sit still, after hearing the hon. Member who professed to be a Reformer, deliver the speech he had done. If the Bill now before the House was thrown out, what was to be done then? Did the hon. Member wish to go on from bad to worse, until some convulsion took place in the country—when the Radicals would get what they wanted—Universal Suffrage, and Annual Parliaments? If that was not the hon. Member's object, he could not conceive for what reason the hon. Member should have made a speech, which had done more to prejudice the measure of Government, than any which had yet been delivered.

An Hon. *Member* denied the accuracy of the statement which had been made, that the whole of Scotland, from one end to the other, was delighted with the Ministerial plan of Reform. Every regularly convened county meeting in that country, comprising the property, the intelligence, and respectability of the district, had, with one or two exceptions, passed resolutions, and prepared petitions, expressing their disapprobation of the measure.

Mr. *Hunt* said, he had been denounced by a gallant Colonel as one of the worst enemies of Reform. The gallant Officer, however, had not ventured to deny one of his assertions. He had never disguised his sentiments. He was a Reformer, but the particular measure before the House did not come up to his idea of Reform. He did not accuse his Majesty's Ministers of having deluded the country, by holding out expectations that their Reform Bill would make bread and clothing cheap; but if they had not, others had. The people had been deluded, but they had discovered their error upon reflection, and would be deluded no longer. If the measure was to be what the noble Lord opposite said it should be, he then was an enemy to the measure so far as thinking it did not go far enough made him an enemy to it.

Sir *Charles Forbes* said, that Edinburgh and Dundee were not the only places in Scotland where evil consequences had ensued from the introduction of the Reform Bill. Much mischief had likewise been done in Perth and Glasgow, in the latter of which places the mob went so far as to hoist the tri-coloured flag.

Lord *Mahon* wished to know whether, if any proposition should be made to preserve the relative proportion of the Representatives of England, Ireland, and Scotland as it now stood, Ministers would consider that it involved a violation of the principle of the Bill.

No answer was given to this question.

The Petition to be printed.

LAW REFORM BILL.—IRELAND.] Mr. *Crampton* moved for leave to bring in a Bill to improve the administration of the law in Ireland. The object of the Bill was, to assimilate the law of Ireland to that of England. It changed the law Terms in Ireland and the days for returning writs; it regulated the periods of *nisi prius* sittings; it enabled the Court of King's Bench to pronounce judgment in certain criminal cases after Term; it regulated the practice of the superior Courts and fixed the time for holding Quarter Sessions; in short it was intended to extend to Ireland the recent alterations which had been made in the law in England. Such being the object of the Bill, he anticipated no opposition to his Motion.

Mr. *O'Connell* said, that this Bill, like the play of *Hamlet* with the part of *Hamlet* left out, omitted the most important matter. The object of the Bill was to assimilate the laws of Ireland to those of England, and yet not a word was mentioned in the Bill about the Grand or Petty-Jury laws. He understood that the last Government had seen the evil of the present Jury system in Ireland, and had prepared a bill to assimilate it to the English system. If it was the intention of the present Government to bring in a particular bill for that purpose, he would not at present say any thing on the subject.

Mr. *Crampton* said, it was true that a bill had been prepared by the late Government on the subject of the Grand-Jury system, and he promised to give it the fullest consideration. It was very probable that it might be brought in, but he could not give any pledge on the subject.

Mr. *O'Connell* said, that there was nothing of which the people of Ireland had so much right to complain as the gross partiality which was displayed in the selection of Juries. It appeared from a report presented to that House, that the Sheriffs in Dublin were elected for party purposes, and were obliged to give party pledges previous to their election. [*"Order!" and a slight confusion in the House.*] "Oh!" exclaimed the hon. and learned Member, "this is a subject of very little importance,—it is only a matter relating to Ireland,—nothing but a proposition to improve the administration of justice in Ireland, which is not worth listening to." He said that the lists of the Special Juries were all made out by the deputy of Lord Seymour Conway, who always put in them members of the Corporation, mostly of little property, and as little expectations. This deputy had the selection of all Special Juries for the law courts of Dublin, including the Court of King's Bench, which was considered an evil as it was acknowledged to be unfair, by the last Administration, and they therefore prepared a bill for the purpose of putting an end to it. By a report made to that House, it appeared that any person, on giving twenty guineas to the sub-sheriff, might have whatever Jury he pleased. The Bill which the last government brought in to assimilate the Jury laws of Ireland to those of England, had been withdrawn on the understanding that it was to be re-introduced early this Session; but now the House was told that that Bill, relating as it did to a most important matter, might be brought in perhaps. He could not be content with such vague promises; he did not ask for any thing unreasonable, he asked for impartial Juries, and he called upon the present Government to bring forward a measure to promote the attainment of so desirable an object. He believed the Irish Insolvent Act would shortly expire. He therefore thought that it would be best to leave all matters connected with that out of the present Bill, and have a particular bill to regulate the Insolvent Court of Ireland. The manner in which the judges —one of them in particular—conducted the business of that Court did not give satisfaction; and it would be his duty to present to the House a petition from a large body of mercantile persons, calling upon the House to consider the state of the insolvent law. He implored the hon. and learned Gentleman (Mr. Crampton) to leave out of the Bill any alteration of the ejectment law. There were at present facilities enough for landlords to crush their tenants. Since the Union several Statutes had been passed in favour of the landlords and against the tenantry. There was now a servile war raging in Ireland, a war of poverty against property, and he was afraid that the discontent of the lower classes would only be aggravated, if any steps were taken to increase the power of the landlords over the tenantry.

Mr. *Crampton* said, that with respect to the bill of the late Government on the subject of the Grand-Jury laws, he had not had as yet time fully to consider it, but he promised to give it his best attention. The disturbances in Ireland were not attributable, he believed, to the administration of justice in that country, which was as pure and impartial as in England. The proposed Bill contained one or two clauses for the purpose of giving relief to such persons as had been committed to prison for contempt of court, arising from their ignorance.

Sir *E. Sugden* considered the statement of the hon. and learned member (Mr. Crampton) respecting the Grand-Jury bill which had been brought forward by the late Government, very fair. He was glad to see that a clause was to be inserted in the proposed Bill, to give relief to those unfortunate persons who were suffering for contempt of Court. When he introduced his bill to relieve a similar class of persons in England, he had proposed extending the provisions to Ireland; but there were certain technical difficulties, which prevented him from doing so. From what had fallen from the hon. and learned member for Waterford, it appeared that he was an advocate for cheap law, except where landlords were concerned. For his part he was disposed to give his support to any process efficacious enough to prevent litigation and expense, which must ultimately fall on the poor tenant.

Mr. *Hume* thought the Ministers were not coming forward on this subject as the House had a right to expect. At an early period of the Session the Noble Lord opposite had stated, that it was the intention of his Majesty's Government to do a great deal to better the condition of Ireland; and now they had an equivocal declaration with respect to a matter of the greatest importance to that country. If the statement of his hon. and learned friend could not be denied (and it could not), of the unfair and partial constitution of juries in Ireland, how could the hon. and learned Gentleman opposite say that the present discontent had nothing to do with the administration of justice in Ireland? In England means had been adopted to procure impartial Juries; why not in Ireland? After the statement by his hon. and learned friend—that it had been established seven or eight years ago, that a sub-sheriff in Dublin had sold Juries for twenty or thirty guineas, and that the individual still kept his office—could there be any doubt of the necessity of interference? He hoped the noble Lord would give some pledge that the measure prepared by the late Administration should be completed.

Lord *Althorp* said, he could not pledge himself to bring forward the particular bill to which the hon. member for Middlesex had alluded, but he would pledge himself that a measure should be brought forward on the part of Government, as soon as he and his colleagues could turn their attention to the subject.

Mr. *Ruthven* said, that Ireland ought to have the benefit of the English laws, wherever they could be applied to the former country.

Motion agreed to.

PRIVILEGES OF THE HOUSE—PECUNIARY PENALTIES.] On the Motion of Mr. C. W. Wynn, the Order of the Day was read for the further consideration of the Report of the Committee on the Privileges of the House with respect to Pecuniary Penalties. The report was brought up and read as follows. "Resolved,—That it is the opinion of this Committee, that in any Bill which, having passed the House of Lords, shall be sent down to this House for their concurrence, or in any Bill which having passed this House, shall be returned by the Lords with amendments, it shall appear that any pecuniary penalty or forfeiture is thereby imposed, varied, or taken away, the Speaker shall, before the second reading of such Bill, or amendments, report to the House his opinion, whether the object thereof be to impose, vary, or to take away any pecuniary charge or burthen on the subject, or whether the same relates only to the punishment or the prevention of offences; and the House shall thereupon determine whether it may be expedient, in such particular case to insist upon the exercise of their privilege to originate all such provisions respecting pecuniary penalties or forfeiture."

Mr. *C. W. Wynn* moved, that the House do agree with the Resolution. The object of it was to relax the privileges of the House in cases where the public interests required it, and with the approbation of the Speaker. Under the system proposed, bills for the amendment of the criminal law, containing clauses which inflicted pecuniary penalties, might be brought forward in the House of Lords, from which great public convenience would result.

Mr. *Hume* expressed his disinclination to trench in the slightest degree upon any of the privileges of the House, and his inability to perceive that the present practice was attended with any inconvenience.

Sir *R. Peel* could state, from his personal experience, that, when he introduced his bills for the amendment of the Criminal Law, very great inconvenience was felt in the passing of those Bills through the House of Lords, in consequence of the exercise of the privileges of the House with respect to the pecuniary penalties necessarily inserted in them.

Lord *Althorp* entirely concurred in the sentiments of the right hon. Baronet, and hoped the House would agree to the resolutions of his right hon. friend.

Resolution read a second time and agreed to.

Civil List Bill.] The House, on the Motion of Lord Althorp, resolved itself into a Committee of the whole House, on the Civil List Bill.

Lord *Althorp* said, that he had already fully stated his reasons why he could not, as the Minister of the Crown, agree to the recommendation of the Committee. He should, therefore, move that a blank, left in one of the clauses of the Bill, be filled up with the words, "That the sum of 510,000*l.* be granted out of the Consolidated Fund, for the support of his Majesty's Household, and the honour and dignity of the Crown."

Mr. *Hume* said, that having been a member of the Committee which resolved that this sum should be reduced by 12,000*l.*, he felt it his duty to move as an amendment that only the sum of 498,000*l.* be granted for the purpose specified.

Mr. *O'Connell* seconded the Amendment. If his hon. friend divided on the question, he would vote with him.

Mr. *George Robinson* supported the Amendment. He did not say that the Ministers were bound by the recommendation of the Committee, but as he saw no reason why the great Officers of State should not have their salaries lessened, he should vote for the lesser sum.

Sir *R. Peel* said, that he entirely approved of the course which the Chancellor of the Exchequer had taken on this subject. In his opinion nothing would be more injudicious than to give grounds for future applications to Parliament, for defraying debts which might hereafter be incurred by the Crown, in consequence of an allowance too limited to satisfy the claims and necessities incidental to Royalty. He, therefore, most cordially assented to the proposal of the noble Lord, it being founded in justice, and sanctioned by sound policy.

Mr. *Hume* thought, that the present condition of the country required more reduction than Ministers had hitherto made, and for that reason would still abide by the opinion which he had already expressed. However, looking to the thin state of the House, he should content himself with protesting against the course, in this instance, pursued by the noble Lord, without pressing for a division.

Resolution agreed to. Several of the blanks of the Bill were filled up. On the clause relating to the income of the junior branches of the Royal Family having been read,

Mr. *Hume* took the opportunity to suggest, that the allowance to the several branches of the Royal Family ought to undergo some reduction in common with all other public salaries, in consideration of the comparative cheapness of provisions since those allowances had been originally granted. Such a diminution might with the greater propriety be proposed, as the present members of the Royal Family enjoyed the benefit of survivorship, for it was provided, that at the death of one prince of the blood his allowance should be so apportioned as considerably to increase the incomes of the others. If, therefore, no proposition of the nature he recommended should emanate from Government, he should feel it his duty, on the bringing up of the Report, when the House resumed, to give notice of his intention, at an early day, to move an Amendment to that effect.

On the clause granting the Crown 10,000*l.* for sudden emergencies,

Mr. *Goulburn* proposed, that the sum be increased to 20,000*l.* for such contingent expenses as might be incurred during the year, and which Parliament could not then anticipate. The actual expense was at present 510,000*l.*; and he thought that 10,000*l.* was not a sufficient surplus to be placed at the disposal of the King, the dignity of the Crown and the convenience of Parliament being taken into consideration. The right hon. Gentleman concluded by moving that the sum be 20,000*l.*

Mr. *O'Connell* could not subscribe to the doctrine of the right hon. Gentleman. He thought that Parliament could not be too wary in placing surplus sums above the actual expenditure in the hands of any

Minister, and should, therefore, propose as an Amendment on the right hon. Gentleman's proposition, that the sum be reduced to 510,000*l.* Even this sum would leave a surplus to meet extraordinary contingencies; for the actual Estimate was but 498,000*l.*

Lord *Althorp* said, he would leave the matter in the hands of the Committee, though he could have no objection to the larger surplus. He, therefore, would agree to the Amendment.

Mr. *O'Connell* declared his determination to divide the Committee on the question.

The Committee accordingly divided. For the Motion 44; Against it 10—Majority in favour of Mr. Goulburn's Motion to increase the surplus to 20,000*l.*—34.

Mr. Hume subsequently moved, as an Amendment on the vote of 123,000*l.* for his Majesty's Household expenses, that it be reduced to 119,344*l.*

Amendment negatived without a division. The Bill, with its Amendments, ordered to be reported. The House resumed.

Mr. *Hume* asked the Chancellor of the Exchequer, whether he intended to refer the other charges on the Civil List to the consideration of a Select Committee.

Lord *Althorp* said, that such was not his intention, but to refer them to a Committee of the whole House. If, when he proposed to refer these charges to a Committee of the whole House, any Gentleman should propose to refer them to the consideration of a Select Committee, he should be prepared to state more fully the intentions of his Majesty's Government, and their reasons for entertaining them.

Mr. *Hume* gave notice, that he should on a future day move that these charges be referred to the consideration of a Select Committee.

EMANCIPATION OF THE JEWS.] Mr. *Goulburn* wished to know whether his right hon. friend opposite intended to proceed with his Motion regarding the Jews, which stood for discussion on Thursday evening.

Mr. *R. Grant* said, that though he retained his former opinions and intentions on this subject, he was inclined to postpone bringing forward his Motion till after the settlement of the Reform Bill, as he did not wish to add any fresh cause of excitement to the public mind. The conduct of those materially interested in the success of his Motion was most proper, in leaving their claims to the discretion of the House, and not wishing to obstruct the progress of another great question by obtruding them at present upon its notice.

MONEY PAYMENT OF WAGES BILL—THE TRUCK SYSTEM.] On the Motion of Mr. Littleton, the Money Payment of Wages Bill was recommitted. On the House resolving itself into a Committee,

Mr. *Hume* held the principle of this Bill to be erroneous. He had before declared his sentiments on the subject, and would not, therefore, discuss its clauses, but move that the Chairman do now leave the Chair.

Sir *R. Bateson* inquired whether this Bill was to be extended to Ireland?

Mr. *Littleton* replied, that it was not; but he should have no objection to extend its provisions to that country.

Sir *R. Bateson* contended, that it was important that the provisions of the Bill should extend to Ireland.

Mr. *Littleton* begged to observe, in explanation, that the title of the Bill contained the words "to certain parts of Great Britain;" and that he was therefore afraid that it could not be extended to Ireland. By another Bill, however, the enactments of the measure might be extended to Ireland.

Mr. *Warburton* would not now go into the discussion of the merits of this Bill, to which he had before expressed his decided opposition. He was glad, however, to find that the Bill had been so materially altered from the form in which it had originally been laid before them. He felt it the more unnecessary to discuss the measure, as, in his opinion, it would be found totally inoperative, even if it should be passed into a law.

Mr. *Western* said, that however highly he might appreciate the motives of the hon. member for Staffordshire, in bringing forward this Bill, yet, believing the principle of it to be most pernicious, he must decidedly oppose it. It was impossible to tell how far such a principle might be carried, or what extent of mischief might result from the adoption of the principle. He believed the House had never interfered between the master and the man, except to the detriment of the latter.

Mr. *Tennant* said, he was opposed to the Bill, and thought that the only effect of it would be, to prevent the poor man from obtaining the best market he could for the only thing he had to sell, namely, his labour. It was not always that laws which originated in good motives were the best laws, or the laws most calculated to effect the object towards which they were directed. Thus the Usury Laws were intended to benefit the borrowers of money; but they were in effect most disadvantageous to the borrowers, as many of the Gentlemen he was now addressing might have experienced. According to the definition of "wages" in this Bill, the clauses of the Bill would not touch any contract which was partly in money and partly in goods.

Mr. *James Morison* believed, that the Bill would be found in practice an interference between master and man, which was never advisable, without the possibility of effecting that which was the professed object of the interference. If, however, the Bill did operate at all, he was sure that it would do the labourers no good, and that it was very likely to do them much harm. In some parts of the country it would throw hundreds out of employment.

Mr. *W. Whitmore* said, that if he thought the bargains in question were matters of pure competition between the masters and the labourers, he should agree with the hon. member for Middlesex, and the other Members opposite; but as he considered the Truck System to be a system of positive compulsion upon the labourers, he believed that that would be a wholesome and beneficial law, which should require that all such contracts be carried into effect by means of money. Under this system, the man who was employed by the Truck-master constantly fell into debt with the shop, and then it was impossible for him to leave that particular employment. Being in the master's debt, the man was altogether in the master's power. None of the Gentlemen opposite had ventured to say, that the Truck System was one which it would be advisable to allow generally; but then if it were not a good general system, why should it be allowed to prevail in particular districts of the country?

Mr. *O'Connell* said, that the best feature in this Bill was, that it would be totally inoperative. He was quite opposed to a measure which went, like this Bill, to interfere with the freedom of labour. The Truck System was the result and the proof of the existence of poverty and distress in the country; and this was not the way to remedy such a state of things. The way to do that was, to increase the market for labour, and to increase the competition amongst the masters.

Mr. *Maberly* said, that this Bill was contrary to all the general principles of political economy. But if it was an expedient and good Bill, why was it confined to England? The whole agricultural wages in Scotland consisted in barter, and yet this Bill was not extended to Scotland. He, for one, was for leaving manufactures and trade alone. In his opinion, the grand principle was, not to legislate at all for such matters, but to let every thing find its proper level in the open market.

Mr. *Littleton* said, that all he wanted in bringing forward this Bill was, to carry into effect the existing laws on the subject. It appeared to him that Parliament should either repeal those laws altogether, or not allow them to be evaded. He maintained that the measure in its present shape would be perfectly effective for the object which it had in view. There was a general call throughout the country, amongst those who were most interested in the matter, for such a measure, and he hoped the House would at length consent to its adoption.

Mr. *R. Gordon* said, that his impression was, that this Bill would be wholly ineffectual. He should certainly oppose it, for it appeared to him to be a perfectly useless and very absurd measure. Indeed, of all the absurd pieces of legislation that had ever been introduced into the British Legislature, this was, in his opinion, the greatest. He would only ask, for instance, why were Lincolnshire and several other counties exempted from the operation of this Bill? Why was such an absurd exemption introduced into it?

Mr. Alderman *Wood* had the same objection to urge against the Bill, for he could not understand why Cornwall should have been exempted from its operation. As, however, the hon. member for Staffordshire thought that the Bill was calculated to prevent the Truck System, he would support it.

Mr. *Littleton* said, that the reason why certain counties had been exempted from the operation of the Bill was, that it had not been proved that the Truck System existed in those counties.

Mr. *Hunt* said, that although there might be some difficulty in carrying the Act into effect, yet he hoped, that for the sake of the labouring poor, who suffered great hardships, the Bill would pass.

Lord *Althorp* observed, that those hon. Members who had opposed this Bill had argued upon a false foundation. They had assumed, that the labourers were always competent to make contracts, whereas they were in every case in debt to their masters, and therefore it was impossible for them to resist the control of their masters, and they were obliged to take goods from them at any rate. All that this Bill did was, to enable the labourers to know what were the bargains they did make. When this measure first came before him, he had had some doubts of its policy; but after a full consideration of the facts, he felt it to be his duty to support it.

Lord *Granville Somerset* opposed the Bill, and supported, though with reluctance, the Motion of the hon. member for Middlesex.

Mr. *Poulett Thomson* did not expect that such a law could be made perfect at once; but it was less likely to be evaded, and was, therefore, a better law than the present.

Lord *Sandon* said, that the labourers felt the slavery in which they were entangled; and they came to that House for relief. In his belief, it was their duty to listen to the demand, and to pass the Bill. It was said, that political economists had an exception to their principles of free-trade; and he thought that it was much to their credit that they had. No one had more agreed in the principles of Mr. Huskisson than he had; but he well knew that that lamented gentleman also felt that there ought to be a limit to the principles of free trade. In his opinion, the present case came within this description.

The House divided; the numbers were, For Mr. Hume's Amendment 15; Against it 40—Majority 25.

Several verbal Amendments were agreed to, as were the several clauses; the House resumed, and the Report was brought up.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Wednesday, April 13, 1831.

Minutes.] Petitions presented. In favour of Reform, by the Earl of Hardwicke, from the county of Cambridge:—By Earl Gower, from Wick. By Lord Rolle, against the Reform Bill, from the Mayor and Commonalty of the city of Exeter. For the Abolition of Slavery, by Lord Skelmersdale, from Protestant Dissenters at Wigan:—By Lord King, forty-seven, from Dissenting Congregations in various parts of London and of England; and one from the Ladies of Norwood (Surrey):—By Lord Feversham, from Dissenters at East Retford. By Earl Gower, from Workmen engaged in the Glazing Work, in the Staffordshire Potteries, for the Repeal of the Duties on Boracic Acid.

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HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Wednesday, April 13, 1831.

Minutes.] New writ issued for the county of Sussex, in the room of Walter Burrell, Esq., deceased. William Mayhew, Esq. took his seat for Colchester.

Bills. Read a first time. Heritable Securities (Scotland); to improve the Administration of Justice (Ireland). Read a second time; Emigration; Committed. Dean Forest Boundaries. Post Office Sale Customs Acts.

Returns ordered. On the Motion of Mr. Lamb, the Copy of the Twentieth Report of the Commissioners appointed to inquire into the Duties, Salaries, and Emoluments, of the Officers, Clerks, and Ministers of Justice, in all temporal and Ecclesiastical Courts in Ireland; the Imports into, and Exports from, the port of Waterford, during each of the last fifteen years; distinguishing the quantity and value of all articles severally exceeding the amount of 500*l.*; also, of the number of Vessels, with the amount of Tonnage, that entered inwards, and cleared outwards, during the same period, distinguishing British and Foreign, so far as the same can be made out.

Petitions presented. Against certain parts of the Reform Bill, by Lord Seymour, from Okehampton:—By Mr. Calcraft, from the Burgesses of Wareham:—By the Marquis of Chandos, from Chipping Wycombe; and from Sir Harcourt Lees, of Black Rock, near Dublin:—By Mr. Cooper, from certain freeholders of the county of Sligo. The petitioners stated it to be their opinion, that if Reform was necessary, it ought to be effected gradually, and not in this sweeping and sudden manner, which was likely to endanger all the ancient institutions of the country. By Mr. Cooper, from the Protestant Clergy, Churchwardens, and Roman Catholic Clergy of Kilpaltyle, in the county of Sligo, complaining of the distress of the poor in that county. In favour of Reform, by the Marquis of Chandos, from Horton (Bucks):—By the Earl of Uxbridge, from Galway:—By Mr. Prittie, from the High Sheriff and Grand Jury of the county of Tipperary. By Lord Brabazon, from the United Parishes of St. Nicholas and St. James, Dublin, in favour of the Repeal of the Union. For the Abolition of Slavery, by Lord F. Osborne, from Great Shelford, and two other places in the county of Cambridge:—By the Marquis of Chandos, from Hanstop (Bucks):—By the Earl of Uxbridge, from Beaumaris, and other places:—By Mr. Tennyson, from various Congregations of Dissenters. Against any alteration of the Timber Duties, by the Earl of Belfast, from the Shipowners of Belfast. For an Amendment of the Poor Laws, by the Marquis of Chandos, from Olney and Waddesdon.

Essex Petition—Reform Bill.] Mr. *Western* said, he rose for the purpose of presenting a Petition from the county of Essex, in favour of the Reform Bill which was now before the House and the public. The petition was agreed to on the 19th of last month, and its presentation was intrusted to him; but he had not had an opportunity of performing that duty at an earlier period. The meeting at which it was carried was convened in consequence of a requisition addressed to the High Sheriff, and was most numerously and respectably attended. At no time did he ever see more enthusiastic earnestness in support of any measure, than was displayed on this occasion in favour of the Reform Bill. It appeared to him that the great body of the inhabitants of the county had the success of this measure most anxiously at heart, and he believed that the dissentients were very few indeed. Attempts he knew were making to get up petitions against the Bill—private and secret attempts; and, doubtless, there would be some respectable names signed to them; but that the real sense of the people throughout the county was in favour of it, did not admit of the shadow of a doubt. The opinions of men were greatly altered on this subject; and he believed that there was not, at present, one man in that county who would have the hardihood to declare himself against all Reform. Of this, however, he was certain, that some persons who professed to be friends to moderate Reform were dangerous and insidious enemies to effectual Reform; and against them, those who favoured the present measure ought to be especially on their guard. He hoped that this Bill would pass. He trusted that the people would call for "the Bill, the whole Bill, and nothing but the Bill." He was very sorry to hear, the other day, that it was the intention of his Majesty's Ministers to make some alterations in the Bill. He hoped, however, that they would not attempt to interfere with its principle. In short he would say, let us have no alteration—he, at least, wished to have none. In his opinion, those alterations had been suggested by the enemies of the Bill, for the purpose of sowing dissension amongst its friends.

Mr. *Tyrell* said, he did not rise for the purpose of creating any discussion on the presentation of this petition; neither did he mean, even for one moment, to insinuate that the petition did not contain the opinion of a considerable number of his constituents. But, when he took into consideration the extraordinary exertions of the friends of his hon. colleague (he spoke not of his own exertions) to add to the weight, respectability, and numbers of the petitioners,—when he took into consideration the continued zeal and assiduity manifested with reference to this subject by the hon. member for St. Ives (Mr. L. Wellesley), who, out of that House, was in the habit of considering himself member for Essex *de jure*—when he called to the recollection of that House, that even a few weeks ago, the hon. member for Essex *de facto* and the hon. Member *de jure* were, in point of opinion, "wide as the Poles asunder" on the measure of Reform,—when he considered these things, he could not but congratulate his hon. colleague on the unanimity of sentiment and opinion which appeared to have prevailed at the Essex meeting. The requisition at first purported to have emanated from the Grand Jury of that county, but he felt it right to state, that only eight of those individuals signed that requisition. It was true that the signatures of two noble Lords were affixed to that requisition but when he told the House that those two noble Lords (for whom he entertained the highest respect) were not known in the county,—that they were scarcely acquainted with ten freeholders, except their own tenants —it must greatly detract from the weight which might otherwise be attached to the circumstance. Besides, not one of three noble Lords who resided in the county had signed the requisition. His hon. colleague seemed to view the Bill as a measure of almost "absolute wisdom." In using that phrase, he did not mean to make any allusion to the worthy Alderman below him. On the other hand, the hon. member for Colchester (Mr. D. W. Harvey) did not allow that the Bill would give him all he wanted, but he accepted it as the means by which he would ultimately arrive at the object which he had in view. In his speech at the meeting, that hon. Member had gone into a long digression with reference to ecclesiastical Reform. *The Times*, and other papers, which professed to give an account of the meeting, had however omitted that part of the hon. Member's speech, although it occupied a considerable portion of the time of the meeting. According to the hon. Member's plan, the Bishops were to be put on half-pay, or Serjeant's pay; and he in the course of his address entered very largely into the question of Church Reform. Whether, however, his (Mr. Tyrell's) hon. colleague held the same opinion upon this point as the hon. Member, he could not pretend to say. With respect to the Bill itself, it appeared that this measure of Reform was to be reformed again. At some future opportunity, when he knew correctly the nature of the measure to be proposed,—which, as it was to be altered, he was not aware of now,—he should deliver his sentiments upon it.

Mr. *L. Wellesley* would assert, and he challenged the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Tyrell) to contradict him, that within the memory of man no question was ever agitated in a county which had gained so much ground in a few years, as the question of Reform had done in the county of Essex. Formerly there was a strong feeling against Reform; but now large towns, inhabited by men of great experience, possessing property, and gifted with solid sense, were friendly to Reform. Those who now agitated that question were the very persons who, some years ago, had opposed it. With respect to any part that he had taken relative to these meetings, he declared upon his word and honour as a gentleman that he had not, in any way, influenced the meetings that had been called,—nor had he striven, in the slightest degree, to bias the opinions of his tenants; and therefore the hon. Member was not warranted in asserting that he had taken an active and zealous part in this business, When representations were made to him as to the necessity of calling public meetings in Essex, to speak the real sense of the county, in consequence of the attempt which was made to get up hole-and-corner petitions, he had said—"There is no necessity to do so, because the feelings of the county had been sufficiently expressed:" but after what had been said by the hon. Gentleman, he would advise the county to assemble. The hon. Member would then have an opportunity of standing forward and stating his opinion, and he would then be enabled to satisfy himself as to the state of feeling which prevailed in the county.

Mr. *Stanley* wished to say a few words in answer to, and in consequence of, certain observations which had fallen from the two hon. Representatives of the county of Essex. He only regretted that his noble friend, the Paymaster of the Forces, was not present, to give to what he was about to say the full weight and sanction of his authority. Both the hon. Members appeared to entertain a misapprehension—which, he believed, prevailed to a certain extent in that House and out of it, giving great dissatisfaction to the friends of Reform, and great satisfaction to its enemies—as to the intention of his Majesty's Ministers. He therefore thought it right to state, most unequivocally, that his Majesty's Ministers did not mean, in any, even the slightest degree, to deviate from the broad and plain principle on which they had founded the measure of Reform. And he only wished that his noble friend was in the House to join with him, as he would do, in expressing his entire concurrence in the declaration, that no such intention to deviate from the principle of the measure existed now, or did exist at any time, on the part of his Majesty's Ministers. No greater misapprehension could arise, with reference to what had occurred in that House, than to infer from it that Ministers meant, for one moment, to lose sight of the principle which they had originally laid down. They were determined on the entire disfranchisement of those boroughs which did not come up to a certain standard of population, and on the partial disfranchisement of those which did not come up to another given standard. No alteration would be made in these points, except that which his noble friend had stated in the outset, as possible,—namely, that if any boroughs could fairly and plainly show that they did not come within the fixed rule and line marked out by the Bill, then those boroughs would be justly entitled to be excluded from the schedules of disfranchisement or partial disfranchisement. But that this measure of Reform would be carried to the utmost and fullest extent, as had been stated by his noble friend, in point of principle, did not, and could not, admit of any doubt. If it were the feeling of that House that the numbers constituting that House would be unnecessarily or extravagantly reduced by this Bill; and if it were deemed proper by the House that its numbers should be farther augmented beyond what was contemplated by the Bill, then that augmentation should not be the means of restoring those disfranchised boroughs, but the number of Members to be added should be taken from such great, populous, and important towns as might be considered to have a fair claim to Representation, in the event of the numbers being augmented.

Sir *E. B. Sugden* said, that as the principle of this measure depended on its details, which, it appeared, were now to be altered, the Bill must be looked upon as a new one. The object of the measure could only be ascertained by the details which had been laid on the Table of the House, and which specified, that the number of Representatives should be decreased. But now the right hon. Gentleman said, that so far as regarded the number of Members, if the proposition were objected to, the number might be increased, care being taken that the right of returning Members should not be restored to the disfranchised boroughs, but that it should be given to great and populous towns. Now, he asked, would not that proceeding manifestly alter the principle of the measure? the effect of this measure would be altogether to divide and cut off the manufacturing from the agricultural interest. One set of individuals would wholly represent the agricultural, and another the manufacturing interest. This measure was not, he was convinced, half so popular as many Gentlemen seemed to suppose. What did the hon. member for Preston tell them on the preceding evening? He stated that the people were decidedly against this Bill. That hon. Member averred, that of 200,000 people whom he had addressed, there was only one in favour of the Bill. The people very naturally asked, would the Bill give cheap bread, cheap beer, and cheap clothes? The answer was, "No, it will not;" and then they declared against it. The hon. member for Preston had told the House, that the people who were excluded from the franchise would have been better pleased if, instead of extending it to the 10*l.* householders, it had been given to the gentry; and it was very natural, that not having it themselves, they should wish to have it given to those who were farther removed from them than the 10*l.* householders. The noble Lord had told them that he intended to make no alteration in the principle of the Bill; but it appeared that he was now disposed not to disturb the rights of those who had acquired the franchise of corporations by birth or servitude: but did not that go to the principle of the Bill? It had been objected to him that he was unreasonable in resisting the going into a Committee with the Bill; but his objection was to going into Committee on a different Bill from that which had been read a second time. The whole Bill had undergone a material alteration, and what guarantee had they that to-morrow it would not be still farther altered? He had heard of instances in which it was proposed to bring some boroughs, which would otherwise come into schedule A, up to the number of schedule B, by including the inhabitants of the parish as well as the borough. This, no doubt, might be done by the Treasury, but was that a way to dispose of the Representation of England? He had heard also of instances of including the parish and the borough in one in cases where they were of the same name. This, no doubt, in particular instances, would be found very convenient, but the effect of it would be, to make the Bill altogether different from that which the people had been led to believe it.

Mr. *John Campbell* was surprised at the course taken by his hon. and learned friend (Sir E. Sugden), who, on the second reading of the Bill, rested all his objections on its details, and now, when about to enter into the Committee, where alone the details could be examined, he occupied himself with the principle of the Bill. What was stated yesterday by the noble Lord did not at all affect the principle of the Bill. The object was, to put an end to nomination, by abolishing those rotten boroughs in which such pernicious influence was exercised. The principle adopted was, that where the population did not exceed 2,000, the borough was altogether disfranchised; and where the population did not exceed 4,000, only one Member was allowed to remain. Now that principle remained untouched; for all that was to be done was, that if any borough could show that it did not come within the rule, it should not be included. But this left the principle as it was. Any changes which might be made were changes only of detail. As to the intention of not interfering with those rights which had been acquired in corporations by birth and servitude, he fully approved of it. It was the only objection that many parties in the country had to the Bill; and he thought it not unreasonable to allow the rights of all persons apprenticed or born at the passing of the Bill, to remain during the lives of those parties. The hon. member for Preston had talked of the feeling of the people in the country on this Bill. Now he had lately been visiting several counties, and he there found all classes, high and low, rich and poor, quite in favour of the Bill. There was a public meeting the other day in the county of Stafford, the requisition for which was signed by ten Peers, and at this meeting there was not a dissentient voice from the Bill. The people approved of it, because they hoped that it would have the effect of giving them cheaper bread and beer, and higher wages,—that it would, in short, better their condition; and there was no doubt that, in the course of time, the economy and better system which a reformed Parliament would produce would have those effects.

Mr. *O'Connell* said, that the hon. and learned Gentleman below him (Sir E. Sugden) had confounded the principles on which the Bill went. It had proceeded upon a scale of population, and as long as that scale was adhered to—and he saw no attempt to depart from it—the principle would remain untouched. The only change in the detail would be, where the numbers were so incorrectly given as to bring some boroughs within either of the schedules, in which, properly speaking, they ought not to be included. Errors of this kind had occurred in many cases, and in none were they more likely to occur than in those places where the parish and the borough were of the same name. It was no departure from the principle of the Bill, then, to include the population of both places in particular instances. The principle of the Bill had for its object to put an end to that corrupt system, by which Members got into that House, not by the choice of the people, but by the nomination of Peers and other individuals; and also by which, persons found their way into the other House as Peers, through the medium of borough influence in this;—that system of traffic for the payment of election expenses, which made seats and the influence over them the objects of bargain and sale. An end had, however, been put by this Bill to all such practices, and he was not surprised at the irritation manifested in certain quarters against a measure which was to destroy this odious traffic;—practices which had been carried on in some instances to so great an extent, and which might have gone on to tarnish even the seat of justice itself. This base traffic would be at an end; and he repeated, that he was not surprised at the irritation displayed by some persons out of that House against the Reform Bill. He must own he was surprised at what had fallen from the hon. member for Preston (Mr. Hunt) as to the opinion of the people on the subject of this Bill. Those who were opposed to it could not be genuine Reformers, who would oppose a measure which would put an end to such odious practices as a traffic for a peerage by means of seats in that House, merely because they themselves had not been included in the elective franchise. He repeated that such parties could not be genuine Reformers.

Lord *Valletort* concurred with the hon. and learned Gentleman that the change to be made in the details of the Bill amounted to an alteration of its principles. He should object very much to that change, particularly to the plan of giving the sixty-two Members to be taken from the boroughs to the large towns. Such a distribution of the Representation would destroy that balance of interests in the country which aleady existed. He would not take the interpretation put upon this measure by other hon. Members, for he heard from the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Stanley) that such was the intention of Government.

Mr. *Stanley* said, what he had intended to convey was, that if the House should decide upon retaining the whole number of Members, it was the intention of Government to give them, not all to large towns, though certainly some of them would be so disposed of, but to large and populous districts.

Mr. *North* wished to know what modification was to take place in the Irish Bill, if so great a change was to be made in the English?

Mr. *Stanley* had already stated, that no change would take place in the principle of the general measure. The only modification in it would be, to exempt those boroughs which could make out a case to show that the returns with respect to them were erroneous. This was only an alteration of detail, and, as it did not affect the general principle, could not affect the Irish Bill.

Mr. *North* considered, that as the general measure, as it first stood, would give five additional Members to Ireland, and take sixty-two from England, the retention of those sixty-two Members would make a serious change which would affect Ireland.

Mr. *Stanley* had not said a word of any intention on the part of Government to retain the sixty-two Members. All he said was, that if the House should be of opinion that the number should be continued, Government would recommend that they should be given to large bodies.

Mr. *Hunt* said, as allusion had been made to him, he could not avoid saying a few words. He would again repeat what he stated last night, viz. that the people in several large and populous districts in which he had addressed them, were without exception (not with one exception, as he was represented to have said) against the measure. His constituents were all for Universal Suffrage,—which they themselves enjoyed in an extreme degree, and they wished that every man who resided in the town should have a vote. The hon. member for Waterford had pretended to lament over him, as having ceased to be a genuine Reformer; and, in return, he might express his regret that that hon. Member had turned round and departed from his promises to his constituents to support Universal Suffrage and Vote by Ballot. If he were under prosecution, or even on the scaffold, no consideration on earth should prevent him from declaring his honest sentiments, or induce him to retract any opinion which he conscientiously held.

General *Gascoyne* had understood, and in that he was not singular, that the noble Lord (Russell) had declared that the sixty-two Members would be retained, and given to the large towns; but now it was stated that no such intention existed. He owned he should like to hear some statement as to what really were the intentions of Government in this respect. He thought it right, that before they went into the Committee they should know how the sixty-two Members who were to remain after the disfranchisement were to be disposed of. In Liverpool, which had a population of 180,000 souls, there was very great difference of opinion as to this Bill, and great doubts of its advantages. The lower classes were not at all favourable to it; but this feeling was not confined to those classes. It was shared by very many amongst the merchants, bankers and others; and he was convinced that the more the people saw of the measure, the less they would be pleased with it; and he believed, that in a week more, petitions from several parts of the country would be presented against it.

Lord *Althorp* said, that after what had fallen from his hon. and gallant friend who last addressed the House, he could not avoid saying a few words. He was not present when his noble friend (Lord J. Russell) addressed the House yesterday on the subject, but he was convinced, that he had not stated it to be the intention of Government to replace the Members who might be cut off by the disfranchisement of the small boroughs, and he would briefly state to the House what was the course which his Majesty's Government intended to pursue. On looking at the different returns and the schedules, they found that, from the incorrectness of those returns, there would be an addition to the Members which his noble friend had stated would constitute the House, because some of the boroughs had been found to have a population sufficient to exempt them from the operation of the Bill; but in this there was no departure from the principle of the Bill; the principle remained the same, but it would not apply to so many boroughs as was at first supposed. This would increase the number beyond what had been stated. As to the exact number of Members which should constitute the House, Ministers did not hold it to be essential to the principle of the Bill. But they were determined to carry the measure with respect to the reduction of numbers, if they could. He repeated, if they could accomplish that, they would not depart from the original plan as to numbers, except in those cases where, as he had said, boroughs could make out that they had a population large enough to exempt them from total or partial disfranchisement. But if it should be the opinion of the House that the present number was not too great, and that it should decide to retain the whole, Ministers might not think it such a deviation from the principle of the Bill as would induce them to abandon it. On the contrary, they would then be prepared to recommend to the House the manner in which those Members should be disposed of, adhering to their original principle, that no Members should sit for boroughs which came within the line of disfranchisement which they had felt it their duty to draw. The Members thus to be disposed of, should the House so decide, they would recommend to be given in many cases to large towns, but in all to large bodies, adhering as much as possible to that balance of interests which was at present kept up in the country; but he begged to be distinctly understood, that the retaining of the whole number of Members was in no one degree to touch that principle which went to the disfranchisement of the rotten boroughs.

Lord *Stormont* said, that even after the explanation of the noble Lord, the House was still ignorant of what was intended by Ministers as to other parts of the Bill; and in order to put the House in possession of such information, he hoped the noble Lord would answer a few questions. He wished to know whether the additional Members were to be given to towns or counties; and whether they were to be given solely to places in England, Scotland, or Ireland; or to places in the three kingdoms.

Lord *Althorp* wished the noble Lord to recollect to what his observations had applied, when he said the additional Members were to be given to populous towns. He had said, that if after the Government had proposed the number of which they thought the House ought to consist, the House should compel Ministers, by a division, to increase that number, then they would take in populous towns, or populous bodies of constituency, and bestow the elective franchise on them. It was true that he had made use of the words populous towns, and he believed it would be to them principally that such additional Members would be proposed to be given by Government. But the same rule would be followed with respect to the addition which Ministers of themselves would propose, they having for their object to keep up a fair balance between the representation of towns and counties. With respect to the last question put by the noble Lord, he had to state, that the additional Members would be given principally, if not entirely, to England.

Mr. Alderman *Wood* said, that some of the enemies of the Reform Bill, and some persons who, he believed, had been connected with the late Administration, had been in the City that morning, expressing the delight they felt at Ministers having got themselves into confusion by the alteration which they had proposed to make in the Bill. He had himself seen some of these gentlemen, and certainly the expression of their countenances had considerably changed for the better from that picture of dismay and terror which it exhibited on the day of the important division, when their faces were as long as it was possible for human faces to be [" *Name.*"] No, he did not mean to give any name, for that was rather a delicate affair; but as the hon. and learned Gentleman (Sir E. Sugden) had shown so much warmth on the subject, it was probable that he was himself one of the parties. He believed, however, that the Ministers had got into no confusion at all; and he considered the proposed alteration an improvement.

Mr. *Cutlar Ferguson* said, that hon. Members who spoke so warmly on the subject of preserving the proportion of Members for the three kingdoms, did not seem to consider that the proportion between the Representation of Scotland and England had been disturbed by the introduction of the Irish Members. All that Parliament had now to do was, to give Representation wherever it was wanted. He had never seen the necessity of reducing the number of Members in that House, and he did not see that any proposition to preserve the existing number would at all trench upon the principle of the Bill. He hoped that in selecting the places by which the additional Members were to be returned, the claims of Scotland would not be forgotten. There were many places in that country of the greatest importance, to which no Members had been given,—namely, the large town of Inverness, that of Perth, and Dumfries, which with its suburbs contained 15,000 souls. The Scotch county Members were to be reduced from thirty to twenty-eight, and one district of burghs, containing a population of 6,000, was to be disfranchised, though the revenue of Scotland, as compared with England, at the time of the Union, was as one to forty, while it now was as one to six or seven. The hon. and learned member for Weymouth had, for the first time, declared himself a friend to Reform, but not to the extent of the Bill. The hon. Baronet, the member for Tamworth, was also now friendly to it, and thought that Representatives ought to be given to populous towns. And how was this to be done without reducing the close boroughs, or increasing the number of Members, to which all were opposed? The fact was, that many, who now said they were friendly to Reform, had, by refusing to consent to moderate Reform in due time, contributed to bring about this new Bill. Many, some time ago, would have been satisfied with much less; and he, for one, even at the present moment, would have been satisfied with a less extensive Bill. One thing, however, was certain, and even the hon. and learned member for Boroughbridge could not deny it, that all were agreed that the people of the United Kingdom were not fitly Represented. The hon. member for Preston professed himself to be a friend to Reform, and yet his observations were always cheered by those who were the enemies of all Reform. The hon. Member had said, that the people were displeased, because the Reform Bill would not make bread and clothing cheaper. Now, he asked the hon. Member, whether he thought that if the elective franchise were extended to every man in the kingdom, it would make bread cheaper? The hon. Member had said that he had met 200,000 men, all of whom he found opposed to the Reform Bill. Now he (Mr. Ferguson) did not believe there existed 200,000 persons in the kingdom entertaining such sentiments. There were many, no doubt, who thought that it went too far. For his part he had not heard of any who said the Bill was good for nothing because it did not give Universal Suffrage. Persons who held such an opinion, ought not to have the elective franchise. They were too ignorant to have it. Horne Tooke said there were three descriptions of persons who ought not to be intrusted with the elective franchise; namely, the extremely miserable, the extremely dependent, and the extremely ignorant; to which he would add, the extremely selfish —a character that evidently belonged to the friends of the hon. member for Preston. He was decidedly of opinion that the principle of the Bill was approved of by the whole population of the empire.

Sir *R. Peel* thought, that as it was now Wednesday, and the Reform Bill stood for commitment on Monday next, it was important for all parties to know the course which Government proposed to take. In particular he should like to know whether it would be proposed to make any addition, beyond the number contemplated originally in the Bill, of Members to Ireland and Scotland. If that were the case, he hoped the Representatives of England would not permit themselves to be betrayed by a false liberality to acquiesce, without the fullest consideration, in any proposition prejudicial to England. He wished, therefore, to know, whether the additional Representatives were to be distributed among the three parts of the United Kingdom; and whether, while proposing to make an addition to the Representation of Ireland and Scotland, that opportunity was to be taken to deprive England of fifty or sixty Members, which it was now entitled to send to Parliament? Both these questions involved considerations of the greatest importance, which ought to be reserved for separate discussion. He understood Ministers had discovered, that in the original schedules some errors were made with respect to particular boroughs, which did not fall within the principle of the Bill, but which would be disfranchised if the returns on which those schedules were framed were strictly adhered to. Would the noble Lord now state whether he intended to admit the population of parishes as a test by which this disfranchisement was to be regulated; and next, whether Government proposed to take the sense of the House by a division on the question of the reduction of the number of the English Representatives? What he understood the noble Lord (Lord J. Russell) to have said the other night was this —that he did not mean to restore the proportion between the Representation of the different kingdoms established at the time of the Union; that he intended to increase the number of Representatives returned by Scotland and Ireland; yet, finding that there was a strong feeling in the House adverse to the reduction of the number of the English Representatives, he proposed, not to restore the schedule A, or the schedule B, but to make up to England the present amount of Representatives in some way or other. He, and he believed every man in London, had so understood the noble Lord. Gentlemen now proposed to correct the errors in the schedules A and B, and the correction of those errors would of itself tend to restore to England some portion of the Representatives; and by that arrangement there might probably remain to England forty Members less than at present. Now he wished to know, whether that was a question on which the House was to be called upon to declare its opinion by a division? He also wished to know whether it was proposed to enter into the consideration of all these important questions on Monday next; on which day the House was to be informed, for the first time, of the names of several places to which Government proposed to extend the right of Representation?

Lord *Althorp* said, it was intended, in estimating the population of the boroughs, to take the population of all parishes into account which were chiefly town parishes. With respect to the other point mentioned by the right hon. Gentleman, he repeated what he had said before, that the errors in the schedules A and B, which required alteration, were very inconsiderable, and arose out of the imperfect nature of the population returns. But besides that, it was proposed to rectify errors of a different kind; namely, such as arose from the omission of places of large population from the list of those to which it was intended to give the elective franchise; and it was further proposed, in order to keep up the balance between the Representation of counties and towns, that a certain number of Members should be added to the counties. The number of the Members of that House would be thereby increased beyond the original proposition of Government; and upon the whole, the present number would be reduced pretty nearly as was supposed by the right hon. Baronet. It was the intention of Ministers to submit the measure, with these additions, to the House on Monday next; and if the House should think the present number of the House ought to be preserved, he did not think any proposition of that nature would so essentially affect the principle of the Bill, as to induce the Ministers, if it was agreed to, to throw up the measure.

Sir *Robert Peel* said, the Bill was then a perfectly new one. It was a new Bill, and on Monday next the House would be called upon, not to consider its principle, but to go into its details. By some towns it now appeared the privilege of returning Members was to be retained; and, besides having to take this alteration into consideration, the House would also have, on Monday next, to determine whether a parish in which a given town stood, was a town parish, or country one. On Monday next, too, it would be proposed to give the privilege of returning Members to a certain number of new places. Was it consistent with strict justice, that the House should not have four or five days to consider those matters before it was called upon to agree to them? If after four months' deliberation, the Government had proved to be fallible, was it not possible for the House to fall into error, if it should be called upon to decide on these important subjects without full time for consideration?

Lord *Althorp* said, that the Government had no intention to take the House by surprise. A full statement would be made of the alterations proposed by Government on Monday next, and it was his opinion, that there would be found nothing in that statement to render the postponement of the consideration of the Bill at all necessary.

General *Gascoyne*, seeing the noble Paymaster of the Forces now in his place, begged to inform him, that a good deal of misconception had prevailed in the House during his absence as to what fell from him the other night. He had conceived the noble Lord to have stated that the Government would consider of means to preserve the proportion of the Representation of the three kingdoms. As he found that that was not the case, he should persevere in the Motion upon that subject, of which he had given notice.

Lord *John Russell* said, it would not be necessary for him to go into any explanation at that time. He was inclined to think, however, that the gallant General had not so far misunderstood him as he had represented, as he recollected perfectly well the gallant General putting some questions to him on the subject, and, on receiving his answer, said he should still persevere in his intention of moving the instruction to the Committee. The gallant General was at perfect liberty to go on, and when the time came he should be prepared to deliver his sentiments.

The Petition was brought up. On the question that it be laid on the Table,

SIR EDWARD SUGDEN AND THE BOROUGH OF WEYMOUTH.] Sir *Edward Sugden* rose, and addressed the House:—He was understood to complain of the attack which had been made upon him by the hon. and learned member for Waterford, founded upon statements which had appeared in the daily papers, the originals of which the hon. and learned Member, he would venture to say, had not seen. If the hon. and learned Member believed such statements, why did he not, manfully and directly bring forward a charge? He was ready to meet any charge that might be brought against him, but he protested against these covert attacks, founded on statements of which the basest and most scandalous use had been made. It had been asserted that he had not paid his election expenses, and that he had taken improper means of securing a seat in the House, in order to obtain from the Government a judicial situation. That was no new charge, and he threw it back with the contempt which it deserved. All who knew any thing of him knew that he had no desire for judicial station. He wished only to win his way by the regular course of his profession. This he said before the House, and in the face of the world. He could over and over again have had judicial station, but he refused it, because he desired to be independent, and gain his independence by his own professional exertions. Was it right, then, that he should be thus censured? Or, was it likely that he would have had recourse to base means to procure a station which he might have obtained with honour? An answer to a statement of his had appeared in *The Times* of that morning, and he declared, on his honour, that nine-tenths of that answer was scandalously false. He would not trespass further on the time of the House, but merely call on those who imputed to him improper conduct, to come forward in a manly manner, and make a charge against him.

Mr. *O'Connell* said, he had found the hon. and learned Gentleman the advocate of parliamentary corruption, and, as such, he had impugned his conduct. He had been led to take up the subject from the following circumstances:—An individual of the name of Northcote came to him, and stated that he had certain documents which related to the traffic in seats in Parliament, and that he wished to keep his name from the public. He (Mr. O'Connell) refused to hear any communication unless he might give his name and produce the original documents. Mr. Northcote finally consented to this, and then asked whether an individual belonging to the same profession with himself should be allowed to escape, after such a transaction, without animadversion. After this conversation, and the production of the papers, he told Mr. Northcote, unless the subject were brought forward by some one else, he would bring it under the notice of the House. He spoke of the traffic of seats, because he found that the expenses of the election were to be paid out of this traffic in seats, and this he saw in the hand-writing of the hon. and learned Gentleman. He thought it his duty, therefore, to make an allusion to the subject, which he believed was in conformity with the documents. For his part he had considered those documents altogether as public property, and he had, therefore, no hesitation in making use of them in this way, with a view to secure an advantage to the people. As for the hon. and learned Gentleman, he had thought fit to have made use of language which would not have escaped him, had he not presumed that he might safely do so in respect to him, from peculiar circumstances. He had made use of the phrase "boroughmongering," and charged that hon. and learned Member with the advocacy of parliamentary corruption. The phrase and the charge had both been published in the journals of the day, and public papers. The letters written were not disavowed or denied, though the hon. and learned Gentleman stood high in his profession, and had occupied a high station under the late Ministry. Was it not absurd then to call such a state of things the Representation of the people in Parliament? The hon. and learned Gentleman, however, had so called it; and had challenged for this state of things the respect of hon. Members and of the country. What! was this, indeed, Representation of the people, that a man should, in such circumstances, be permitted to talk of vested rights and indemnities? Or hold out that persons had a right to make an outlay of 21,000*l.*, by way of investing so much property in boroughs, reserving the return of one individual free of expense, whilst that party, so secured from all charge, had the boldness to state that a claim for indemnity might arise, on the ground of expense incurred, where none really had been incurred? He felt it impossible to restrain himself within very measured language, when he found the hon. and learned Member, this evening, instead of meeting the charge fairly and boldly, and denying his share of the correspondence, which he never yet had denied, resorting to a defence which was characterized by a spirit of low chicanery and artifice, calculated, as the hon. and learned Member had hoped, to conceal that which every one might see lurked behind the curtain—the hon. and learned Gentleman never had yet denied—would he now deny—the correspondence attributed to him? Would he join him now, and show his sincerity, by asking for inquiry on this subject? If he would do so, he would give him the opportunity, for most assuredly would he bring forward a motion upon the subject.

Sir *Edward Sugden* remarked, that the foundation of the complaint he had made against the hon. and learned Gentleman, had only been considerably increased by what had fallen from him within the last few minutes. The attack he now sustained had been made advisedly. Indeed, the hon. and learned Member had stated the intention to attack him, and he had, as the House observed, performed that promise, by imputing to him the advocacy of corruption in the borough system, whilst only doing that which he felt himself conscientiously called on as a Member of that House, to do. If the House allowed the observations just now made use of, and the language to be unreproved which had just escaped from the hon. and learned Gentleman's lips, then indeed he would for once admit that a Reform in that House had become necessary, though in a very different respect from that contended for by the hon. and learned Gentleman. As to the letters which he had been called on to disavow, he confessed he was unable to do so completely till he had them in his possession, from the circumstance of his letters being written, at least nineteen times out of twenty, in Court between different proceedings, and it was therefore impossible for him to take copies of them. From expressions, however, in them he felt persuaded, he could not have written those letters imputed to him. Having, however, no copies of his own letters, he would now invite the hon. and learned Gentleman to bring forward the originals, and from the inspection of them, he felt he should clearly prove, as he had already stated, that the whole of the charges brought against him by the newspapers, and by the hon. and learned Gentleman, were totally false. If he declined doing so, then it would appear that he did so decline, not out of a wish to do justice between him and his accusers, but because the hon. and learned Gentleman had said, he would make him the subject of attack in that House. He confessed he was sorry to hear the hon. and learned Gentleman league himself with persons out of doors to heap unfounded obloquy on other Members of that House. He would repeat, in contradiction to the hon. and learned Member's assertion, that he paid the whole of his election expenses in 1826, when, though not contested, those expenses were very considerable, and also the whole of those incurred in 1830. He declared upon his honour, that all the charges and insinuations made against him on the score of those expenses were totally false. He had already denied these charges as publicly as they had been made, and he would then add, upon his honour as a Gentleman, that he did not think, though disabled, from the want of copies, to speak more decidedly, that he either had written, or could have written, the letters alluded to. He doubted the existence of those letters, notwithstanding the hon. and learned Gentleman said he had seen them; for he certainly would not pay him the compliment to say he believed that assertion. That hon. and learned Gentleman had admitted and justified the attack now made on him, though it not only originated with the hon. and learned Gentleman, but was made totally without provocation. The advocates of Universal Suffrage and Vote by Ballot might hereafter expect the same treatment as he had now met with from the hon. and learned Member, wavering on those great subjects as he appeared to be at present. As, on the one hand, he had always been averse to courting a quarrel, so, on the other hand, he should always be anxious to prove that he never would flinch from maintaining his character there, or elsewhere, in the manner that it behoved every Gentleman to support it.

Mr. *Hume* considered the hon. and learned Gentleman who last spoke, had violated order by the allusion made to the doubts he entertained of his hon. and learned friend's veracity, when he asserted he would not believe what his hon. and learned friend had asserted.

The *Speaker* had heard nothing which he could consider disorderly, in respect to the assertion by the hon. and learned Member, that he could not pay the hon. and learned member for Waterford the compliment to believe what he had asserted relative to letters, of the alleged contents of which he had before expressed his doubts; which only amounted to this, that he would not believe those letters to have been written by him until he inspected the hand-writing. He could not refrain from expressing, however, a wish that the interference of the hon. member for Middlesex had taken place earlier. Great latitude had been, and, in his mind, ought to be given to hon. Members when called on to defend their characters from attacks. If, however, he were desired to give his opinion whether disorder had been apparent in this case, he should say yes; but, if he were called on further to explain his view of it, he should say it had its origin with the hon. and learned member for Waterford.

Lord *J. Russell* was of opinion that the subject was one which required further discussion and inquiry. Although the statement which had appeared in the public prints did not satisfy him that the hon. and learned member for Weymouth had been justly charged, yet on the other hand, the denial had not been such as to remove all impression from his mind that the hon. and learned Gentleman was wholly free from the imputation which had been cast upon him. He hoped, therefore, that the hon. and learned member for Waterford would bring the subject forward and he should be exceedingly happy if, on that occasion, the hon. and learned member for Weymouth should be able to give such explanations of his conduct as might relieve him entirely from the imputation.

Sir *E. Sugden* wished to know what it was that the noble Lord desired to have examined before a Committee of Parliament? Was it if a seat had been obtained in that House by payment of money, or by nomination? If the noble Lord's sensitiveness was such that he could not bear to see men come into that House in any other way than was strictly legal and constitutional, let the noble Lord not make a personal attack upon him, but fairly look these abuses in the face, and endeavour to adopt some mode of getting rid of them. Among other instances of men getting into that House without having recourse to the free votes of a numerous constituency, was that of the members for the borough of Bletchingley, into which he thought an inquiry ought to be made, as well as into many other boroughs.

Lord *J. Russell* denied that he had made any personal attack upon the hon. and learned Member. What he had said was solely from a wish to see the character of Members vindicated. As long as he continued a Member of that House, he thought he had a right to endeavour to make the laws which governed it be properly pursued. One of those laws was, that the sale of seats there, neither directly or indirectly, should be allowed. The hon. and learned Member called on him to see that the principle of that law was carried into effect. Why, he was engaged in doing so, to the utmost of his ability, at that moment. The hon. and learned Gentleman then referred to the borough of Bletchingley, and said that some inquiry ought to be made into the manner in which the seats of that borough were disposed of. If the hon. and learned Member would take the trouble of looking into schedule A of a certain Bill that was now before the House, he would find, that however the seats for that borough had hitherto been disposed of, all opportunity of their being again made the subject of sale would be most effectually destroyed, and, therefore, if the hon. and learned Gentleman was really anxious for the purity of that House, let him assist in destroying that practice which was now the subject of so much complaint. The opportunity was now given him, and he might at once prove himself the friend of the purity of that House, by voting for a measure which he had as yet opposed, making himself as celebrated by supporting Reform as he had hitherto been by opposing it.

Mr. *Hudson Gurney* observed, that as the noble Lord had been engaged in a contest for counties, and in contests for open boroughs, and now held a seat for a nomination borough, he must have the means of affording some information upon every kind of corruption, and especially with regard to the exercise of patronage in nomination boroughs.

Petition to be laid on the Table.

CUSTOM HOUSE AND EXCISE OATHS.] Lord *Nugent*, in rising to introduce his motion for bringing in a Bill upon the subject of Oaths, said, he should be able to show, on the best authority, that these Excise and Custom House Oaths were useless, and he thought there could be no doubt that they were worse than useless. The number of oaths taken in the Excise Offices and at the Custom House were most numerous. At one of these departments the oaths amounted within the space of twelve months to the enormous number of 101,596. That was in the Customs; but in the Excise they amounted in the same period to the still more monstrous number of 194,612. When this circumstance was made known to the Treasury, their Lordships addressed both these Boards, inquiring into the necessity of taking these oaths. He would shew the ground on which that rested from the fourth Report of the Commissioners who had been appointed to inquire into the Revenue. That Report stated—" It has been the practice of the Legislature, and adopted in various systems of regulation, in cases where it has been difficult to obtain the object in view, either from the information or from the superintendence of others, to endeavour to attain it by operating upon the conscience of the acting party himself, and by compelling him to take an oath, either as to the truth of a particular fact, or that he has fulfilled, or will fulfil, the stipulations required of him. This species of security has been carried to a great extent, and particularly in the Custom House laws; and to such purposes have oaths been applied, that in many instances they have lost their intended use, and no protection whatever to the revenue is derived from them. It frequently happens at the Custom House, that oaths are required to be taken by persons who are almost necessarily ignorant of the truth of the facts to which they swear: it follows, therefore, that the oath in these cases is considered as a mere matter of form, and neither the person who administers, nor he who takes it, attaches to it the character of the sacred obligation which is entered into. To require such a ceremony, without discrimination, is most mischievous; it obtains no safety for the revenue, and it weakens the influence of this most solemn asseveration in those cases to which it is properly applicable." In the replies to the letters which the Treasury addressed to the Custom House and Excise Boards, it was curious to observe, that the most complete concurrence was observable in them. The Bill which it was his object to introduce to the House was, with respect to many of its clauses at least, drawn up on the authority of the Solicitors to these two Boards. He would now state generally the result of the Bill. The Excise proposed to abolish the majority of the oaths now taken in that department, and the Custom House concurred in that recommendation. In one of the Boards it was proposed to abolish ninety-two out of the ninety-four oaths now prescribed, and both boards recommended the substitution of a Declaration with a pecuniary penalty attached to its violation. In the cases where the name of the Deity was now appealed to, and unhappily in most of them appealed to in vain, it was proposed to substitute a Declaration with a penalty of 100*l.*, if that Declaration should be untruly made. By this means the revenue would be better protected, for now perjury, as far as Excise and Custom House oaths were concerned, could hardly ever be punished, and was, in fact, hardly ever made the subject of prosecution; while, under the proposed Bill, those Boards would have the security of a pecuniary penalty, which might be promptly and, he believed, easily recovered. He moved for leave to bring in a Bill for the purposes which he had thus briefly stated.

Mr. *O'Connell* congratulated the country on this Motion having been brought forward by a member of the Government, as the first step towards the abolition of the system of unnecessary swearing. He hoped that this abolition would extend to the oaths taken at the Universities, as well as at the Excise and the Custom House. It was a most laudable measure, only it ought to be followed up, and it should have his hearty support.

Leave was given to bring in the Bill.

STATE OF THE COUNTY OF CLARE.] Mr. *O'Brien*, in introducing the Motion of which he had given notice to the consideration of the House, felt compelled to make a short statement of the motives that had induced him to bring it forward. The county of Clare was now in a state of confusion, bordering on anarchy, and he wished, therefore, to call on the Ministers to say whether they intended such a state of things should continue, or whether they meant to take some active and efficient measures to cause the laws to be respected? At present there was no security for property, and very little for personal safety, in that county. If this were permitted to continue unchecked, he feared it would soon spread into all the other counties of Ireland. The excesses that had taken place in the county of Clare within the last six months were hardly exceeded by those which afflict a country during a civil war. He would read to the House an extract from one of the Irish Papers, detailing some of the atrocities lately committed. The hon. Member accordingly read the following passage from the *Limerick Chronicle*. " A stern sense of public duty now impels us to assume a more serious office, and with concern we have to proclaim the awful and astounding fact, that in the county of Clare, heretofore one of the most tranquil and well-affected in Ireland, there exists at present neither security for human life, nor protection for private property, at any hour, either of the day or night! It is no less notorious than true, that a broad and deep laid conspiracy has been formed against the principal gentry and landholders of that county, who from fear of the assassin are afraid to walk their demesnes by day, and whose houses, towards evening, assume the appearance of fortresses in a state of siege. Travelling the high road is equally unsafe, and many of the country families have deserted their mansions, and are now come into town for that refuge and protection which their native domiciles are unable to afford them. Incendiary notices have been served upon the proprietors of ground, to let out and dispose of, only at certain prices which the secret dictator fixes, under penalty of death for disobedience. This mysterious personage, with the terrific signature of Terry Alts, issues his mandate, and woe to him who presumes to neglect it! The veriest Eastern tyrant never exercised over his obsequious minions a more grinding and formidable despotism than the fearful name of Terry Alts contrives to uphold in the county of Clare. No peasant will dare, at his peril, to work for the landlord who is denounced by this ruffian legislator, whose vulgar, bloody, and ill-spelt scroll has more actual sway in the county, than a volume of his Majesty's Statutes. But what is the result of this strange and unnatural state of society? Why, intimidation,—not merely general, but universal; and of a character the most terrific and appalling! Before the noon-day sun vast tracts of land are maliciously turned up with the spade, and thus an irreparable mischief is done to the property of those who are obnoxious to the Rockites,—walls and gates are levelled to the ground,—and cattle hunted to death at night over hedges briars, and fastnesses,—the usual boundaries and landmarks are destroyed,—houses attacked, burglaries committed, and a most extensive seizure of fire-arms effected!—These, however, are minor offences compared with the murders and assassinations of the last six months, for which not one of the sanguinary authors has been, to this day, brought to the bar of justice." The statement there made was confirmed by a letter which he had recently received from a gentleman of large property in the county, an extract of which he would also take the liberty of reading. "The organization of this county by the insurgents is complete, and I much fear that nothing but an increased civil and military force, aided by strong legislative enactments, will now be adequate to suppress the evil. You may form a judgment, when I mention that they meet in bodies of 4,000 or 5,000 men, and appoint 300 or 400 to dig up the ground, and station the rest as videttes throughout the country, to give notice of any force coming to disperse them. I fear that the Insurrection Act, which would only apply to cases after sunset, would be inadequate in this country to meet the mischief, as the most daring attacks and the most shocking outrages are committed principally in the noon-day. They now respect neither life nor property; in fact, the country people are so confederated, and deeply implicated in crime, that they are now desperate, and dread the worst." One of the worst features in these proceedings was, that no evidence could be obtained that would enable the Government to bring home the crime to the offenders in a Court of Justice. No man among all those that were assembled could be induced to implicate his fellows, and, in consequence, the ordinary laws became of no avail. This was carried to such an extent, that though many of the persons who had been guilty of these disturbances were known, though some even of those who had committed murders, horrible and atrocious murders, were more than suspected, the Magistrates were unable to apprehend them on the charge, as they could not possibly procure legal evidence of their guilt. He did not mean to accuse the Government of any untimely supineness on this subject, and he was willing to acknowledge the humane motives which had occasioned the visit of the Marquis of Anglesey to that part of the country; but he feared that the Government had mistaken the means by which these proceedings were to be put down. There was now no check upon the outrages committed in the county of Clare. He would mention one instance of this. There was near his father's residence a house that was considered to be one of the best barricaded houses in the county, and two policemen had been put into the house to guard it. At noon-day that house was attacked; an entrance was forced, and thirteen stand of arms taken from it; and though the peasantry of the neighbourhood, the tenants of the gentleman whose house was plundered, were the witnesses of this scene of outrage, and though the military arrived within a short time, there was not one man who would give information against the offenders, and not even one who would tell the direction in which they had proceeded. On a former occasion, when the disturbances had not been so extensive as they were now, the Insurrection Act had been asked for, and it had been effective; but he almost feared, that if it should now be employed, it would be found insufficient. He knew that it was the fashion in London to attribute these insurrections to the misconduct of the Clare landlords; but he felt warranted in asserting, that that supposition was utterly unjustifiable. The Clare landlords were not worse than others, and he believed that, in many instances, they were more considerate. They only took half the sum which was offered them as rent for their land; and such was the competition to obtain land in that county, that almost any sum was offered for it. The Clare landlords, however, did not wish to oppress their tenantry; and they, of course, took into their consideration the impossibility of getting such rents paid. He was not there, however, to defend the Clare landlords, though, to ascertain the truth of the fact he had just stated, he was willing that a Committee should be appointed; and he was sure that its report would establish the character of the Clare landlords. He was willing to admit that rent, generally speaking, was too high in Ireland; but while the competition was so excessive he did not see how that could be remedied. He believed that the cause of the disturbances was to be found in the poverty of the people, and that that poverty was occasioned by their too great numbers as compared with the means of their employment. Also he believed, that in the county of Clare fuel had been added to the discontents, by the effect of political and religious dissension, and that the impunity of the first outrages had been the cause of others. Under these circumstances, he asked the Ministers what it was their intention to do? He thought that measures of vigour were required from them in the first instance; but he would add, that these measures of vigour must be followed by measures of relief. He thought that these measures of relief were to be found in emigration and colonization, and he might add, too, in a qualified system of Poor-laws. In carrying these measures into effect, the Government would receive every assistance from the gentlemen of the county, who would most heartily concur in any plan that would put a stop to those outrages, which compelled them to fly for safety to the towns, their own residences being unsafe, and quite insufficient to protect them from the violence of insurrection. There was one gentleman in the county who would readily give up to the Government, for ten years, a large quantity of land, if they would undertake to colonise it, and during that period he would surrender all claim to rent of any description. Having thus called the attention of the Government to this subject, he (Mr. O'Brien) should not detain the House further, than by moving for a copy of the Memorial addressed by the Grand Jury of the county of Clare to the Irish Government, on the subject of the distresses in that county.

Mr. *Stanley* said, that as the hon. Member had moved for a copy of a paper, to the production of which there could not possibly be the slightest objection, he understood the hon. Member's object to be, to introduce the state of the county of Clare to the special notice of the House. He (Mr. Stanley) was far from denying the extent of the grievances of which the hon. Member complained. He acknowledged that the attacks on both persons and property were lamentable, and that the difficulty of obtaining evidence of these crimes was as great as the hon. Member had described it to be, so that the crimes remained unchecked by the operations of the law, and by all the powers of the Government. The gravamen of the charge, however, against the Government seemed to be, that on the first complaint of local disorder, the Government had not at once overthrown the constitutional rules of law, and had not had recourse to the severe provisions of the Insurrection Act. He was far from saying, that it would not be necessary ultimately to have recourse to that measure; but nothing except the most urgent necessity could justify it; and if the Government should be compelled to have recourse to it at last, it would deserve the credit of not having adopted such an extreme measure until all others had been found unavailing. The first step which the Government had taken was, to increase the military force, to augment the amount of the constabulary, and to send into the county four stipendiary Magistrates to administer justice; as it was thought that persons unconnected with the county, and consequently uninfluenced by any of the feelings of the resident magistracy, would show a proper energy in the administration of justice. In that opinion the Government seemed to have been justified by what had taken place, when, according to the hon. Member's own statement, the gentlemen of the county deserted their houses, and fled to the towns for protection, setting, as he must say, no bright example of self-devotion to the maintenance of the authority of the laws, in defence of which the country had a right to expect they would stand forward, not only at the expense of the loss of their ease and comfort, but at the peril of their lives. Now, although it was quite true, that the Government had received information from many quarters respecting the disorganized state of society in that county, it did not consider it advisable that the magistracy of Clare should be armed with such extraordinary powers, until the Lord Lieutenant had, by personal inspection, satisfied himself of the absolute necessity of applying so rigorous a measure as a remedy for the existing evils. The Lord Lieutenant, not satisfied with receiving reports from a distance of the state of the county, determined to assure himself, by personal inspection, of the real nature of the evils to which it was necessary to apply a remedy. The Government would, in a great measure, be guided by the opinion of the Lord Lieutenant, founded upon his own personal knowledge, whether it would be necessary to come to that House for extraordinary powers to remedy the existing evils. He confessed that the state of the county of Clare was one of the most lamentable that could be conceived; and not the least lamentable feature of it was the utter disorganization of society, whether that arose from political or other causes. The hon. Member said, that political and religious excitement had hitherto produced commotion; but at the present moment the disturbances were certainly connected with no political or religious feeling, for it was a war of the lower classes against the higher. He would not enter into the question as to whose fault it was, or whose conduct was the cause, that the whole of the lower classes were in direct hostility to the upper. The hon. Gentleman had confessed, that, in his opinion, the rents were too high, and that the distress of the lower classes was the cause of the disturbances; and yet all the remedy that he proposed was, that, at the first blush—at the first appearance of disorder—the Government should apply the extraordinary power given by the Insurrection Act. He complained that that Act had not been put in force six weeks ago—that the Government had not applied, as an ordinary and common remedy of the law, the extraordinary powers of the Insurrection Act. The hon. Gentleman told the House that he believed the Insurrection Act would not now be sufficient, and called upon the Government to apply some vigorous measures. They must, indeed, be vigorous measures, if he was not satisfied with the vigour of the Insurrection Act. The hon. Gentleman said, that that Act would not now be sufficient, because it did not apply to offences committed in the open day. Here the hon. Gentleman was misinformed. The Insurrection Act did apply to officers committed in the middle of the day; it did not create any new offence—it did not make that an offence in the middle of the day which was not so at present—but it gave an extraordinary power of adjudicating upon offences, by dispensing with the attendance of a Grand Jury, or a Petty Jury, and inflicting the punishment of transportation, on the finding of an Assistant Barrister and the magistracy. If that measure should be found necessary, the hon. Gentleman would perceive that his Majesty's Government were disposed to adopt all necessary means to remedy the existing evils. He was reluctant, particularly in the present state of the House, to enter more fully into the condition of Clare. The Government would be provided with the best and fullest information; and whenever it should be necessary to adopt more vigorous measures, they would be prepared to communicate to the House such information, including, of course, the paper for which the hon. Gentleman moved—as would justify them in proposing the adoption of so extraordinary and unconstitutional a measure as the Insurrection Act. He would not enter into a consideration of the ulterior measures alluded to by the hon. Gentleman, as emigration, the colonization of waste lands, and particularly the important and delicate question of a modified system of Poor-laws. On the latter point he would only say, that as it appeared to him, a modified system of Poor-laws could in no possible way, and to no possible extent, remove the present evils of the county of Clare, which, as the hon. Gentleman told the House arose from the poverty of the people, caused by their want of employment. That could not be relieved by a modified system of Poor-laws, which could only provide that all who were out of work should be supported at the expense of the parish. This must lower rather than raise the miserable pittance which the poor of Clare now gained when they were employed, and must introduce the abuses which were complained of in this country as to settlement and other points. The Government, he would state, in conclusion, trusted that the measures which it had in contemplation would suffice for the pacification of the disturbed districts, and these measures they were resolved to try before they had recourse to the Insurrection Act, which was so unconstitutional in its nature, that the application of it could only be justified by the most absolute necessity.

Major *Macnamara* concurred with the right hon. Secretary in the opinion that nothing short of the most positive necessity could justify Government in placing such tremendous and unconstitutional powers in the hands of any body of men as would be conferred by the Insurrection Act. He deeply lamented the state of disorganization into which society had been reduced in the county of Clare; but he sincerely believed, that the evil was not deep-rooted, and he looked upon it as of a nature which admitted of a gentler remedy than some, in their overweening apprehension, were anxious to apply. The people laboured under the most terrible privations; and for disturbances, which had their origin in the general distress, the remedy which would naturally suggest itself was, in his mind, the amelioration of that miserable condition which drove the people into acts of desperation. He trusted, therefore, that in the measures which the right hon. Secretary intended to propose, the first consideration would be, the distressed state of the peasantry of Clare, and the fact that by this distress they had been goaded into that unfortunate breach of the laws of society, and of the laws of the land in which they were then engaged; and that remembering this, his Majesty's Government would diligently inquire into the causes of that distress, observing critically how far it might be calculated to arise from the peculiar state of the social system in Ireland, or the peculiar circumstances of the country—and how far from the defects, or from the mal-administration of the law; and that then the measures they submitted to the House would be addressed to the removal of those causes in which the distress was ascertained to have its origin.

Mr. *Maurice O'Connell* was likewise of opinion, that the causes of the evil, which was of a transitory nature, lay on the surface of society. While he stated this, however, he was at the same time bound to confirm the statement of the hon. Members who had already spoken respecting the deplorable condition in which the county he had the honour to represent was at that moment plunged. It was perfectly true that outrages deeply to be lamented had taken place, and equally true it was that the peasantry was in a state of fearful organization. This dreadful state of things, however, he attributed to the distress under which the peasantry of Clare had so long groaned, but under which they could not be expected to succumb for ever. The man who deemed they could, knew, indeed, little of human nature. The distress, he contended, had originated in that complication of evils to which the Irish peasant was exposed — the tithe system—the oppressive mode of letting the land—the draining of the country's wealth for the benefit of absentees—the attempt at proselytism, under the guise of education—the Grand Jury Laws—and, above all, the maladministration of the laws in general. In addition to those evils, which might be supposed to press upo the Irish peasant in every part of the country, there were particular evils that affected the peasants of Clare. They had been exposed to the most galling persecution, in consequence of the independent vote they had given in 1828; and there was no county in Ireland, in which religious bigotry assumed a more offensive form. On more than one property—but especially on the estate of a Mr. Synge, whose name had, he believed, been before heard in that House—the tenants were persecuted, unless they consented that their children should attend the Protestant schools, and abandon the religion of their fathers. The conduct of the Magistrates, too, with scarcely an exception, was oppressive, and in many instances most atrocious. To such people, he contended, it was most improper to commit such great—such unconstitutional powers as those which would be vested in them by the Insurrection Act. They had already abused the more limited powers which had been intrusted to them. Was that a reason for investing them with other powers which scarcely knew any bounds? He could, if necessary, detail many instances of oppression and improper conduct upon the part of the Magistrates in Clare. There was one man amongst them, who was both a Justice of Peace, and a Chief Constable of Police. He, in fact, conveniently combined the two characters. He seized the wretched peasant as a police constable—as a Magistrate he committed him to prison. In more than one instance it happened that people were carried to gaol on informations that were not sworn; and in one he had to state, that a Magistrate actually descended from the judgment seat, to beat the unfortunate peasant he had caused to be dragged before him. In another district of Clare, there was another Magistrate to whom he wished particularly to allude. This Magistrate sat in one room, but a higher authority sat in another room, to which he was compelled to refer, and under whose authority he was bound to decide. He might hear the case himself, but before he attempted to decide upon it, he was obliged to ask his lady what he should do. He stated this upon the authority of Mr. Malachy Duff, who was a most respectable gentleman, and certainly would not deceive him. From what he had seen and knew, therefore, he could not vote for intrusting increased powers to the Magistrates of Clare. Until of late, that county had been virgin. It never, even in the worst of times, had been stained by insurrection, much less reduced to its present lamentable state. Much of the spirit of hostility to a certain class of the gentry which prevailed, he attributed to Mr. Synge and his proselytising schools. Apprehensions that disturbances would occur had been long since entertained. Four years ago, a memorial from the landowners was transmitted to the Government, explaining that the seeds of evil had been sown in Clare. The Government acknowledged the receipt of the Memorial, but nothing was done, and yet in that Memorial it was distinctly stated, that the organization of the peasantry had commenced. There was no interference, and, consequently, the spirit of insurrection spread through the land, until the present state of things was induced, under which neither life nor property was safe. And now, indeed, at the eleventh hour, Government came forward to legislate under circumstances of difficulty, for that which, four years ago presented none. Had it been then attended to, a most lamentable effusion of human blood might have been spared. The insurgents in Clare now called themselves Terry-Alts—the origin of the name was this:—Terry-Alt was an old pensioner—an honest and loyal man—but he got into a quarrel with an agent named Stevenson, (it was understood) about not sending his child to a Protestant school, and Terry thought proper to beat the agent. The quarrel was merely personal; but other peasants, to whom this agent was obnoxious, thought proper to serve him with a threatening notice, and, in a spirit of jest, signed it with the name of "Terry-Alt, the pensioner," of whose personal prowess, it was presumed, he must retain an uneasy recollection. He believed that the Marquis of Anglesey's visit to Clare had been productive of great harm. If it had not been for that, he thought it probable the peasantry would have given up their arms. A deputy from one of the parishes had waited on him and Mr. Steele, and promised that all the arms should be given up at a particular spot. He had no doubt this would have been done, and that the example would have been followed by other parishes; but when the man heard of Lord Anglesey's expected visit, he said he could be no longer answerable for the performance of the promise, as the peasantry had universally declared they would not lay down their arms until Lord Anglesey did something for them. Mr. Steele and he had, however, spent a day and a night in endeavouring to get them to deliver up the arms. They partly succeeded; and, with the help of God, he trusted all the arms would be eventually given up. He hoped that Government would not, because there happened to be a calm at present, suppose that the gale would not rise again, but would endeavour to ameliorate the condition of the people. What he considered would mainly contribute to the pacification of the country was the letting of the land to the people upon fair terms, the preventing jobbing in the making of roads, a change in the Grand Jury Laws, and the Tithe System, and in the Administration of Justice. He thanked the House for listening to him so patiently, and assured them his statement was not overcharged. He most sincerely hoped, that the measures of the right hon. Secretary would restore the peace of the country.

Mr. *Ruthven* defended the character of the Irish Magistracy generally, and thought that any instance of individual misconduct should be referred to the Lord Chancellor of Ireland. He regretted to believe that vigorous measures were necessary to suppress the insurrection in those southern counties, and he was reluctantly induced to believe that the Insurrection Act was perhaps necessary. As for the remedies for the prevalent distress, the Poor-laws, he was persuaded, must be introduced in Ireland sooner or latter; not in the shape in which they were now in England, but in an improved form, similar to what they were in principle when they were originally passed.

Colonel *Trench* regretted to hear so distressing an account of the state of the peasantry in the county of Clare, to which state of distress the hon. Gentleman who had entered into a detail of it, had attributed the recent outrages and disturbances that had spread in that county. But he knew that cases of as flagrant a description had taken place in other parts of Ireland, where no such cause prevailed. He believed that they might be traced to the system of agitation which had unhappily been resorted to. He could point out instances of insubordination to the laws, instances of acts of violence having been committed where no pretence of distress could be found. He would name two instances where such misconduct was manifested by the people against a landlord who had been invariably kind and benevolent to his tenants and the people in the neighbourhood, and against a Clergyman who had equally a claim to the gratitude of the people around the place where he resided. As an instance of the means which were had recourse to for provoking agitation and stirring up insurrection, he would mention what lately occurred in Queen's county. At Montrath a gentleman presented himself to a public meeting, and made a long and inflammatory speech, of which he would read a short passage. "Those gentry say, and say truly, that if the Union was repealed, tithes would be abolished; but if they think that by prolonging that measure they will secure tithes, they will be miserably deceived. Tithes are virtually abolished. I never will again pay a penny of tithes. Understand me, my friends,—I say again I will never pay tithe; the law, then, empowers the tithe-owner to take my property and sell it. I calculate on being esteemed by my countrymen, and I think the Irishman does not live who will buy my goods; and if the tithe-owner appropriates them to his own use, I am sure my fellow-parishioners will compensate me, and I promise them in return, that if the goods of any of them be brought to sale, I will not buy them, and that I will assist to compensate them. We will act as the society of Friends do; we will be a Society of friends. I will transgress no law; I will pay no tithe, but I will not obstruct the law. I am certain many people and many parishes will follow my example; may I not, then, say tithe is virtually abolished?" Such language was calculated to excite the people to whom it was addressed, and render them discontented. Although distress had in some cases caused the peasantry to commit excesses and acts at which every well-constituted mind shuddered, yet he was persuaded, as he had before stated, that to other causes those acts of outrage might be traced; and if the same influence were exerted, still similar acts would follow.

Mr. *Stanley* said, that if he was right in supposing that the person alluded to by the member for Clare (Mr. M. O'Connell) was Mr. Tomkins Brew, he could assure the hon. Gentleman that Mr. Brew, though he had been a Police Officer, and was now a Justice of the Peace, had never held the two offices together. If it could be proved that he had been guilty of the very improper conduct with which he was charged, he should be dismissed without delay.

Mr. *Dominick Browne* wished it to be understood that there was no connexion whatever between the disturbances in Clare and the famine at present spreading through some parts of the west of Ireland. The people in that part, who were suffering the most grievous distress, and in whose behalf an appeal was now being made to the benevolence of the English nation, were not in a state of insurrection.

Mr. *Brownlow* said, that whenever he heard of movements in Ireland, such as had been described by the hon. member for Ennis, insurrectionary though they might be called, he invariably attributed them to the excitement of intolerable distress; and strange as it might sound to English ears, he did not think there was a people in the world more easily governed than the Irish, if they were not goaded into disorders by oppression and misery. The distress which prevailed in every part of that country was such as would not be endured in England for a single day. He believed that it was mainly attributable to the intolerable exactions which were imposed upon the people in the shape of rent. Although Clare suffered cruelly in that respect, he well knew that other parts of Ireland were scarcely treated more favourably. The question now was, what was to be done to remedy the disorders which undeniably prevailed? Was it to be supposed that the Insurrection Act would prove an efficient remedy? Could the distresses of a starving people be mitigated by a rigorous and unconstitutional law? He hoped the House would pause before it acted on the suggestion of the hon. member for Ennis, if he had rightly understood that Gentleman to suggest the revival of that law. Measures of relief would be far more appropriate and more efficacious. No people on the face of the earth were more willing to labour than the peasantry of Ireland for their subsistence. They only wanted employment; they asked for means of obtaining food; they would be satisfied with a remuneration for their exertions which would enable them and their families to exist. They had a right to relief from the produce of that soil which they cultivated. He hoped, that the House would pause ere measures so harsh as those recommended were resorted to. He trusted that they would not be applied. There was no necessity for it. He would strongly recommend the immediate institution of a system of Poor-laws into that country. It was vain to tell him, that the exports of Ireland were becoming more valuable—that the imports were increasing—that the revenue was improving—and that these and other symptoms of national improvement were not to be denied. But he would reply, that while those signs of prosperity were to be observed, the condition of the mass of the people was fast deteriorating. To use the language of Doctor Doyle, in a pamphlet of great ability and interest, which he had recently published, the great body of the people were in a state of rapid transition from wretchedness to ruin. He admitted, that the people of England had a right to say to the Irish landlords that their soil was abundantly productive, and their revenues abundantly ample, and that they could well provide for the subsistence of their people from the resources of their own country, without coming to this country to beg for their relief. But, at the same time he hoped, that in the present appalling distress, the benevolence of the people of England would not be appealed to in vain, and that the enactment of Poor-laws would prevent the necessity of any such appeal hereafter.

Mr. *Owen O'Connor* had no doubt that the disturbances were caused by distress, for the Irish were the most suffering and distressed people in the whole world.

Mr. *O'Connell* had not intended to have troubled the House on the present occasion, but he could not refrain from adding one sentence to what he had said at other times, when the distresses of Ireland had come under their consideration. He was opposed on every ground to the introduction of the Insurrection Act into that country. An Act of that coercive nature might be a very good and effectual method for quelling disturbances and riots at the moment, but it ever left a sting behind it, in the bosoms of the peasantry, who would be readier to join in any subsequent insurrectionary movement from having suffered under the arbitrary oppression of such an Act. He entirely concurred in what had fallen from the right hon. Gentlemen on the other side, with respect to the real cause of the disturbances now existing in the county of Clare. They were not the result of any political feeling, but the sole and only cause of those disturbances was poverty—grinding, hopeless poverty—and they had the additional stimulus to complaint, from seeing the produce of the country sent out of Ireland, to be sold for the benefit of the absentees, to the amount of 210,000*l.* a-year, not one farthing of which ever returned to them. He had been himself a long time opposed to the introduction of Poor-laws into that country, as he was aware of the inconveniences and evils with which they were attended. But in respect to Ireland, it had become a question of life and death, and he believed that the enactment of a legal provision for the poor, out of the produce of the soil, ought no longer to be delayed. The opposition of the people in some disturbed parts of Ireland to the exaction of tithes had been much spoken of; but he would ask, did Gentlemen think that the present system of tithes could continue? The people, for the support of the religion in which they believed, paid willingly for one Church, and the laws compelled them to pay for another with which they had nothing further to do than to support it at a vast expense. There were thus two funds in Ireland which ought to be made available for the support of the poor—one, the excessive income of the Church; the other the excessive rent of the absentees. While he was member for the county of Clare, he had made but one application for a gentleman to be put in the commission of the peace. That gentleman was a Mr. Bridgeman, a person in all respects qualified to be a Magistrate; but the late Chancellor had not condescended even to return an answer to this application. Notwithstanding what had been said of the respectability of the four stipendiary Magistrates in Clare, to whom the enforcement of the Insurrection Act would be intrusted, should it be put into operation in that county, he could assure the right hon. Secretary for Ireland that two of the four had been insolvents, and that people said, with what justice he did not know, that one of those gentlemen had not undergone a clean white-washing. But be the character of the Magistrates what it might, the powers given them by that Act were such as no man ought to possess. The necessary consequence of its operation was, to render the notion of constitutional law a matter of ridicule with the people. It turned the Court of Justice into a Court Martial, with all the arbitrary severity, but with none of the honour, of the Military Court.

Colonel *Trench* begged to correct a misapprehension into which the hon. and learned member for Waterford had fallen, as to what he had said of the causes of the Clare disturbances. He had not attributed those riots to the existence of any political feeling in that county, but he had, in talking of the disturbances which arose from political feeling, alluded to other parts of the country where the condition of the people, as far as related to food and the other necessaries of life, was not such as to lead them to become insurgents from causes of poverty.

Mr. *Leader* said, there was much reason to apprehend that the disturbance now prevailing in Clare would extend itself to districts only separated from it by the Shannon—districts in which there were 1,000 square miles without resident proprietors, and of which the produce was devoted to swell the revenues of absentees. There was no one, who paid the slightest attention to the altered state of the resources of Ireland, who must not be fully aware that those resources had of late years fearfully diminished; if the trade in provisions had increased, the price had fallen, and the linen trade might almost be considered at an end. In fact, at the present moment, the exports of Ireland might be looked on as reduced to the single article of corn, which annually amounted to between 2,000,000 and 3,000,000 quarters—that was the sum total of export to which the labours of 8,000,000 of human beings were to be directed, and he might add, to that alone. In such a state of things, he could only look to measures of amelioration. It was the duty of the Government to adopt measures of amelioration, for, without them, life would not be worth having. It was the first duty of the Government to see that the people had support and employment—and support and employment could only be ensured to them by a large assessment levied upon the lands of absentees, and upon those of other proprietors. He felt it his duty thus to come forward, as an Irish gentleman, representing a free constituency, for he felt that it was at once for the interest of Ireland, and of the empire at large, that the battle should be fought in that House, and not at fairs with pikes and bludgeons. At once he felt bound to declare, that the Legislature had the power, and should have the disposition, to adopt measures of amelioration. He was sure he spoke not only his own sentiments, but those of a large proportion of the gentlemen connected with Ireland, when he said, that unless some measure of amelioration were adopted, they could not hope for security, nor could they be ancillary to improvement.

Mr. *Maurice Fitzgerald* said, that if the distress was so urgent, and the disorganization of society in Clare so serious as they had been represented to be, he begged to call the attention of the House to a matter still more serious,—namely, how far the Government was prepared to arrest the progress of this state of things to other parts of the country. Ministers must and would, he was sure, do him the justice to say, that four months ago he called upon the Government to arm themselves with force adequate to the coming danger; for four months ago he had foreseen that danger. Would the Government now dare to tell him—would they dare to tell Ireland, that within those four months they had taken precautions adequate to the emergency? The people of that part of the country in which his property was situated were quiet and tranquil at present, and he trusted that they would remain so; but was he for that reason to be insensible to the dangers which threatened other parts of the country? He would not then inquire into the causes of disturbances,—though he was prepared to enter into the inquiry at any convenient time, and when the inquiry was instituted, he did not think there would be much difference of opinion with regard to those causes. What, however, he wanted to know was this,—had the Government used proper precautions? He was not called upon to enter into a defence of the conduct of Irish landlords generally; it was sufficient for him if he could justify his own conduct as a landlord: but he must say, that no one had a right to stigmatize the Irish landlords without knowing what they had had to contend with for the last thirty-five years. Gentlemen might very coolly and very philosophically talk about the practicability of individual defences being made against the attacks of an insurrectionary mob; but had they ever, even in imagination, made the case their own? It was notorious, that in some parts of Ireland many gentlemen had been for thirty-five years past in what was called a state of siege. He was not interested in praising or censuring the landlords of Clare; he had nothing to do with their conduct, of which he knew little; but he must say, that no Government ought to excuse or tolerate open disorganization and outrage, on the ground that landlords had not conducted themselves as well as they might have done. It was the business of a Government to uphold the laws. If it were necessary for him to state it, he was ready to state what he as an individual, should be prepared to do under the circumstances; but he objected altogether to the Insurrection Act; he had objected to it twenty-five years ago, and he objected to it now. He objected to it principally on the grounds which had been urged by the hon. member for Waterford; but he objected to it in this particular case upon this other ground also,—namely, that if the gentlemen of Clare were, as they had been represented, afraid to remain in their houses, they certainly were not persons to whom the administration of such an Act ought to be intrusted. He protested against the having recourse to the Insurrection Act, and upon this, amongst other grounds—that it was a law which was extremely liable to be abused and perverted. In his opinion, when any departure was made from the law and practice of the Constitution of the country, it should be laid upon the responsibility of the Government, and not upon that of the local Magistracy. It was much to be apprehended, if measures were not promptly taken by the Government to put an end to the atrocities which were now continually committed in the south-west of Ireland, that the evil would spread to such an extent, and the system of disorganization would become so general, that it would be extremely hard to deal with it. He would therefore urge upon his Majesty's Government the necessity of adopting some measures for that purpose without delay. He would add further, that he hoped his Majesty's Government had estimated the extent of the danger, so as to provide a sufficient force to meet it. Every measure proposed to strengthen the hands of Government in Ireland would meet the assent of the House, and the execution of whatever extraordinary powers it might be necessary to invest the Government with, could never be exercised with more humanity and generosity than by the noble Lord now at the head of the Government of Ireland. He did not concur with those who thought that the distress or poverty of Ireland palliated the enormities which had been lately committed in some parts of Clare; but he would contend, at the same time, that the Government and the Legislature should speedily set about devising measures for bettering the condition of the people of that country. He was astonished by the doctrine which, if he had not greatly misunderstood the hon. member for Kilkenny (Mr. Leader), had been implied in the statements made that night by that hon. Member—namely, that the agricultural exports of Ireland were productive of evil to that country, and that the 3,000,000 quarters of corn which he stated was the amount exported from Ireland, would, if retained there, provide food for the now destitute and starving population. The hon. Member seemed to forget, that if a prohibition were laid upon the export of corn from Ireland, the amount which was now exported from it might not be produced there. One of the sound and common-sense maxims of political economy might have reminded the hon. Member that such would be the effect of placing a restriction upon the exportation of the agricultural produce of Ireland. In his opinion, to advocate the doctrine that the export of produce was not beneficial to Ireland, was to maintain what might lead to the most mischievous consequences. The people, if they could be persuaded that such a doctrine was well-founded, might assemble at the out-ports and put a stop to the exports, than which nothing could occur that would be attended with more fatal and dangerous results. He contended, that nothing was more desirable for Ireland than to increase the export of its produce; at the same time that no one could be more desirous than he was, that the producers should live in comfort. His acquaintance with Ireland, however, led him to conclude, that it might afford abundance of subsistence for its own population, and that there would still be an enormous amount to export. He agreed with those who thought that nothing could be more criminal, and at the same time more absurd, than the treatment of the labouring population of Ireland. There was much improvement required in the mode in which the peasantry were treated in Ireland. The real interests of the landlords of Ireland would be truly consulted and promoted by affording adequate settlements, upon fair and moderate terms, to the peasantry upon their lands. Wherever capital was thus expended on land in Ireland, it invariably gave an abundant return. He could mention many instances in proof of the fact, and in his own case he would state, that he derived a return of twelve per cent and upwards from capital so laid out. It was the interest of every landlord in Ireland to place the labourers on his estate in comfort. It was truly stated by the hon. member for Clare (Mr. Maurice O'Connell) that those peasants who occupied land in the pasture districts suffered the greatest hardships; but he (Mr. Fitzgerald) would not countenance the opinion that any disadvantages which this portion of the peasantry suffered justified those outrages, which were an aggravation of the evil. The export of corn from Ireland was stated at 2,250,000 quarters, and, taking that quantity at an average of 1*l.* 10*s.* a quarter, it amounted to no more than 3,375,000*l.*, which was no great sum out of the income of Ireland. For his part, he sincerely hoped that the exports from Ireland to this country would daily increase, and that the two countries would be more intimately identified. In conclusion, he called upon the Government to bring forward some measure of adequate protection for property in Ireland.

Mr. *Leader* said, that nothing could be further from his mind than to attempt to limit the exports of Ireland; but, on the contrary, his earnest wish was to see them extended; and he had complained that at present they were so small.

Mr. *James Grattan* said, that it was easy to dilate on all the mischiefs under which Ireland was labouring, but not so easy to point out to his Majesty's Government any remedy for the numerous diseases. In his opinion, the picture that had been drawn was much distorted and overcharged. With respect to the absentees of Ireland, he thought that it was a grievance to which they must submit; but his remedy for that evil was the making a permanent relief for the poor of Ireland. That question, he was happy to say, was making great progress in Ireland, and daily acquiring advocates, in spite of the attempts of interested persons to check it; and he had no doubt that it would finally be carried into effect. The Magistracy of the country were greatly maligned, but he believed much of the misconduct ascribed to them was to be traced to the absence of those from the country, who, if they resided in it, must have influence from wealth and property. The hon. member for Clare (Mr. Maurice O'Connell) in a speech of great promise, had justly described the high rents of land held in Ireland as one of the sources of evil. He thought a return shewing the amount of rents paid for land in that part of the country would be desirable. It would justify, he was sure, dissatisfaction—he did not say outrage—and would go far to account for the disturbances which prevailed. As the question of Poor-laws for Ireland had been gaining ground in that country, and in Parliament, for several years, he hoped his Majesty's Government would take it into consideration. It would be much better they should adopt some measure of that kind than look to the Insurrection Act, which had failed, after an experience of thirty years. As to exports, he thought the export of produce was the most miserable kind of export, and that most to be deprecated, and agreed with the sentiments contained in the best book ever written on Ireland—that by the hon. member for Newark—in which he said, that when there was distress the export of corn and cattle ought to be stopped, and applied to feed the people.

Mr. *Hunt* said, that he had listened to all the speeches that had been made; and they appeared to come to this conclusion, that Ireland was in a state of great distress, yet that a system of Poor-laws was the only remedy. If this was the case, why did not some Irish Member propose such a system to that House, and not leave it to English Members to do their business for them? He had never seen any reason why the people of Ireland should not have Poor-laws; and if the House was prepared to refuse them, the best thing they could do would be, to vote with the hon. member for Waterford for the Repeal of the Union.

Lord *Valentia* said, that after the disturbances which had been taking place in Ireland, the Government was bound to take steps to prevent them, and in so doing they should have his humble support. With respect to Poor-laws for Ireland, perhaps something in that way might be done; but as to transplanting the English system of Poor-laws to Ireland, that, in his opinion, was impracticable. The residence of the gentry on the estates would tend to relieve the distress of Ireland. The county he represented (Wexford) was in a very prosperous condition, and this, he believed, was owing to the great number of resident landlords.

Motion agreed to.

SUPPLY—ORDNANCE.] On the Motion of Mr. Tennyson, the House went into a Committee of Supply.

Mr. *Tennyson*, in moving the Ordnance Estimates, stated, that the distribution of the vote he should have to propose, would be 994,218*l.* for Ordnance expenses; 334,820*l.* for Barrack expenses, deducting 8,500*l.* on account of the Brighton Barracks; and 76,595*l.* for Military stores. The total expenditure would be 1,714,995*l.*, of which 1,355,000*l.* were wanted for the effective service, and 359,000*l.* for superannuations, &c. From this sum, however, there was to be deducted the 296,182*l.* for the sale of stores, credits left from last year, &c.; so that the sum to be voted would be 1,418,813*l.* The sum voted last year was 1,689,444*l.*—making a difference of 270,631*l.* This large reduction was owing to his having 128,437*l.* more of credit, than in 1830. All this, however, would not be saved to the country: the actual reduction was 166,000*l.*, but there was a debt of 24,000*l.* greater than last year to be deducted from this sum. The hon. Member explained, that it was the intention of Government to place the Artillery Academy at Woolwich on an improved footing, similar to the establishment at Sandhurst, and the principle of the establishment would be, to make the cadets pay for their education. There was also a reduction of 62,500*l.* under the head of Extraordinaries and Works. There was every disposition in the Master-general of the Ordnance to study economy, and make all the reductions possible in this expensive department. He admitted that the late Board had made considerable reductions, and the present Board had followed in its steps. Considering that the heads of the Ordnance had been but little more than three months in the department, he thought it would be admitted that they had done every thing that was practicable. It was difficult within so short a period to take a comprehensive view of so extensive a field as the Ordnance, which comprehended 320 stations, and included an infinity of accounts and matters connected with public works, repairs, &c. Allowance would be made for the inexperience of the persons at present connected with the Ordnance, and he trusted that the hon. member for Middlesex would admit that they could not have gone further than they had in so short a time. He could assure the Committee, that all the establishments connected with the Ordnance were then undergoing, and would continue to be submitted to, a careful revision, with a view to the adoption of every measure of economy and reduction consistent with their efficiency and with the public service. The hon. Member concluded by moving that a sum not exceeding 80,649*l.* be granted to his Majesty for defraying the expense of the Salary of the office of Master-general of the Ordnance, and the expense of the two Ordnance Offices at Pall-Mall and at the Tower.

Sir *Henry Fane* expressed his satisfaction at the candour with which the hon. Gentleman had done justice to the former Board of Ordnance, in acknowledging its economy.

Sir *Henry Hardinge* approved of the arrangements proposed, and complimented the hon. Member on the clearness of his statement. The hon. Gentleman had admitted, as he understood, that the whole actual saving made by the present Board was only 3,000*l.* The other apparent diminution arose from the balances in hand, and from the Ordnance Board not requiring so many stores as had been formerly required, and from works having been suspended. There was, in point of fact, no important reduction of the expense of that office. He objected to the abolition of the office of Lieutenant-general of the Ordnance, and declared that, in the appointment of Major-general Cockburn to be Inspector-General of the Marines, the present Government had followed the example of the late Government; which, out of office, the present Ministers had condemned. They had objected also to the late Board of Ordnance being all military men, and they had appointed to the Board of Admiralty, even to the Secretary, none but naval men. Out of office, too, they had reproached the late Ministers with not attending to the recommendation of the Finance Committee; and in office they had positively declared, no longer than last night, that they could not follow such recommendation.

Mr. *Tennyson* repeated his previous statements with respect to the total amount of diminished charges and saving upon the present Estimate. He denied that the right hon. and gallant Member was correct in describing the saving as being only 3,000*l.*—the right hon. Gentleman might just as well have asserted that it did not exceed 3*l.* He (Mr. Tennyson) thought that the details into which he had before entered must have satisfied the Committee that the actual saving would be, rating it at the lowest, 100,000*l.*, if not 166,000*l.*

Sir *H. Hardinge* denied that a diminution of charge for a single year could be considered a saving, for it was merely abstaining from doing in 1831 what would be done in 1832, and without benefit to the public. He repeated, therefore, that the saving was only 3,000*l.* and cautioned the hon. Gentleman on the danger of allowing the Ordnance establishments, which were purely scientific, to go to decay; for if he did let them down, he would not find it easy to raise them up again.

Sir *H. Fane* wished to draw the attention of the Committee to one very important point, because it was connected with the efficiency of the Navy. The sum of 53,000*l.* was called for on account of repairs. Now he doubted the adequacy of that sum, because he understood that a most experienced and intelligent officer had stated, that there were, at present, no less than 10,000 naval gun-carriages out of repair, and for which he could not answer. Situated as Europe was at present, this was a matter of most serious importance.

Mr. *Hume* censured the plan which Government had long adopted, of collecting large quantities of stores to perish and decay. Here it appeared, from the statement of the hon. Baronet, that there were 10,000 rotten gun-carriages in store. The saving proposed in these Estimates by his Majesty's Government were, he was sorry to say, very trifling, but he trusted that they would be greater hereafter. The whole expenditure under this head was manifestly too large, considering the situation of the country.

Sir *H. Fane* denied, that he had spoken of rotten gun-carriages. He said it was reported that a most experienced officer had represented that there were 10,000 gun-carriages which were out of repair.

Lord *Althorp* contended, in opposition to the gallant Officer (Sir H. Hardinge), that a very considerable saving had been really effected in these Estimates. He certainly considered the not calling for a grant, on account of certain works, as a saving. Some of those works might hereafter be deemed unnecessary.

Sir *H. Hardinge* only wished to observe, that a greater saving had been made under the Duke of Wellington. In the salaries of civil officers alone, it was 47,000*l.* The number of stations now was only one or two more than in 1792, though we had now seven or eight powder-magazines included amongst them.

Mr. *Maberly* said, that the late Government had acted in the teeth of the Report of the Committee of Finance, which had recommended the abolition of the office of Lieutenant-general of the Ordnance. The present Government immediately abolished the situation, and yet it was admitted the service was as well carried on without that office as with it.

Sir *H. Hardinge* said, the recommendation of the Committee was contrary to the evidence given before them.

Sir *G. Warrender* admitted and praised the economy of the present Government, and said, that the conduct of the late Administration, in resisting reductions which had been recommended to them, brought about that measure of Reform which he so much deprecated.

Mr. *Tennyson* said, that the present Government had not begun the Ordnance Estimates. They had only reviewed them. When they should have an opportunity of forming estimates of their own, a greater reduction might be expected.

The Resolution agreed to, as were also the following: 9,089*l.* for Salaries of the Department at Woolwich; 17,705*l.* for the Salaries of the Civil Establishment of the Ordnance Stations at Home; 27,724*l.* for the Salaries of Out Stations in Ireland and abroad; and 40,756*l.* for the Salaries of Barrack-Masters, and Barrack-Serjeants at home and abroad.

The House resumed.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Thursday, April 14, 1831.

MINUTES.] Bills. Annual Indemnity brought up from the Commons, and read a first time.

Petitions presented. For the Abolition of Slavery, by the Archbishop of YORK, fifty from Rippon, Harrowgate, and other places in Yorkshire.

THE BEER BILL.] The Earl of *Malmesbury* said, that the Magistracy of the country had had some opportunity of ascertaining the effects of the Beer Bill which had been passed in the last Session, and he thought it proper that the attention of the House should be called to the subject. He should at present content himself with moving for certain Returns which would enable their Lordships to form an accurate judgment of what the effect of the Bill had been throughout the country, and particularly in the agricultural districts. He wished the House to be put in possession of information on the subject, for it was his opinion, that the Bill had, in its operation, been of a pernicious tendency, and in saying this he particularly alluded to the agricultural districts. He wished to ascertain the number of licenses that had been taken out under the new Act, and he should move, that there be laid before this House a Return of the number of Licenses for the sale of Beer that had been taken out under the Act of 10th George 4th, c. 64, to the latest period to which the account can be made out, distinguishing the several counties in which such Licenses had been granted.

The *Lord Chancellor* said, that it was not his intention to trespass upon the time of their Lordships, but he wished to take the present opportunity of merely saying a few words, lest it should otherwise go forth to the public, and particularly to those who had an interest in the Bill, that his Majesty's Ministers felt themselves averse from the measure that had been passed in the last Session of Parliament. The fact was not so; and his Majesty's Government, in applying for information on this subject, had no other object in view than to make themselves acquainted with the truth, and to ascertain if the charges made out against the Bill, were well grounded or not. When he proposed, on two occasions, in the other House, a Bill of this nature, it was a special object with him that beer should not be allowed to be drunk on the premises where it was sold; but his Majesty's late Government, having made particular inquiries on the subject, and having availed themselves of the evidence taken before the Committee, decided against his clause; and he, perhaps, though his mind was unchanged on the subject, was inclined to admit that they were justified in doing so. He would acknowledge that he was aware that great evils had arisen from the Bill, in one or two districts, and he particularly alluded to the counties of Hants, Wilts, and Somerset. The same effects, however, had not been produced in the northern counties, where he had the best opportunity of being acquainted with its effects. Neither the Clergy, the Dissenters, nor the landlords in the north, had made any complaints of the operation of the Bill, or of its effects upon the habits of the poorer classes. It was proper to examine into the subject carefully, and to scrutinize the nature of the proposed changes, for the mischiefs which might have arisen from the measure might be only temporary, and consequent upon a sudden change of system; for though all changes did occasionally produce evils, they were in some cases of a temporary nature, and were compensated by the ultimate working of the new system. Until the House were in possession of full information upon the subject, and until every precaution had been taken, he could not see the propriety of making changes in a law, under which so many vested interests had already been formed.

The Earl of *Malmesbury* said, that inquiry into the subject was all he at present wanted, and he did not know that a better way of obtaining information could be devised, than that of granting a Committee.

The Earl of *Carnarvon* conceived, that the Bill, in its effects, had turned out to be a pernicious measure, and as vested interests were daily growing up under its protection, he thought that investigation ought not to be delayed.

Lord *Skelmersdale* thought, that the House ought to be put into possession of the answers which the Magistrates of the country had written to the circular letter which the noble Lord, the Secretary of State for the Home Department, had sent throughout the country.

The *Lord Chancellor* explained, that the evidence already produced upon the subject was sufficient to satisfy the minds of most persons. He was far from insinuating any thing against those Magistrates, that had reported against the Beer Bill, but at the same time he could not shut his eyes to the infirmities of nature, nor could he forget what was likely to be produced by the fact, that the Bill took from the Magistrates the only patronage possessed by a Justice of the Peace—the power of granting licenses. As long as nature was nature, as long as man was man, there was a frailty within him, which would bias his judgment, and one person would see an object in a very different point of view from another, according as their interests were differently affected by it. He was far from impugning the Magistrates, but nevertheless, from the causes he had stated, their reports must be considered in some instances, and to a certain degree, as drawn up under a bias of the judgment.

The Earl of *Malmesbury* said, that he felt some surprise that the noble Lord upon the Woolsack should impugn the whole Magistracy of the country, and declare that every Magistrate was capable of making an official report under the influence of a bias produced by his personal interests. He believed, on the contrary, that the Magistrates were incapable, from any such motives, of giving incorrect information to the Executive Government. It was, in point of fact, quite ridiculous, that the noble Lord at the head of the Home Department should address the circular he had addressed to the Magistrates of the country, if his Majesty's Ministers had entertained of them such opinions as had been that night uttered by the noble Lord on the Woolsack. He had no desire to press his Motion; but he certainly did wish to know what was the number of houses that had been licensed under the present Bill.

The *Lord Chancellor* said, that it was indifferent to him whether the Returns were pressed for or not, and in that particular the noble Earl might take the course which he thought best; but it was not a matter of indifference to him to be held up to the public as having made an attack upon the Magistracy of the country which he never had made, and which it had never been his intention to make. He appealed to their Lordships whether what he had said, could bear the shadow of a shade—the show of a semblance—of an attack upon the Magistrates? He had always admitted, that the Justices of the Peace were a useful body of men—useful professionally, judicially, and in every respect, and he was far from impugning them, or impeaching their conduct. All that he had done was, to suppose them not exempt from the general laws of our common nature, and to state that Ministers ought to bear this in mind when they were called upon to judge, not of the evidence, but of the opinions of the Magistrates. He would defy any man, or body of men, to be exempt from what was the common lot of all men, and all men would have their opinions biassed by a system under which they enjoy power, and be inclined against a change by which that power was to be taken from them. If he had not taken this opportunity of meeting the noble Earl's accusation in the way he had done, the charge of his having attacked the Magistrates of the country would have been repeated here and in other places; and it would have gone forth that his Majesty's Ministers were adverse to the whole body of the Magistracy. The observations which he had made were not in favour of any measure which had been introduced by himself or his friends, for the Bill in question had been brought forward by their predecessors in office.

The Marquis of *Salisbury* maintained that the Bill had not worked well as far as the morals of the lower orders were concerned; but yet it had not been found to have all the bad effects which had been attributed to it.

Lord *Melbourne* could state, on the part of the Ministers, that they had not made up their minds with respect to the Bill. He was desirous of having the best information upon the subject, and he thought that longer time ought to be taken to ascertain how the Bill actually worked. Measures of this sort, undertaken by Ministers, were always attended by the inconvenience of disturbing the public mind; but complaints had become so extremely numerous, that he should have thought he neglected his duty if he had not taken steps to obtain full and clear information upon the subject. He entertained great respect for the Magistrates, and he considered that their replies had afforded him very full information upon the effects and operations of the Bill; but being at the same time well aware that the imputations which had been now urged against them would be cast upon the Magistrates, he had also directed a circular to other bodies of men. He had felt, that the subject was of great and permanent importance to the morals and well-being of the country, and that the closest attention should be given to it. He hoped that the Bill would ultimately be found beneficial.

Motion agreed to.

PETITIONS AGAINST REFORM.] The Earl of *Haddington* said, that he rose to present to their Lordships a Petition from the important county of Edinburgh, against the Bill which a noble Lord had introduced into the other House, for the object of Reforming the Representation in Parliament. So many occasions had lately been taken to depreciate county petitions, that he felt himself called upon to vindicate the rights of the landed interests to speak their opinions, without being misrepresented, upon matters of such high importance. The meeting from which the petition had proceeded was not what was commonly called a hole-and-corner meeting. It was a meeting called by a public requisition, and it was openly held in the county hall. Some persons were not inclined to pay much attention to county petitions unless they were numerously signed; but if the property and rank of those who attended a meeting gave any consequence to a petition, he should claim the utmost deference to that which he had then to present. He could take upon himself to say, that there were few persons at the meeting in question who were not the representatives of landed property. A difference of opinion had prevailed at the meeting, but it had subsided, and the result was, the voting of a petition praying, that the Reform Bill now before the House of Commons should not pass into a law. The petition stated, that the petitioners, though against the Reform Bills, were not averse to such a Reform as would be consistent with the established Constitution of the country. This, he must confess, was a new feature in petitions from that part of the United Kingdom from which this petition came (Scotland), shewing that the question of Reform was no longer one of principle, but a question of degree. What degree of Reform the petitioners might be pleased with, it was not for him to say, and perhaps they might not go so far as he was inclined to go; for he thought it essential for the safety of the institutions of the country that the measure of Reform should go far enough to conciliate the opinions of the great bulk of the intellect and respectability of the country. The petitioners prayed that the right of voting should be continued to all places at present possessed of it, and in this prayer he cordially agreed. The principle of disfranchisement was dangerous in itself, and fraught with the most evil consequences, and the qualification of 10*l.* was not founded in any established principle whatever. The petitioners next speak of the manner in which the Reform Bill would affect the interests of their own county. They did not object to the granting of Representatives to large manufacturing towns, nor to the general regulation of elections; but they protested against dividing the Representation of counties, and thus depriving them of the privileges they had enjoyed for many centuries, and which had been confirmed to them by the treaty of the Union. If this alluded to what was proposed with respect to the counties of Selkirk and Peebles, he had no hesitation in saying, that in this particular the Bill ought to be altered. In his opinion, the time was come that the principle of popular elections must be introduced into Scotland. The petitioners stated, that the proposed plan of Reform would have the effect of subverting the due influence of property, and of giving the privilege of returning Members to persons of small possessions. If the Bill were to remain in its present state, he should certainly concur in the views of the petitioners. It was established by the returns before the House, that the people inhabiting towns would have the preponderance in returning Members who ought to be returned by the landed interest. The inhabited houses in Scotland amounted to 351,000 odd hundreds. The inhabited house-tax upon such of these as were rated at above 10*l.* a year, amounted to 35,700*l.* Of this 25,036*l.* was levied upon houses rated at between 10*l.* and 20*l.* a year. The whole constituency of Scotland was calculated by the noble Lord who had introduced the Bill at about 60,000, and by the inhabited house-tax it would appear that more than one half of this constituency would consist of householders, and of these, 25,000 would consist of very small householders. He did not know, that the inhabited house-tax was any criterion, for taxation by the present Bill was not referred to. It was enacted, that the Sheriffs of counties were to decide the value of the houses, and if the owners thought themselves aggrieved, the appeal lay from the Sheriff alone, to the Sheriff and a Jury: and lastly, the appeal might be carried even to the House of Lords. The people of Scotland, therefore, dreaded the introduction of such a system of endless litigation, with all its consequences of fraud and perjury. He did not know upon what principle at present the house-tax was laid, for to his knowledge a great many houses worth more than 10*l.* a year escaped taxation. By the clause in the present Bill, a house and land might be valued together, so that small houses rated at only 5*l.* a year, if they had a little land attached to them, would be valued at 10*l.*, and acquire the right of voting. The country would be overwhelmed by voters of this petty description. He was certain that very mistaken notions prevailed amongst people in England on this point, owing to the different manner in which buildings were managed in Scotland from the mode in which they were managed in this country. The Bill provided, that building leases should not give a right to vote unless where they were for 50*l.* a year, but in Scotland, where buildings were leased out in perpetuity, the Bill would confer the right of voting. He was sure that it would be extremely difficult to strike out a proper mode for establishing a constituency in populous towns in Scotland; but in towns where there was a large population, his Majesty's Ministers, by carefully attending to all the suggestions which might be made to them from competently informed quarters, and by proceeding with due caution and deliberation, might be able to furnish a good system of popular election in Scotland, which would be understood there, which would lead to no chicanery, and which would be quite satisfactory. With regard to the whole measure of Reform, he trusted that when it came to be discussed, it would be recollected, both in that House and in the other House of Parliament, that while that measure introduced a great and important change into the existing state of the Representation, even in England, the change which it went to introduce into Scotland would be a complete and entire novelty; for in that country, during the last 300 or 400 years, except in some of the borough towns, nothing like a popular election had been known. In making that statement he only stated an undoubted fact, and it was one which rendered necessary the application of great caution and deliberation to the consideration of a measure which was intended to introduce a popular system of election into that country. There was no country in the world where all the relations and dependencies of social life were in a happier state than they were and had been in Scotland for many years, and he hoped sincerely and anxiously that nothing would come from Parliament which would tend to impair or endanger such a state of things. He would not take upon himself to say, that any thing which Parliament would do upon this subject would have such an effect; but nevertheless, it was impossible to contemplate the great change which it was proposed to introduce into Scotland, without anxiety as to its result; and he should be grieved indeed, if that result should be to disorganize the social relations at present existing in that country, for at such a rate political franchises would certainly be dearly purchased. He should not, on this occasion, go further into the general question, but would conclude by stating, that the prayer of the petition was, that the Bill now before Parliament should not pass into a law.

The Earl of *Rosebery* said, that as one of the largest landed proprietors in the county of Edinburgh, he felt called upon to make a few remarks on this occasion, both upon the petition which had been presented, and the statement which had been made by his noble friend who had just sat down. He was ready at once to admit, that several of the names attached to the petition were those of gentlemen of rank, of ancient family, and considerable property, in the county of Edinburgh. He would also say, that many others of the petitioners were known to him, either personally or by reputation,—that they were valued for their character and property, and that, in fact, all those who had signed this petition were men of respectability, whose opinions were undoubtedly worthy of attention. But there were two points connected with this and all other county petitions which had been or which would be presented from Scotland on the subject of Reform, which should never be forgotten when the value and importance of such petitions were to be duly and fairly estimated. The first point was, that county meetings in Scotland in no respect or degree whatever resembled county meetings in England. The county meetings in Scotland were not constituted, as in this country, of every description of persons of property and intelligence in the county. The county meetings in Scotland comprised a particular class of persons, many of whom had no property in the county in which the meeting took place. The second point to which he wished to direct the attention of their Lordships, as connected with those county petitions from Scotland, was, that the great majority of the individuals who attended those meetings were personally and directly interested in the opposing the change which it was proposed to make in the Representation of that county. He was not prepared to go into an analysis of this petition on this occasion, to demonstrate that it completely came under the class of petitions which he had just described; but, looking at the petition, he saw appended to it the names of several persons who had no property in the county of Edinburgh; and he was sure of this fact also, that several persons who were possessed of property in that county were debarred from attending the meeting at which this petition was adopted, because, owing to the peculiar constitution of county meetings in Scotland, they would have no voice there. The number of persons who had signed the petition was sixty-two, in a county the population of which, after deducting the population both of the City of Edinburgh and the town of Leith, amounted to 53,000. He begged further to remark, that it appeared from a return which had been laid upon their Lordships' Table, that in the county of Edinburgh there were 464 proprietors rated at 10*l.* and upwards. Now he would contend, that until a meeting of the county of Edinburgh should be held, at which those 464 persons could attend and have a voice, their Lordships would not be able to ascertain the real feelings of that county with regard to the measure of Reform; and he was convinced that if such a meeting should be called, the petition which would be adopted at it would be of a very different character from that which had emanated from those sixty-two individuals. The observations which he had made on this petition applied also to the other petitions which were in progress from the other counties in Scotland. He had made out a list of the number of persons who had attended four or five county meetings in Scotland at which petitions had been adopted, and the English Peers in that House would be somewhat disappointed when they found what was the character of such county meetings. In the county of Perth—the largest in Scotland—a very opulent county, with a population amounting to 140,000, and containing, according to a return on their Table, between 700 and 800 persons rated for a property of 10*l.* and upwards, the number that voted at a county meeting, convened to consider the question of Reform, consisted of a majority of fifty-eight against it, and a minority of thirty-six in favour of it, and that was what was called a large county meeting in Scotland. In the county of Banff, which contained a considerable population and a great number of landowners, the amount of persons that attended a county meeting, at which a petition had been adopted in favour of the measure, consisted of thirteen who voted for the petition, and four who voted against it. In the county of Moray, eight persons attended the county meeting, five of whom voted against Reform, and three in favour of it. In Selkirk, which was undoubtedly a small county, six persons attended the county meeting three of whom voted for, and three against the measure of Reform. In the county of Haddington, which was an opulent and wealthy county, the meeting was composed of twenty persons; no petition was adopted at that county meeting, but several speeches were made, and a variety of resolutions were passed, and twelve of the persons present voted against the measure and eight in favour of it. These details would show to their Lordships what was the real nature of Scotch county meetings—how they were constituted, as regarded those who could attend and vote at them; and having laid those details before their Lordships, he would leave them to judge whether petitions from such meetings could be considered as justly expressing the opinions of the landed proprietors of Scotland on this subject. For his part he would say, that neither the petition from the county of Edinburgh, nor the petitions from the other counties in Scotland, at all, in his mind, afforded an evidence, either as regarded property or as regarded population, of the feeling which existed in Scotland upon the subject of Reform. He hoped that under this qualification and reservation all those county petitions from Scotland on the subject of Reform would be for the future received in that House. He should not go further into a discussion of the general principle of the measure on this occasion than to state, that all who entertained the opinion that Reform was necessary in the southern parts of the kingdom, must be of opinion, notwithstanding the extreme novelty to which his noble friend had alluded, as applicable to such a measure, that Reform was doubly necessary in Scotland. In a country like Scotland, where every part of the Representative system required amendment, he was ready to admit, that the question ought to be entertained with caution and wisdom, but, he would also add, with sincerity, efficiency, and in good earnest. If the present opportunity for amending that system should be allowed to pass by, it might happen that no opportunity would hereafter present itself for effecting it. By introducing such a Reform into Scotland, they would at once elevate the character of the people of Scotland, and the character of their Representatives, rendering them more worthy of their confidence, and better calculated to discharge the important duties which devolved upon them as Members of Parliament. By introducing such a Reform there, they would demonstrate that there could not be a greater fallacy than that which had been advanced by many persons, and which he had often heard propounded with no lack of boldness but with an entire lack of argument,—namely, that the extraordinary prosperity of Scotland was attributable to the state of its Representation. He was of opinion that many persons who made that statement did not themselves believe it, and that those who did believe it had mistaken the means by which a great and beneficial end had been achieved. He should reserve what he had further to say until the time for discussing the Bill regarding Scotland should arrive, when he hoped to be able to point out some improvements, the introduction of which into the Bill would render it more perfect and efficient, and more analogous to the particular institutions of that country which it was intended to ameliorate. In conclusion, he begged to disclaim any want of courtesy or respect towards those petitioners, for to both his courtesy and his respect he felt that they were fully entitled: at the same time he had felt it his duty to exercise that freedom which, as a member of that House he possessed, in examining the distinct merits of this petition, and in pointing out to their Lordships the real weight which ought to be attached to it.

The Duke of *Buccleugh* did not deny the statement of the noble Earl who had just sat down, that this petition had emanated from but a small number of persons in the county of Edinburgh, but the majority of them were persons who had large properties there. He had no doubt that if they held out to the 464 persons to whom the noble Earl had alluded, the option of having a vote or not, that they would be for a measure which would give them the right of voting. It was a fact that the most mistaken notions were abroad in Scotland regarding this Bill, and he believed that by far the greater portion of the lower classes in that country were not aware of its real nature, or of what it would give them, and that they were totally mistaken as to the advantages which they expected to derive from it. He could inform their Lordships, that the prevailing impression amongst those classes in Scotland was, that this Bill would give them a right to vote in the counties; that after it passed there would be no more excisemen,—no more gaugers: that they should have a free trade; that whiskey would be cheap, &c. He was aware of the fact that such an impression had been created amongst the lower classes of the people in Scotland by persons who were going about the country there, exciting the most absurd expectations amongst the people, and industriously promoting an agitation, the fruits of which were witnessed in the riots that had lately occurred in Edinburgh. He could not understand why Selkirk should be disfranchised, or why it should be joined to Peeblesshire. But he should defer stating his reasons for objecting to the Bill altogether, until it had come regularly before them.

The Earl of *Haddington* presented a similar Petition from certain persons who had not been able to attend the meeting at which the petition he had previously presented had been adopted. In doing so he begged to say, that he did not deny, that those petitions came from a small number of persons, but he only claimed for them that weight and attention to which their respectability entitled them. He only asked that respect for their petition, which would be given to the petition of the gentry of Hampshire or any other English county.

The Duke of *Wellington* presented a Petition from the Noblemen, freeholders, Justices of the Peace, and Commissioners of Supply of the county of Dumbarton, complaining of the extensive and sweeping Reform which was contemplated by the Reform Bill as regarded Scotland. He observed that there was no part of the country which, during the last fifty years, had been more progressively and uniformly prosperous than Scotland; that was a fact which could not be disputed, and he remembered, with particular satisfaction, a remark which had been made once by a noble friend of his, whose loss at present he every day saw more reason to deplore,—he meant the late Earl of Liverpool,—that Scotland was in every respect the best-conditioned country in the world; yet this was the country into which his Majesty's Ministers proposed to introduce what the petitioners called "a sweeping Reform." He begged to say, that whatever might be the difference between the county Meetings in Scotland, and the county Meetings held in England and elsewhere, it was the duty of his Majesty's Ministers, particularly when they were about to propose a change which went to alter that which had been settled by the act of Union and by a solemn treaty between the two countries, to have consulted the opinions and wishes of the great landed proprietors in Scotland, before they brought forward a measure of that description.

Petition laid on the Table.

Lord *King* remarked, that seeing the importance which the noble Duke was anxious to attach to this petition, he supposed the noble Duke thought that the county Meeting at which it had been adopted was at least no farce.

Petition in favour of Reform.] The Marquis of *Lansdown* said, that he rose to present a Petition on the subject of Reform, to which, notwithstanding the number of petitions which had been presented on that question, he felt it his duty to call the attention of their Lordships, not only on account of the number of signatures appended to it, but on account of the great respectability of the parties from whom the petition emanated. It was adopted at a public Meeting convened in the city of London, and held in the Egyptian-hall, consisting of the merchants, bankers, and other traders of the Metropolis; and when he stated that eight or nine tenths of those persons who came fairly under that description had signed this petition,—that in point of fact it had been signed by almost all the respectable merchants of London, and that altogether it had attached to it the names of about 9,000 persons, filling the rank of traders in London—he was sure that their Lordships would see that it was highly deserving of their attention. He was not desirous on this occasion to revive in that House the irregular, though certainly not useless discussion, upon the general subject of the measure which had taken place there previous to the late recess; but he could not avoid calling the attention of the House to the peculiar value of the opinions of that class of persons from whom this petition emanated. Having been one of those who had given their assent to this measure of Reform, solely on the ground that they thought it calculated to strengthen and render permanent the invaluable establishments under which we had the happiness to live, he was glad to find the opinions of persons who were most deeply interested not only in the permanency of our establishments, but in the continuance of the peace and the tranquillity of the country, thus expressed in favour of the measure of Reform which had been brought forward by his Majesty's Ministers. He was rejoiced to find persons whose most valuable interests were closely interwoven with the existence of those institutions, and with the peace of the country, thus coming forward, after having maturely considered the details of the Reform Bill, and expressing their conviction that the adoption of such a measure by Parliament would tend most effectually to preserve the institutions, and the peace and quiet of the country, upon the preservation of which their interests so vitally depended. The proprietors of land were interested in the preservation of that tranquillity, but perhaps not so much as those who were engaged in trade and commerce. Should a storm arise, whenever it passed away real property would regain its value; but it was totally a different case with those whose wealth consisted in the circulating capital of the country. Even a temporary interruption of the public tranquillity might extinguish all their hopes, and destroy all their property. He therefore regarded this petition, coming as it did from such an important class of persons, as affording a strong argument in favour of the Reform which had been proposed by his Majesty's Government. The noble Marquis concluded by presenting the petition, which was ordered to lie on the Table.

The Marquis of *Londonderry* was anxious to obtain some information from the noble Earl at the head of the Government, explanatory of his declaration on a former occasion, so far as that declaration was contravened by a more recent statement on the part of Ministers elsewhere. It might be remembered that the noble Earl had pledged himself to stand or fall by the Reform Bill now on the table of the other House of Parliament, and not to abate a jot of its provisions. Since that declaration, however, Ministers had seen reason to depart from their measure in several important particulars—of which it would be sufficient to cite their having renounced their intention of reducing the number of the Members of the House of Commons. The noble Marquis was proceeding to read extracts from Lord John Russell's speech, in order to show that that noble Lord had laid great stress on the necessity of a reduction of the number of the Members of the other House, when—

The Earl of *Mansfield* rose to order. It was irregular, he said, and contrary to the usages of Parliament, to make the alleged reports of what might have occurred elsewhere the subject of discussion in that House.

The Marquis of *Londonderry* would not persist in discussing the speech of the noble Mover of the Reform Bill, though he could not see any impropriety or inconvenience in his doing so; and should therefore confine himself to a simple question—namely, whether Ministers meant to reduce the number of the House of Commons from 658 to 596 as they had originally proposed, or not? How they meant, in case they did not reduce them, to fill up the deficiency which their disfranchising clause, and the schedules A and B, would occasion? Whether, in fact, they meant to retain these disfranchisements like so many old bad notes to be issued at convenience.

Earl *Grey* concurred entirely with the noble Earl opposite, who had risen to order, as to the inconvenience and irregularity of discussions founded on newspaper reports, however accurate, and on the merits of a measure which had not yet come before them substantially. He, however, would answer the noble Marquis briefly, but, he trusted, satisfactorily. The noble Marquis had reminded their Lordships of his (Earl Grey's) pledge delivered on a former occasion, to the effect that he would not consent to compromise the principle of the Reform measure, but would stand or fall by it as originally planned. The noble Marquis had correctly stated his declaration. He had said, that he would stand or fall by the principle of the Bill now in progress in the other House of Parliament; and for the satisfaction of the noble Marquis would then repeat his declaration, that he would not consent for himself or his colleagues to abandon a single principle of that Bill, but would stand or fall by it as it succeeded or otherwise. When he had, however, expressed his determination to thus stand or fall by the Reform Bill, he had also explicitly stated, that it was the principle of that Bill which he would not for a moment consent to compromise—for he was not presumptuous enough to imagine that there might not be defects of detail susceptible of improvement. The principle which Ministers had in view in bringing forward the measure was, to effect such improvements in the Representation of the people as the well-being of the country required,—in fact, to adapt the Representation to the institutions, to the wants, property, and intelligence of the country; and he would not consent to any alteration in the provisions—not to say the principle—of that measure, which was at all likely to interfere with this its great object. As a means to this end, and not as an end in itself, Ministers proposed to disfranchise certain boroughs incompatible with a pure system of Representation, and therefore they would not assent to any modifications of the means which might defeat the end they had in view. With respect to what the noble Marquis had observed touching a reduction of the Members of the other House of Parliament, he begged their Lordships to bear in mind, that that reduction formed no essential portion of the measure—that it was a question the merits of which were not involved in the success or merits of the Reform Bill. It was true that he and his colleagues did entertain an opinion that such a reduction would be advantageous to the public weal, and that a fewer number would contribute to the despatch of public business; but that opinion formed, he repeated, no essential element of their plan of Reform; and therefore not to insist on its enforcement could not in fairness be construed into a compromise of the principle by which he pledged himself to stand or fall. This opinion of the inconvenience of the present large number of the House of Commons' Members was not a new one of his. He had often asserted it, more particularly when the act of legislative Union with Ireland was under the consideration of the other House of Parliament. On that occasion he moved, as an amendment to the Bill, that 100 Members be taken off the Representation of England, to make room for the 100 new Members which Ireland was to send under its provisions, and the feelings of the majority of the House, and the then Government, were far from being hostile to his proposition, the chief obstacle to the success of which arose from the principle of compensation to certain borough proprietors in Ireland having been recognised by the Government. His opinion, then, as to the advantages of a reduction of the number of the Commons, he repeated, formed no essential part of the Reform Bill, and was to be judged of on other grounds. Then as to some alterations which it was proposed to make in the details of the Bill, he wished it to be borne in mind, that they were so far from being opposed to its principle, that they only went to carry it into effect, and were only such improvements as more correct information suggested. Since the plan and objects of the Bill had been first announced to Parliament, Ministers had obtained more correct returns of the population of the boroughs and towns which it would affect; and the result would be a modification, in two or three instances, of the schedules A and B; but, as he had before said, no departure from the principle of the measure. The noble Marquis asked whether Ministers meant to propose that the number of the Commons should be kept up to 658, the present number; and if so, how they meant to fill up the deficiency which the disfranchising clauses would occasion. His answer was, that Ministers would not originate any proposition to make good this deficiency. Their individual opinions were, as he had stated, in favour of a reduction of the number; but if the House of Commons should, contrary to this opinion, agree that the full complement of 658 Members was expedient, he and his colleagues did not feel that they should therefore abandon the Bill of which this reduction was not an essential feature. If a deficiency should thus require to be filled up, he was not called upon to say how it might be done with advantage to the public. All he would say was, that he would not consent to its being filled up from schedule A, that is, from the boroughs proposed to be disfranchised altogether. Nor from schedule B, that is, from those boroughs which the bill would deprive of the power of returning more than one Member, but only in such a way as would conduce to the great object of the measure—the giving to the property and intelligence of the country their due share of Representation. The Government had no power or intention of doling out the right of sending Representatives like bank notes, as the noble Marquis thought fit to describe it. Their Lordships knew well what situation Ministers were in, and that they could not dole out the right of Representation as they thought fit. Ministers had no such power. It depended upon the House of Commons, and on that House to determine how the Representation should be apportioned. Any alterations that were proposed by Ministers should be on the principle he had stated. It was in strict accordance with the principle of the measure, to correct any errors into which the framers of the Bill had fallen from the errors in the population returns. There had been, and there should be, no alteration proposed or consented to by him or his colleagues, which was inconsistent with the principle of the Bill. He felt himself pledged to the character and efficiency of the measure, and to its principles, and from those principles he would not depart—and upon those principles, when carried into effect, he once more repeated, that he was prepared to stand or fall.

The Earl of *Carnarvon* had, since he last addressed their Lordships, minutely examined the noble Earl's Bill, and could safely say, that one more extraordinary in itself, and more extravagantly mischievous, it had never been his fortune to peruse. The noble Earl said, he would stand or fall by its principle; but as yet they had to learn what that principle was. He really could not say what it was, unless, indeed, he could call it the principle of confiscation. Indeed, its leading principle was so difficult to discover, that its proposers had the right to claim the power of amending it The noble Earl who had just spoken, said the Bill was intended to make the Representation more consistent with the institutions of the country. He had looked through the Bill, and he could not find that principle in any part of it. Upon the proposed Bill, the whole power of the country was given to one description of voters. He undertook to say, that under the new Bill a great majority of the voters would be found amongst the lower classes. All householders of 10*l.* were to vote, and the amount was not to be estimated according to the assessment, but according to the value of the houses. Every one knew, that the assessment was considerably lower than the value, and therefore if noble Lords looked to 10*l.* as assessed, and the sum giving the right of voting, they mistook the provisions of the Bill. Looking to other parts of the Bill they were greatly objectionable. Not less than eighty boroughs were to be left to the discretion of the Privy Council, because they did not furnish what was considered a sufficient number of voters. Thirty-nine, or nearly half that number of boroughs, did not contain a majority of the freemen within their precincts, and therefore all those boroughs might be said to be at the disposal of the Privy Council. After full, due, and mature consideration, such was the plan his Majesty's Ministers had brought forward for providing a new and a better constitution, and for preserving the settled institutions of the country, which were amongst the greatest works of man, and had given wealth, character, and reputation to Great Britain, and placed her at the head of all the nations of the world. The institutions of this country had also been proved to contain a principle of stability beyond those of any other country. The reason of this was, because the institutions of Great Britain had not been devised by any man, but had grown up with the habits of the people, and the country had prospered under them. He was not one of those who thought that, because the institutions of this country were good, they might not be improved and amended. Those whose eyes were suddenly opened, and who had become all at once Radicals, might ridicule his idea, that a Bill of Reform might become better by calm consideration, and that its details should be considered *seriatim*. If caution and deliberation were not used in any measure of Reform, it would not only tend to unsettle the Constitution, but to unsettle men's minds. In an article which appeared in the "Edinburgh Review," some years since, and which was forcibly and eloquently written, of which a person intimately connected with the present Government was generally known to be the author, it was justly stated, that the great practical excellence of the British Constitution arose from the immense variety of the rights of election which existed. The proposed Bill got rid of that variety, by extending the franchise to the householders in towns; so that popular clamour must always prevail, however it might be opposed to the good of the people, or the safety of the Crown. It had been thrown in his teeth that he had toiled through many unprofitable nights in that House, attending to the Bills for disfranchising corrupt boroughs. In the East Retford case, which was brought before the House last year, the voters were brought to the bar *seriatim*, to fix the guilt on themselves. Now, to the best of his recollection, the greater number of those who were brought to the bar of their Lordships' House, and confessed themselves guilty of bribery, were little tradesmen in small towns, men to whom the franchise was given under this Bill, as they were generally persons who occupied houses valued above 10*l*. The boroughs, too, to which those voters belonged—such boroughs as Penryn and Retford—containing from 350 to 550 voters, were precisely the boroughs which were now to be established under this Bill. If the Bill, by establishing such a description of boroughs, and giving the right of voting to small tradesmen, secured the purity of election, and put an end to bribery, it would act contrary to all the facts derived from experience. One of the principles of this Bill rested on the basis of population. Now, upon that point he would only observe, that though Ministers had laid down that principle in theory, they had by no means followed it in practice; for if they had, they would have found that the basis of population would have hurried them on from one step to another, until every vestige of the Constitution had been destroyed. He looked upon this Bill as the most unprincipled measure that he had ever heard of; and by the term "unprincipled" he merely meant destitute of any fixed principle. It was a measure which had evidently been got up in a hurry by the present Ministry. Their friends had made foolish speeches to their constituents out of doors, and, to make good those extravagant speeches, Ministers had brought in a measure quite as extravagant. He was certain that this Bill was not the production of his noble friend at the head of the Government; it bore no mark of his master-hand—it displayed no trace of his genius, of his talent, or of his experience. He must have assigned the task of drawing up a new Constitution for the country to a committee of superannuated school-boys, just as he had assigned the task of drawing up his budget to some young statesmen of precocious experience, for in both cases the Ministers were equally unsuccessful. They brought forward a plan of finance for the year, which they were obliged to abandon within a week of their first proposing it. He trusted that they would have the good sense to abandon in the same way their Reform Bill, which had been brought forward with as little consideration as their Budget. That Bill confiscated vested rights by wholesale, and sacrificed to mere theory privileges which had long existed in all classes of the community. It was now only the middle of April, and it was not until the 1st of March that the secret of this Bill was communicated to the public. He thought that they ought to have more than six weeks to judge of the merits of a Bill which would destroy the present Constitution of England so far as related to the Representation of the people in the House of Commons, after it had lasted for as many as six centuries. They were proceeding not with calm deliberation, but with breathless haste, to pass a Bill which might place their Lordships in the greatest jeopardy. He contended, that more time ought to be granted for deliberation; for the country had been taken by surprise, and had been deluded into a sudden burst of approbation of this measure by the clap-traps which it contained for all sorts of men. The fact was, that the more men looked into its details the more they disliked it; and doubts as to its eligibility and its expediency were rising up in the mind of every liberal and thinking man in the country. He wished that his noble friend at the head of the Government would consider, before he proceeded further with this Bill, who were the allies who supported him in it. His noble friend knew enough of the motives of men to be aware of the causes which had induced so many discordant parties to unite in approbation of his Bill. All the violent agitations of the country, all its covert treasons, were arrayed in support of it. They had determined to give his noble friend a temporary respite from the agitation of the Ballot, and of the Repeal of the Union. But they had let out their reason for so doing—they had avowed their belief that his noble friend would unintentionally do more for them in a single Session by this Bill of his, than they could ever hope to do for themselves in a long series of years by all their discussions. Yes, the Irish agitators were all his noble friend's own! and he wished his noble friend much joy of his possession. The Birmingham Union, too, was all his own—that Union which had told the highest authorities of the country that they had funds and men to furnish two armies, each equal to that which fought at Waterloo, if it should be necessary to take up arms against the oligarchy. That was a phrase which of late had become fashionable: but, for his own part, he must say, that he did not know who the persons were who were branded under the title of the oligarchy. Did the reformers of Birmingham mean by the oligarchy the gentry of the country? Did they mean that they would burn a few of their houses? Did they mean, that at their bidding the King was likely to become the greatest rebel in all his dominions? Then the twopenny trash all supported his noble friend; so that, with this great confederate array, his noble friend marched against the old institutions of the country, supported by all the blasphemy and sedition which it contained. Did his noble friend think, that because the property of the country was silent, because those who held it, being accustomed to place confidence in the Government, from never having seen their flanks turned by Government on the one side, and by sedition on the other, had not expressed themselves clamorously against this measure—did his noble friend think, that they did not feel the deepest alarm at its uncalled-for magnitude, and its probable risk? They were inclined to give his noble friend all credit for honest and pure intention; but they believed that on this occasion he had been led away by the counsels of others. The magic wand of Comus, and the enchanted cup of Circe, were very potential; and he really believed that his noble friend must have been struck by the one or have been intoxicated by the other, before he changed his nature so far as to give his consent to the innovations which this Bill was calculated to make upon the Constitution. He was sorry to hear his noble friend opposite—he meant the noble Marquis (Lansdown)—avowing that within the last three months he had seen grounds for altering all his former opinions. [The noble Marquis expressed his dissent.] If his noble friend had altered them for good and sufficient reasons, he had done wisely; but if there was any thing that had given him more pain than another in the course of these discussions, it was the belief that his noble friend, on whose talents he had been accustomed to rely for the salvation of the country, had been induced to drink of the same Circeian cup with his noble colleague at the head of the Government. What effect had been produced on the public mind by the manner in which his noble friend had brought forward this vaunted Reform Bill? The effect of it had been this—that all discreet, and prudent, and thinking men looked upon his noble friend as the Neckar of the French Revolution. They believed him to be guiding the country, unknowingly, to the brink of a precipice—they believed, that when his eyes should be opened, and he should look down upon the dreadful abyss which was yawning to ingulf it, he would recoil from his own act, and, with a hand too powerless to save and too virtuous to immolate his country, he would leave it to some ruthless ruffian arm to hurl it down to irretrievable destruction. That was the opinion of thousands who were deeply interested in the commercial welfare and prosperity of the country. They were convinced that confidence, which was the life and soul of commerce, would be destroyed by the passing of this Bill; that capital would be driven from the country; that the same species of agitation which had driven manufactures from France in the time of Louis 14th, would drive them from our shores; and that then, like Virtue, when she fled the earth, they would never re-appear in their ancient resting-place. If Ministers had taken time to provide for the safety of the different interests of the country in this Bill, they might have had the benefit of his vote, such as it was, in its favour; but they had cut that question short; for in their scramble to disfranchise totally all boroughs with less than 2,000, and partially all boroughs with less than 4,000 inhabitants, and in their determination to base their Bill on a principle of population which they did not always carry into practice, they had lost sight of all those great interests which it was their bounden duty to have protected and preserved. He begged it might be understood that he was not enamoured of the anomalies of the Constitution. If any Bill had been introduced, founded on a moderate principle, it should have had his support. The measure intended to have been introduced by the noble and learned Lord on the Woolsack in the other House of Parliament, would have deserved his support. It proceeded on an intelligible principle, whilst the Bill now before Parliament proceeded on an unknown principle, and could not be adopted without getting rid of those mighty interests on which the wealth and power of the country were founded. If they altered the institutions of the country, and adopted new institutions, it should be done with caution and deliberation. He was himself a friend to moderate Reform; and he believed that, in the present state of the country, they must concede to Reform something more than in their own calm and deliberate judgment they might think prudent. But, to concede every thing to Reform, as was proposed in this Bill—to advance blindly, perhaps to salvation, but more probably to inevitable destruction—was that which no sensible man could ever think of doing. He therefore called upon the House and upon the country to pause before they gave their consent to a measure, which might plunge the country into a dangerous abyss, from which no human councils could ever withdraw it. The noble Earl concluded by observing, that their Lordships might not perhaps pay much attention to his boding voice, but that would not prevent him from raising it, whenever any measure was proposed to them which he thought likely to inflict injury on the laws and constitution of his country.

The Bishop of *Bristol*, though not unfriendly to rational Reform, could not give his consent to the measure which was at present before the other House of Parliament. Though the petitions in behalf of that measure were very numerous, he knew enough of the modes by which such petitions were got up, to induce him to believe that they did not express the sentiments of the majority of the people. If the Bill had contained any provisions calculated to check that corruption and bribery at elections which all good men deplored, if it had gone no further than shortening the duration of the poll and limiting the expenses of election, he might have been inclined to support it: but, extensive as it now was, he could not look upon it as any thing else than a dangerous innovation upon the Constitution of the country. He objected to the Bill for another reason—it was a dangerous infringement on the rights of property; and if Parliament once commenced a course of spoliation on one species of property, there was no telling what species of property would long continue safe. He was of opinion, that even the boasted omnipotence of Parliament was not competent to deprive individuals, without their consent, of a species of property which they had long enjoyed. Individuals should not even be called on to forfeit property to which they had an undoubted right. He likewise contended, that this Bill was indefensible, inasmuch as it deprived the different corporations of the country of privileges which had long been vested in them. If Birmingham and Manchester were desirous of being represented in Parliament, let them, with the large funds which were at their disposal, compensate the decayed boroughs which they deprived of the elective franchise. Though no man was more willing than he was, to correct any real abuses, he could not help deprecating this measure, which he believed to be pregnant with mischief of every description to all the different interests of the country. He hoped that, if the Bill should come before their Lordships, the noble Earl at the head of the Government would modify it as much as possible. He was fully aware of the responsibility which he incurred by this declaration of his opinion, and he was anxious to have it understood that, in making it, he was merely expressing his own individual opinions, and not those of the honourable profession to which he belonged.

The *Lord Chancellor*.—"My Lords, I assure you, most unaffectedly, that I rise with great reluctance to prolong this unusual, and I believe I must say irregular, and I am sure that we all feel, greatly inconvenient, discussion into which my noble friend has so unexpectedly dragged the House. [*Cries of "no, no."*] Then if I must not say dragged your Lordships, I will borrow one of my noble friend's metaphors, which I will endeavour to keep unmixed,—though in the myriad of metaphors which he employed he always mixed them in the most inexplicable confusion, —I will say, that if your Lordships were not dragged, you were seduced and beguiled into this discussion by my noble friend most needlessly and unexpectedly; for my noble friend who presented the petition, confined himself most closely to that which, according to the strictest rules of your Lordships' House, is most in order: he did not enter into the whole merits of the whole question, but limited himself to making a comment on the persons from whom the petition proceeded, on the importance of the prayer of the petition, and on the manner and on the occasion on which the petitioners had congregated together. These were the topics, and these were the only topics, on which my noble friend entered; but my noble friend near me, who cautiously abstained from joining in the Debate when the question was not raised irregularly, or unusually, or incidentally upon a petition, but when it was brought forward expressly, and avowedly for the purpose of forcing a Debate on the merits of the Reform Bill—

my noble friend, who was silent when we all were prepared for Debate, comes down when a petition is to be presented, and we are all unprepared, and drags us,—no I will not say drag, for that implies force, but seduces us, for that implies consent—into a discussion, to which he brings a speech of great rhetoric, exuberant fancy, multitudinous metaphor, and long premeditation, and filled with great, if not always successful, attempts to instruct and amuse us; but a speech, of which, whatever may be its other rare and exalted merit, conciseness is not that merit which I would venture to predicate as its distinguishing characteristic. With all deference to my noble friend, I must say, that he took us all a little by surprise. My noble friend commenced his oration by saying that he had only a word or two to say regarding this petition. Then I thought to myself, 'Oh, there is nothing here but what is right and regular.' But then he said that which, from the long experience I have had of this and the other House of Parliament, gave me strange misgivings, —he said—and it is always an ominous introduction to a professedly short statement—'far be it from me upon this occasion to enter into the merits of the general question.' As soon as my noble friend had uttered those words, my experience led me to expect a long, elaborate, and premeditated disquisition on all the merits of the Reform Bill, and on every other topic which by any artifice of rhetoric my noble friend could connect with it, not excepting that which was the real cause of his speech,—a general, a virulent, and not a very candid or even amicable attack on the character and persons of those who at this moment constitute the Cabinet. I should only be running the risk of verifying my own remark were I to begin the defence of my noble colleagues and myself by abjuring any intention to enter into it at any great length. I have reason to know that my noble friend came down here fortified by good sleep and an excellent dinner,—I have not had the same benefit of either bed or board. I have undergone the fatigues of a long day without refreshment, and therefore your Lordships have some pledge that I shall not detain you longer than is absolutely necessary. My noble friend and the right rev. Prelate who followed him,—and here I will observe, that I could wish that my noble friend had imitated the right rev. Prelate, whose speech was distinguished by straightforwardness of purpose and undeviating liberality and candour,—my noble friend and the right rev. Prelate both state that they are Reformers, and that they will not stand up for acknowledged abuses. 'Only prove to us,' says the right rev. Prelate, echoing the words of my noble friend, 'only prove to us that these things are abuses, and we will be among the first to lop them off.' Is it then, in the opinion of my noble friend, who advertises himself as a reformer in one of the most anti-Reform speeches that I ever heard in the whole course of my life, and whose advertisement contains as correct an account of his reforming propensities as the advertisements in the daily journals do of the wares advertised by them for sale —is it in the eye of such a Reformer as my noble friend no abuse that the most populous, the most opulent, the most enterprising, and the most intelligent cities in this empire should be wholly unrepresented, whilst the mouldering mounds of Old Sarum, and the barren walls of Midhurst each send two Members to Parliament? 'Oh, but then,' says he, 'if your plan had been confined to that, Birmingham and Manchester might have been permitted to return Members to the House of Commons.' Be it so. But then, is it no abuse,—mind, I am addressing myself all this time to a sincere thorough-going Reformer, for such my noble friend professes himself to be,—is it no abuse, I ask, in the eyes of my noble friend, that the power of giving laws to a great empire, with millions of subjects at home, and tens of millions of subjects abroad,—the power of giving laws to this great and intelligent country, and of all but giving laws, as my noble friend said, through this country to all the world besides,—is it no abuse, I say, that the power of making such laws should be vested as property in private individuals? Is it no abuse in his eyes that the power should be given, not by the choice of the people, but according to the caprice, inclination, or good-will of a peer or other powerful patron? Is it no abuse in his eyes that this power should be set up to auction in our public marts;—that it should be sold as notoriously as the beasts in Smithfield;—that it should be let for a term of years, like a stall or a stable;—and that it should be so openly treated as an article of traffic, that when a question arose, as I stated the other night, regarding the prompt, the discount was allowed, not in money, but in returning a Member—I speak from my own knowledge—to the Parliament now assembled?" The noble Lord then proceeded to ask—had not the buying and selling of seats been proved to be as common as that of cattle in the market? And was it in the face of acknowledged abuses such as those—abuses which, in the words of a former Speaker of the House of Commons, would have caused our ancestors to startle—that the friends of rational Reform, who would lop off these abuses, were to be denominated innovators, and to be accused of tearing up the Constitution by the roots? But there was an outcry made in favour of corporations and bodies which had come by usurpation to have a monopoly of the Representation. In his mind it was no small recommendation of the measure to say, that such abuses and anomalies would in future be got rid of by means of it. Nothing could be more degrading to him who sold, and to him who purchased, than the existing traffic in votes at elections; its effect was more prejudicial to the morals of the people, and worse for the country generally, than the evil of nomination boroughs. This barter and sale of men's voices and consciences was debasing to him who came into Parliament by means of it, and destructive of the character of those by whom he was returned; and no where was the base traffic more remarkable than in towns where freemen possessed a right of voting, particularly non-resident freemen. It was proposed by the Bill, as the best mode of lopping-off abuses, to take the right of election out of hands by which it had been invariably abused, and to place it in the property of the country. At the same time let the noble Lord bear in mind, that the Bill did not disfranchise existing freemen. He had himself witnessed a contested election in a great rotten borough—for he would so denominate Liverpool, and place it at the head of all the rest,—and although for many months afterwards the candidates had no notion of any corrupt or undue practices, the cost of the election amounted to upwards of 40,000*l.* He had been told that three times 40,000*l.* would not be sufficient to pay the expenses of the last election that had disgraced the town of Liverpool—he hoped the last in every sense of the word; for if this Bill were torn to shivers, another and a local Bill would be necessary to deprive parties of a franchise which they had abused. The noble Lord complained of the measure having been brought forward without due deliberation, although three months had been suffered to elapse before it was introduced. But if Ministers had delayed the Bill till another Session, he rather suspected there would have been found some friend to Reform like the noble Lord, to complain of the delay. What had been said of the fair sex appeared to be applicable in the present instance:—

> "We men have many faults: poor women have but two,
> There's nothing right they say,—there's nothing right they do."

So the noble Lord thought with respect to his Majesty's Ministers: like the ladies, they had only two faults in his opinion—they said and did nothing right. But this opinion of the noble Lord was of recent birth: up to a late period he had expressed no distrust or disapprobation of Ministers. He was sure that his noble friend was the last man in the world to be guilty of a wilful misrepresentation of any well-known fact; he was convinced, therefore, that he did not mean to make any wilful misrepresentation, and that he had said what he did not precisely intend to say. He had cast imputations upon those in whom, as he had already observed, up to a very late period, he professed to have the most unbounded confidence. His noble friend appeared to deny it:—when he said a late period he meant a period before Christmas, he would not even say Christmas; but an earlier period, about the 22nd of November; up to that period his noble friend at least appeared to entertain no distrust of his Majesty's present Ministers. He was neither afraid of new inroads on the fabric of the Constitution, nor of their bringing forward ridiculous measures; and, least of all, did he ever indulge in such observations as he had favoured their Lordships with in his gambols that night—he alluded to his calling them overgrown, superannuated school-boys. He was not aware what sort of beings superannuated school-boys might be: his Majesty's Ministers were not mere tyros in political affairs, nor novices in point of experience or resolution, yet such was the magic influence of the Bill—so much had it disturbed his noble friend's powers of reasoning—so great a change had it produced in his opinion—that he could discover nothing but superannuated school-boy blunderers, bunglers, or what not, in men in whom, up to a very late period, comparatively speaking, he had nothing but confidence to place—of whom he had but praise to speak. That Bill appeared indeed to be one of fascination, as regarded the noble Lord, for it had beguiled him of his better feeling, and deprived him of his better sense. As an instance of which latter effect, take the noble Lord's famous sentence beginning with Comus, ending with Circe, and containing every thing dreadful and seductive but Scylla and Charybdis. He could not undertake to follow the noble Lord through all the inconsistencies of his speech. The noble Lord declared he would have supported the measure if he did not believe it to be pregnant with mischief to the commercial, monied, and manufacturing interests of the country. Would not the noble Lord allow the bankers and monied men of London, and the manufacturers of Manchester, Leeds, and Sheffield, to know something of those interests? He would not accuse his noble friend of an overweening appreciation of his own intelligence, in the opinions he had expressed as to the interest of the manufacturing and monied classes in the proposed Reform; but yet he thought it rather too much that his noble friend should give himself more credit than he would allow to the London bankers, for a correct estimation of the true interests of the monied classes, and that he should consider himself better acquainted with what concerns the manufacturing interests of the country than the manufacturers themselves; and further, he thought it rather too much that his noble friend should pronounce that measure to be unpalatable and injurious to the people, which almost all England had concurred in approving. Ill-fated, unhappy England! which has not only a Government determined to destroy the institutions of the State, and a people bent upon the annihilation of popular rights, but the whole body of her manufacturers combined to ruin her manufacturers; the bankers to compromise the monied, and the merchants to barter the commercial interest. Having ventured to trespass so far upon the attention of their Lordships, in answer to his noble friend, he should reserve, until other opportunities might arise, his defence of himself and his colleagues, in respect to the details of the Bill. He had then risen only to show that his noble friend had in fact argued nothing against the measure, and to repel the imputation which had been cast upon him, that in some number of a certain Periodical, he had demonstrated that a piebald Representation was indispensable according to the Constitution. He knew, that such things were often said, but he was sure that he had not expressed any such opinion. [The Earl of Carnarvon intimated, that he did not impute the article to which he had alluded to the noble Lord, but to a right hon. Gentleman connected with the Government.] It was, also, a gross perversion to assert, that population was the basis on which the Reform Bill proceeded. He contended that the Bill made property really and in effect the basis of Representation; and he denied that the present Representation of the freemen in Corporations was a representation of property. He knew, indeed, that it was possible for a man so to pass his life in inconsistency, as to make his last inconsistencies seem consistent with themselves; and he therefore was the less surprised, when he heard it at the same time asserted that the great principle of Representation, according to the Constitution, was the Representation of property; and that the present state of the Corporations afforded the Representation contemplated by the Constitution. But could it be said for a moment that property was the basis of the suffrage in the Corporations? Was it not the fact that the freeman might be a pauper in the parish workhouse, and might transmit to the pauper issue of his loins the privilege of making laws for the disposal of property, and for the control of the Peerage. Did his noble friend find fault with the present Administration for their endeavours to abolish that privilege as far as was consistent with existing rights? The utmost that a respect for existing rights could require of them, they had done. They had not interfered with the present freemen, who were to be allowed to retain the suffrage for life. The Representation at present was totally disconnected with property, whereas the measure of the Government was based solely upon property. When he heard those objections from the declared friends of Reform, he was reminded of the proverb, "Save me from my friends." He, for his part, would prefer to meet the honest, uncompromising, avowed, intelligible, and unvirulent opposition of the noble Duke, lately at the head of his Majesty's Government, than to fall into the arms of the fastidious friends of the present Ministers. Although he had, at first, felt some unwillingness to disfranchise all the boroughs included in one schedule of the Reform Bill, yet, when he came to consider the case in all its bearings, he was convinced that there was no safe mode of proceeding otherwise. He never had stated on a former occasion his doubts on the subject of these boroughs. He never had been, and never should be, ashamed to own, that he entertained those doubts be they as unpopular as they might. But when he came narrowly to inspect the subject, he found, that if the Legislature once trenched on the confines, it would not be consistent with any principle of expediency or safety, to stop short of taking all that could be got. He concurred in the present measure, which embraced a large view of the case, because, being in office, and having the support of the Government, he thought it likely to be carried; and he formerly brought forward a more confined measure, because he thought that what he then proposed was the utmost of what he should then get: he had since, however, overcome his first reluctance, and had been induced to give, and cheerfully to give, his support and assistance to a measure which he approved of, because he considered it consistent, intelligible, and effectual, and well calculated to produce, he would not say a change in,—but a restoration of, the purity of the Constitution. He felt assured, however, that, on a future opportunity, he should be able to show his noble friend that, under no circumstances, could it be fit that a Representative of the people, having the power to vote away their property and rights, should be deputed from a pig-stye, or from a ruined wall, or an enclosed mound, having no inhabitants, except for about five minutes in every seven years. There was no man less liable to the charge of having rashly attempted to overthrow the institutions which had nursed the prosperity of this country than the man who was then addressing their Lordships; but he was also incapable of confounding the rust with the pure metal, or the abuses with the original purposes of our institutions. His admiration of the theoretical excellence of the Constitution did not cause him to resist the removal of those practical perversions of it, on account of which Mr. Pitt, who at all events was no reformer, said, that it was impossible for an honest Minister to conduct the affairs of the country. He was desirous to answer the question of his noble friend as to "Who were the allies of the Government in their enterprise of Reform?" For his part, he would not judge of any man by that perverted adage, according to which a man's character was to be estimated, not by the truth of his opinions, or the uprightness of his conduct, but by his company. It was broken charity to inquire, not whether a man pursued himself a straight path, but by whom was he accidentally accompanied? He thought the measure of Reform pursued by the Ministers, sound in principle, consistent with itself and with the Constitution. Proceeding, therefore, with an anxious wish to improve, not to destroy, our institutions, were they to be condemned because their measure had this additional quality, or, as he ought rather to call it, this additional advantage, that it had received the general approbation of all classes of the people? Was it a reproach to say, that those persons called agitators were the allies of the Ministry, when, by the same accident, they had the approbation of the whole body of the people? He would repeat, was a measure, which, being consistent with its own principles, and with the principles of the Constitution, having, moreover, the accident of the universal favour of the people, to be condemned, because it had the additional accident, he would not call it merit, of pacifying that small portion of his Majesty's subjects who had avowed their own despair that anything which it was in human power to effect could ever pacify them. He did not assert that the general approbation the measure had met with was of itself a sufficient ground to justify it, and induce their Lordships to pass it, but it was surely a most extraordinary objection to the Bill to say that it had pacified the country and met the wishes of all classes of his Majesty's subjects. He had good grounds for hoping that they who now slighted that Bill would find amongst its results the pacification even of Ireland. For he could pledge his word, that in parts of that country where the Repeal of the Union had engrossed men's thoughts a few weeks ago, dissatisfaction had ceased, and all were reconciled to the legislative Union by the announcement of the Ministerial plan of Reform. He did not fear that their Lordships would be alarmed into a disapproval of such a Bill by the exaggerations of his noble friend. When the whole of the United Kingdom, from the extremity of Cornwall to the most northern point of Scotland, and from the Isle of Ely to the Coast of Galway, rested their content upon the consummation of that measure, he was sure their Lordships would not be persuaded by the representations of his noble friend to bring the tranquillity of these realms into jeopardy by its rejection. He did not mean to use the language of intimidation (into which the warning of foreseeing wisdom was too often interpreted) when he reminded their Lordships of those predictions of the great Chatham, which their severer ancestors had listened to with respect and honour, though unhappily they neglected his advice, on this question of Reform. Although the counsels of that great man were not followed, his warnings were heard without displeasure, and he (the Lord Chancellor) would venture to say, in later times, that he thought the thunders of Heaven might sometimes roll in the voice of a united people.

Lord *Wynford* was happy to find that the noble and learned Lord who had just addressed their Lordships, was not one of the projectors of that which he (Lord Wynford) regarded as the most scandalous part of the Ministerial project of Reform, and which involved the annihilation of vested rights. The cutting off the nomination boroughs was, in his opinion, a most sweeping confiscation, without being justified by any offence. When an offence was proved, it might justly lead to forfeiture. Liverpool was an apposite case to illustrate what he meant, and which would justify such a course of proceeding. In such a course he would cordially concur, and would consent to confiscation when the guilt had been proved, but not before. The noble and learned Lord on the Woolsack had talked a good deal about thunder —was there no thunder in Heaven, then, for injustice? Injustice, he believed, whether practised by a nation or classes of men, never passed unpunished. He hoped that their Lordships would attend to the opinion which the noble and learned Lord had formerly professed, and not follow his present opinion, which might lead to a confiscation of all property. He knew what Mr. Pitt's opinions were as well as that noble and learned Lord; and he recollected well, that though Mr. Pitt admitted the imperfections of our Constitution, he had always contended that they were imperfections we must still carry about us, and could not get rid of them without destroying the Constitution. They were like excrescences on the body, which could not be removed with safety. He took it for granted, as nothing had been proved against the boroughs which were to be disfranchised, that they had done nothing wrong; and yet, though no guilt had been brought home to them, sixty-two of them were to be disfranchised at once. But he wished their Lordships to recollect that confiscation did not stop here. It touched another and an important part of the Constitution; and let them take care that they did not hold a doctrine to-day which might be abused against themselves to-morrow. The freemen of towns—those who held their rights by burgage tenure—were to be disfranchised, and their rights were to be confiscated. It might be said, perhaps, that the Bill did not touch the present possessors, but it did their children; and if they touched the freemen to-day, what security could any man have that to-morrow the freeholders would not be attacked? The children of those freemen who were to be disfranchised, had as much right to their franchise as their Lordships had to their seats in that House, or to their estates. He would caution their Lordships to beware of that argument! they laid claim to their titles, as freemen claimed their freedom,—by birth. Suppose any one were to say, "We do not like the peerage of England; just let it remain as it is at present, and after the deaths of the present Peers, do away with it altogether." What answer could their Lordships make to such an argument if they on the very same principle, confiscated the rights of freemen, freeholders, and burgage tenants? He remembered to have heard a noble Duke, he would excuse the allusion, talk about the right of 40*s*. freeholders to return Members to sit in Parliament. He was bound to take it for granted that, in the case to which he alluded, Parliament did what was right. It was not for him, knowing nothing of what was passing at that time—indeed, it would be unconstitutional in him, to form any other presumption. He conceived that the ground on which the Legislature acted was, that they were not genuine freeholders, and that they were only upheld for certain purposes. Admitting that their Lordships were not to deprive existing freemen of their privileges, how could their Lordships answer for taking away the rights from their children? Let it be recollected that the rights of freeholders in towns, and of burgage tenants, descended like property to their children. The 40*s*. freeholders were an abuse; that could not be said of the freemen of the ancient boroughs of England. He put it gravely to their Lordships, therefore, what answer could they give, if they took away the rights of the children, should any person hereafter come forward and say, that the present Peers ought to be allowed to retain their titles, but that, instead of descending to their children, they must be given up? He could not see any distinction between the two cases. He therefore entreated their Lordships maturely to reflect and consider how far the principles on which they might act could be extended to their Lordships, and their families. The noble and learned Lord declared, that property was the basis of the Bill: and yet it took the right of voting from men of character, property, and respectable situation in life, and conferred it on men who might actually be reduced to a state of pauperism. He had examined this Bill, clause by clause, from one end to the other, and he could not understand on what principle it was framed, nor did he find that any two of its advocates, in the statements they had made, had given the same account of it. He understood the noble Earl to say, the other day, that the principle of the Bill was population; that was now disclaimed; the principle of the Bill was not population, although it gave the right of voting to about 170,000 people. The noble and learned Lord said, the principle of the Bill was property. How did the noble Lord prove that? "Oh," said he, "we give the freeholders votes!"—Why they, your Lordships know, had votes before; and, instead of giving them votes, they are to be mixed up with paupers, or something very like it. The Bill, then, deprived the freeholders of their rights, by sharing those rights with paupers. They were to be mingled with leaseholders of 50*l*. a-year, while the holders of Church property, the lease of which was generally renewed every two or three years, were excluded. In the cities that were counties within themselves, like Bristol, the freeholders were very hardly treated. In general, the voters who paid only 10*l*. rent, would far out number those who had 30*l*., 40*l*., or, 50*l*. a year, and thus the Bill would throw the elections altogether into the hands of paupers. He was entitled to say that on the authority of the Liverpool Poor Bill, in which it was stated, that the leaseholders paying 10*l*. a-year, could not pay their poor-rates. The Reform Bill would throw down all those interests which had grown up by time, and which gave every class a share in the Representation, and would throw that Representation entirely into the hands of one class only. The poorer and lowest classes would be able to return a majority of the House of Commons. The landed interest would, under this Bill, as he had calculated, have only 136 Members, while the Representatives of the pauper class would be 298. The fear, therefore, which some persons had pretended to feel for the predominancy of the landed interest, was very idle, and destitute of foundation. In fact, the scheme would take away the Representation from the great mass of the property in the country, and give it to an oligarchy of wealth. He considered Universal Suffrage to be only another name for universal plunder, but he was not sure that it would not be as bad under this Bill. He was certain that property would neither be represented nor protected under it. He did not deny, that under it talents would find their way into Parliament, but they would be not the talents which would benefit the country—they would destroy its institutions. The talents would be those of men who had nothing to lose and everything to gain, and who would make themselves the willing instruments of terror. They would be demagogues, and their talents would be employed to the worst purposes. Property would no longer be protected. It would be made the subject of a general scramble, and general confusion must be the result. In conclusion, the noble Lord called on their Lordships rather to follow the former opinions of the noble and learned Lord on the Woolsack, than his present opinions, for he seemed not to go cordially along with his colleagues in their plan.

Lord *Farnham* could not allow the

assertion of the noble and learned Lord on the Woolsack, that this Bill had pacified Ireland, to pass uncontradicted. There was not the slightest foundation for believing that it had, or would have, any such effect. Instead of becoming pacified, that country was going forward in a very different direction. He had rather expected, such was the state of that country, to have heard the noble Lord, the Secretary of State for the Home Department, come down to the House, and ask for further powers to tranquillize it; but he was happy to find, that there was no necessity to have recourse to such unconstitutional means. The noble and learned Lord had said, that the Bill had removed the desire for the Repeal of the Union. The fact was, that the people were under the influence of demagogues, and by them they had been instructed to forbear from pressing the question of the Repeal of the Union. An address, however, of the hon. member for Waterford to the people of the Queen's County had been published, which showed that the Secretary of War came into Parliament under the protection of that hon. Member.

The *Lord Chancellor* explained, that he had never supposed, or said, that the Bill could pacify Ireland; that it could get rid of poverty, misery, and crime; but he said that, in some parts of Ireland, it had been productive of the best possible effects; and, with respect to this, he must refer their Lordships to an extract from a document which had already been referred to in another place, and which contained these words, with reference to Ireland:—"The Reform measure has put a stop, in some places, to a system of agitation for a repeal of the Union, which has so long prevailed." He was afraid, certainly, that measures of coercion might be necessary, as well as remedial measures; he hoped not, but he was afraid; and he mentioned that, to show that he could never suppose that a measure of that kind would pacify Ireland. If it were necessary, Ministers certainly would apply to Parliament for additional powers; but that necessity might, he hoped, be averted.

Petition to lie on the Table.

IRISH SUBLETTING ACT.] Lord Melbourne having proposed to postpone the second reading of this Bill,

The Earl of *Wicklow* really could not consent to the noble Viscount's postponing this important Bill so frequently without assigning any reason for his doing so, or giving any notice of his intention.

Lord *Melbourne* said, his object in postponing the Bill was, to introduce some very extensive amendments, which he hoped would meet the approbation of the House and satisfy the noble Earl himself. The Bill was of too much importance to be hastily disposed of.

The Earl of *Wicklow* suggested, if these amendments affected the principle of the Bill, that the noble Viscount should withdraw it, and bring in a new one.

Viscount *Melbourne* said, the amendments did not affect the principle, nor were they yet fully matured. He intended to propose them in the Committee.

Second reading postponed.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Thursday, April 14, 1831.

MINUTES.] Sir JOHN MALCOLM took his seat for Launceston.

Bills committed. The Corporation Fund; the Elections (Ireland), read a third time. The Growth of Tobacco (Ireland); Deputy Lieutenants (Scotland) Indemnity.

Mr. R. GRANT'S Motion relative to the Emancipation of the Jews, was postponed till May 5th.

Petitions presented. For the Abolition of Slavery, by Lord STANLEY, from Warrington:—By Mr. HUGHES HUGHES, from Dissenters at Oxford:—By Mr. BENETT, from Dissenters at West Lavington, and other places in Wiltshire:—By Mr. JOHN WOOD, from Dissenters at Guisborough, and other places:—By Mr. JOHN JOHNSTONE, from Pollokshaws, and other places. In favour of the Cotton Factories Bill, by Mr. FYSHE PALMER, from Maidenhead:—By Mr. JOHN JOHNSTONE, from the Incorporation of Weavers, Dunfermline. Against the Bill, by Mr. STRUTT, from Silk Throwsters of Derby:—By Lord STANLEY, from Cotton Spinners at Heywood; also from the Clergy, &c. of Bolton-le-moor, against the Beer Bill. For Promoting the Building of Churches, by Mr. HUGHES HUGHES, from the Clergy of Docking, and of Kendal. In favour of the Kildare Street Society, by Mr. J. WYNNE, from Calny Sligo. Against the Duty on Steam Vessels, by Sir GEORGE MURRAY, from Owners of Steam Vessels at Leith:—By Lord WILLIAM GRAHAM, from Dumbarton:—By Mr. MARRYATT from Margate and Broadstairs. For Reform, by Lord STANLEY, from Broughton, Denton, and Houghton:—By Mr. HUNT, from Miles Platting. Against the Reform Bill, by Lord EASTNOR, from the Mayor and Corporation of Hereford:—By Mr. BENETT, from Westbury, complaining that that Borough was to be disfranchised, though it contained more than 6,000 inhabitants. By Sir GEORGE MURRAY, for the Repeal of the Post-horse Duty, from Coach-masters of Perth and Forfar shires. For the Repeal of the Duty on Printed Cottons, from Cotton Manufacturers at Perth.

REPRESENTATION OF THE CHURCH OF SCOTLAND.] Sir *G. Murray* presented a Petition from the Presbytery of Dunblane, praying that in the Reform Bill provision should be made that the Ministers of the Church of Scotland might have the power of voting for a Representative in Parliament. He was himself not favourable to giving the elective franchise to the clergymen of the Church of Scotland, because doing so would bring them into collision with the people at elections, and thus lower their character, which at present stood very high, owing to the fact, that in no instance was any opportunity afforded of bringing them into unpleasant collision with their parishioners. He could not support the prayer of the petition. If, however, the clergymen of the Church of Scotland thought that they ought to be represented, and were desirous to be so, he should wish to see them represented as the Church of England was—in the House of Peers by means of her dignitaries, and in the Commons, by the Members for her Universities. He did not advocate change, but as the Ministers were about to make a great change, that ought to be made as perfect as possible. On this principle he must contend, that Scotch cities and towns with upwards of 20,000 inhabitants, which by the new Bill would be left unrepresented, ought to have Members given to them. As he perceived that another Member was to be given to the University of Dublin, he recommended Ministers to give the same advantage to the Universities of Scotland.

Sir *Alexander Hope* cordially agreed with his right hon. friend. To take the clergy of Scotland from the exclusive performance of their clerical duties, would be a great injury to them and their flocks. At the same time he wished to see their interests represented and taken care of in Parliament.

Mr. *Hart Davis* thought some of the observations of the right hon. Baronet (Sir G. Murray) was levelled at the clergymen of the Church of England, who, he was persuaded, formed as zealous a body of clergymen as were to be found in the world.

Mr. *Robert Grant* said, that the Representation of the Scotch Church was a question still open; and he might also state, that the plan of giving a Member to the Scotch Universities was under the consideration of his Majesty's Ministers.

Petition to be printed.

REFORM.—PERSONALITIES OF MR. HUNT AND MR. O'CONNELL.] Mr. *Hunt* presented a Petition from the inhabitants of the suburbs of Manchester, in which they stated, that though they thought no Reform would be effectual without Vote by Ballot, yet they were favourable to the Ministerial plan, and hoped it would be carried without being suffered to be impaired by those parties who were interested in the existence of the abuses of the country. In presenting another Petition from New Lanark, complaining of Distress, of Taxation without Representation, and praying for a repeal of the Corn Laws, the hon. Member expressed his regret at the absence of the hon. member for Kirkcudbright, and of the hon. member for Waterford, both of whom had attacked him last night, as the present petition would have shown them, that he was correct in his observations. The present petitioners prayed for the abolition of the restrictions on the importation of corn, and also that the people might not be called upon to serve in the militia, or to pay taxes, until every kind of retrenchment was adopted, their grievances redressed, and a full Reform granted in the Commons House of Parliament. He had, however, been attacked by those hon. Members, so that between Sawney and Blarney he had enough upon his hands.

Mr. *O'Connell*, who had just then entered the House, said, that he could easily reply to the charges made against him by the hon. member for Preston. He begged to congratulate the hon. Member on becoming the oracle of the Tories, who now continually quoted him on all important occasions. The hon. member for Preston represented the people of England as if they were like the dog with the meat crossing a brook, and anxious to throw it aside in order to catch hold of that which was impracticable—the shadow. The hon. Member was certainly urging the people of England to look after the shadow and forget the substance. He was, in fact, a mock reformer, and not a real one. He was not a substantial corrector of abuses, but appeared to be rather anxious to pull down all the establishments of the country —while, on the contrary, he (Mr. O'Connell) was quite willing, when an opportunity offered of correcting abuses, to sacrifice the theory of Reform to its practice, and to accept the benefit. Nay, more—when he found that that Government, which had commenced prosecutions against him, were about to concede Reform to the country, instead of compromising with them, as had been charged against him, he made no compromise, but he did sacrifice his personal feelings to lend them his support in conferring a benefit on the country. As, however, the hon. member for Preston was thus injuring the cause of Reform, he would make a present of him to the Tories altogether. He mistook what had fallen from him (Mr. O'Connell), and misrepresented him accordingly; and, without accusing him of selling himself to the Tories, he must say that he had also mistaken and misrepresented in like manner the people of England. He did not mean to say, that he had been bought, for he did not think that he would sell himself to the Tories, or that they would buy him; but he had certainly shown them that he was a lumping pennyworth if they were disposed to purchase.

Mr. *John Campbell* said, that, in the absence of the hon. member for Kirkcudbright, he would say, that he entirely concurred in every thing which had fallen from him on the previous evening. He would not charge the hon. member for Preston with having sold himself, for he was incapable of doing so, but, notwithstanding his respect for him, he must say that his conduct was suspicious. He believed, that the hon. Member had elicited the opinions of the few hundred thousand persons of whom he spoke on a former evening, by putting leading questions to them, such as "Would you not rather have no Reform than such a Reform as this?" to which a multitude like that would naturally reply in the affirmative. The sentiments the hon. Member stated were not the sentiments of the people of England.

Mr. Alderman *Waithman* said, that he had never known any measure give so much satisfaction as the present. There were not, in the whole kingdom, 5,000 persons who would be found to disapprove of the measure. He thought it a remedy for all present evils, and he had no doubt that in any future House there would be individuals fully competent to carry on the business of the country. He merely rose, in consequence of his connection with large bodies of men, to give his contradiction to the statements which had been made.

Sir *Henry Hardinge* observed, that as the hon. member for Waterford had complimented the hon. member for Preston in having gone over to the Tories, the hon. member for Preston might compliment the hon. member for Waterford in having gone over to the Whigs. The hon. Baronet, the member for Lewes, had stated, that when he went to his constituents, there were only one or two who approved of the Bill. He (Sir H. Hardinge) understood from undoubted authority that the freemen of Lewes were persuaded that the Bill would not answer its objects, and that they had come to a resolution, in the event of a dissolution, of again returning their present Representative, who opposed the Bill, to Parliament. In Northamptonshire there was any thing but a universal feeling in favour of Reform. He rather believed that an anti-Reform feeling had been expressed not only by the property of the county, but by a large majority in point of numbers.

Mr. *Kennedy* said, that the persons in Scotland from whom this petition emanated were peculiarly satisfied with the Reform Bill. In Paisley there was a universal feeling of satisfaction. He was sure that no hon. Member could contradict the statement that at a meeting at Paisley, unexampled for numbers and respectability, a universal feeling of satisfaction was expressed.

Mr. *Hunt* hoped, that the House would bear with him for a short time, having been attacked in the way that he had been. How often had he said, that the people were run wild in favour of this cause? He was heard at the Common Hall of the City of London with great complacency in favour of the Bill, but the moment he endeavoured to say any thing to show, that it would not have the effect which was expected, he was no longer favoured with a hearing. He had stated, that the whole country were running wild with such a degree of unanimity as he had never before beheld in this country. There was, however, a reaction beginning; and he would observe, in answer to what had fallen from the worthy Alderman, that he had had today two deputations from the City of London (he had had one yesterday), to invite him to take the chair at a meeting of the operatives, to express their disapprobation of the Reform Bill; but he had declined, having otherwise more business than he could manage. Situated as he was, between Caledonia and Hibernia, he had quite enough to do. He was ready however to face the hon. member for Kirkcudbright, either there or elsewhere. What he had said was, that he was about to present a petition from new Lanark, praying to be relieved from taxation, unless they were represented in Parliament. That was all that he had said. The hon. member for Waterford talked something about *Paddy*. He had said nothing about *Paddy*. What he had said was, that he had been attacked by Hibernia, on one side, overpowering him with tears, and Caledonia threatening great heat and fire on the other; and that between "Sawney" and "Blarney" he was very nearly overwhelmed. Every one would think, after the speech of the hon. member for Waterford, that "Blarney" was applicable to him. The hon. member for Waterford had said that he (Mr. Hunt) had made an attack upon him. Attack! what attack did he make on the hon. and learned Member? He should not have said a word, unless he had been previously attacked. The hon. Member did not charge him openly with any thing, but he insinuated something in the same way as he had accused the hon. member for Weymouth. "Now Sir (said Mr. Hunt), I do not insinuate, but I boldly and plainly tell him, in the face of this House, and in the face of the country, that he trafficked with the Marquis of Anglesey for the very office which Mr. Doherty now holds. There would have been no agitation about the Union, if Mr. Doherty had not got the situation instead of him. Mr. Bennett was the go-between in the negotiation. The hon. and learned Member accused him of having sold himself to the Tories—let him prove that. Whatever the hon. and learned Member for Waterford might say about his being no Reformer, and about the hon. and learned Member himself being a real Reformer, he knew that he had shown himself a Reformer. He appealed to the House—he would not appeal to the hon. and learned Member—yes, he would appeal to the hon. Member whether he had a double way of shooting? He would appeal to the country whether he had expressed one sentiment to-day and another to-morrow? He had always been the advocate of Universal Suffrage and Vote by Ballot. The hon. member stated at Clare that he was in favour of Vote by Ballot and Universal Suffrage. It was the hon. and learned Member, therefore, that was the shifter and not he. The hon. and learned Member had declared at the election for Clare, that he was the advocate of Universal Suffrage and Vote by Ballot; and it was therefore, the hon. Member that had shifted his ground. The hon. and learned Member agreed with the Ministers—so did he to a certain extent—but he was not satisfied that their measure was an unmixed good, and, therefore, he could not say so. He could not change his sentiments because the hon. member for Waterford did. There was a discussion last night on the discontent which existed in Clare. Did that hon. and learned Member not think, that a great part of the discontent in Clare arose from his having broken his promises? He had promised them, that when he was in Parliament he would move for a Repeal of the Act for disfranchising the 40*s.* freeholders. The hon. Member had not done any such thing. For his own part he had never consented to disfranchise any man. He must unequivocally say, that the people of England, who had been running wild in favour of the Reform Bill, were recovering their senses, and that the seven millions of adults who were not to receive any share of the franchise by this Bill, were no further in favour of it than, as he had before stated, because it would make an inroad into that system which was disgraceful to the whole country. With regard to the measure itself, though what he might say of it would be said to be a proof that he had joined the Tories, he must observe, that alterations in it were necessary, and alterations had been announced. The noble Lord who announced them gave one version of those alterations, the hon. Secretary for Ireland had given another, and the noble Lord, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, had given a third, which was different from the two others. Probably all these Gentlemen meant the same, but, from want of consulting with each other, they did not agree in their stories. He begged to ask, then, what they did mean? A petition had been presented from Warwick for the Bill, the whole Bill, and nothing but the Bill—yet now the Bill was to be altered. Nothing of that which he had always contended for was to be granted by the Bill, and he, therefore, was not content with the measure. He had attended a meeting in Somersetshire a fortnight ago, and at the close of that meeting the people had come to an unanimous resolution in favour of Vote by Ballot. The members for Somersetshire were not then attending their duty in the House; as they had not attended their duty at the meeting, he would not, therefore, present the petition. As to his constituents, he was not afraid to meet them—he was not afraid of the threat held out in *The Times* of this morning, of a dissolution; he did not object to a dissolution, and was not afraid of his seat. If his constituents objected to his conduct, let them only say so, and he would accept the Chiltern Hundreds. What did he gain by sitting there till two o'clock in the morning, or what could he gain? Neither the Tories nor the Whigs had anything to give him which he would accept of. If ever he should accept anything, let the House and the country form such an opinion of him as he had of the hon. member for Waterford.

Mr. *Cutlar Ferguson*, in reference to his statement on the former evening, explained, that he had said the whole population of Scotland were, he believed, in favour of the principle of the Bill, but they did not agree in all its details and in all its provisions. Two or three counties with which he was connected had declared in favour of the principle of Reform, but they did not like the sweeping nature of the Bill. One county in which the people had declared in favour of the Bill, objected to reducing the rate for voting so low as was intended, but that was not the case with the majority of his constituents, and he believed with the majority of the people of Scotland. There was one occasion on which the hon. member for Preston must have been, he believed, much mis-reported. He had been made to say at a meeting of the people in Manchester, that "he would let them into a secret which they could not learn from the newspapers, because there was a conspiracy between the Ministers and the Reporters to carry the Bill. The Ministers had openly avowed in the House that they had called in one million of the middle classes to take a share in the Representation, in order to keep down the lower classes, that they meant to raise the volunteers again, that they might keep their hands in the pockets of the people, and that the people might not escape their present work" [*hear, hear! from Mr. Hunt*]. He was sorry to suppose, that the hon. Member meant to justify such language. Did he mean to say, that Ministers had avowed that they introduced a million of voters to keep down and crush the lower classes? He denied, that such language had ever been used in that House by the Ministers. If the hon. Member avowed such language, he must justify it. He supposed that what he had said was not a fair report of what the hon. Member had spoken, and he mentioned it, that the hon. Member might contradict it. He could not conceive anything more mischievous, anything more likely to hold up that House to the contempt and even to the indignation, of the people. The hon. Member had stated, that the Ministers had done nothing to reduce the price of bread, or diminish the hours of labour. Could it be expected of any Reform Bill that it should reduce the price of bread or diminish the hours of labour? He expected nothing of that kind from Reform. He expected that Reform would make that House a more faithful guardian of the public purse. Wars would not have been so frequent, so wasteful, and so expensive, and would sooner have been put an end to; the nation would not have been so heavily taxed, nor have groaned under its present load of debt, had the people been fully and fairly represented. But to say that Reform would reduce the price of bread or diminish the necessity for labour, was absurd. He could not wish his greatest enemy a greater evil than to propound a plan of Reform, of Universal Suffrage and Vote by Ballot, on the ground that it would make bread cheap and labour light, and afterwards to meet the disappointed people. Such language was extremely dangerous, and he was astonished that the hon. Member had not disavowed it.

Major *Macnamara* said, that he was on the hustings at Clare, at the election of 1829, and then the hon. member for Waterford had made no such promises as had been stated by the hon. member for Preston.

Mr. *Francis Baring* said, that the petition could afford no evidence of what were the feelings of the people of Scotland as to the Reform Bill; for it was dated March the 4th, before the people who had signed it could have known the contents of that Bill.

Mr. *O'Connell* would not have taken any notice of the observations of the hon. member for Preston, had he not introduced the names of the Marquis of Anglesey and of Mr. Bennett. As he was quite sure that, as to them, the charge was unfounded, as far as Mr. Bennett was concerned, he said, unequivocally, that it was totally without foundation. As to the Marquis of Anglesey, the hon. Member probably knew nothing more of him, than that he had seen him ride about the streets on horseback; and he was sure, that as to him the charge was also unfounded. As to himself, he would assert, that since that House had been constituted, a charge more completely unfounded never had been made. The hon. Member must now shift his ground.

Mr. *Hunt* rose to say, that the report alluded to by the hon. member for Kirkcudbright was a false report. He had stated nothing at Manchester that he had not stated in that House. He had stated in that House, that what fell from the member for Calne was, that in the opinion of Ministers the Bill was calculated to unite the middle classes to the higher classes and the Government, and keep down the rabble. That was stated by the hon. member for Calne. He had repeated it; and it was placed on record in *The Times*. The principle he had stated was, that with the proposed Reform there would be a perpetual Corn-law, and therefore bread would be no cheaper; but that, with a properly reformed Parliament, the Corn-laws would be abolished, and bread would be cheaper. A reformed Parliament would get rid of the Corn-laws, but a Parliament reformed by the Bill, would only make the Corn-laws perpetual. A Parliament reformed as it ought to be, would make corn cheap, clothing cheap, and labour less. He had stated that; and he had stated that, with a reformed Parliament, it would not be necessary to work sixteen hours a day. A reformed Parliament would relieve the people from pensions and taxes. A reformed Parliament would not have voted away the money of the people as the present Parliament did last night when the Civil List was before them; and, therefore, he was friendly to Reform of any kind. He meant nothing offensive to either party, but he must say he was neither Whig nor Tory, and he expected nothing, and would take nothing which it was in the power of either party to give. He required no protection from any one, for he hoped, as long as he had a seat in that House, that he should be able to protect himself. With regard to the hon. member for Waterford (Mr. O'Connell), he repeated, that there had been propositions to give a place to that hon. and learned Member sent to Lord Anglesey by that hon. Member, not only once, but twice or three times; and he was satisfied, that if they had been successful, there would have been no agitation in Ireland. He did not know this of his own knowledge, but he had seen Mr. Bennett, who was acquainted with the whole proceedings. The member for Waterford called on the hon. member for Weymouth to allow his case to be brought before Parliament. Was the member for Waterford ready to allow these proceedings of his to be brought before the House? Let him call for an inquiry, and he (Mr. Hunt) should be able, he thought, to produce abundant evidence of the transactions to which he alluded. He could name two Members of that House who were present with him at the time when Mr. Bennett told the whole of the story. The member for Waterford accused him of a desire to get place; let him answer now for himself. He (Mr. Hunt) had never asked for any thing in his life, nor had he ever desired to have any thing offered to him; for, he repeated, he could not, and would not accept it.

Petition laid on the Table.

Mr. *Hume* said, he had a Petition to present from 700 Shipwrights of the Thames, in favour of the Reform Bill. He particularly wished to direct the attention of the House to this petition, because it gave an answer to those who asserted, that the lower classes were adverse to the Bill. These petitioners declared, that they expected the advantage of good Government from the progress of Reform. They were satisfied that their condition would be improved by it; and he very much doubted whether there were 200,000 persons in the country who did not believe that the Bill would be advantageous, and that a great boon was given to them by the measures of the Government.

Mr. *O'Connell*, on the question that the petition be laid on the Table, begged to say a few words in explanation; and it would be really few. The hon. member for Preston had charged him with having negociated with the Government for a place, but he had not pretended to say, that he (Mr. O'Connell) was a party to any of these negotiations. If Mr. Bennett said, that he (Mr. O'Connell) had any knowledge of, or any connection with, negotiations of that kind, all he could say then was, that Mr. Bennett had given utterance to that which was totally untrue. He believed, however, that Mr. Bennett, when he heard of the assertions of the hon. member for Preston on this subject— and hear of them he should on the first moment when his present residence was ascertained, so that a letter could reach him—he believed, he repeated, that Mr. Bennett would be quite ready to contradict what had been attributed to him by the member for Preston. He did not believe that Mr. Bennett had made such a statement; but if he had, then all that he could say was, that Mr. Bennett, and not the member for Preston, had calumniated him.

Petition to be printed.

PETITIONS FROM SCOTLAND.] Lord *William Graham*, in presenting a Petition against the Reform Bill from the county of Dumbarton, complained of the sweeping nature of the plan proposed by the Government, and observed, that Ministers had drawn their line with a very impolitic hand, for, by the present arrangement, the influence of many counties would be totally absorbed by that of others.

The *Lord Advocate* said, the petition presented by the noble Lord was agreed to at a meeting, which was not numerously attended, and on a division, thirty-six persons voted against, and twenty-five in favour of, the Reform Bill. The petition, therefore, emanated from a very small majority. A meeting of a different description—a meeting of the landholders, and including a great portion of the wealth and respectability of the county—was about, however, to be convened, and he was confident that the result of their decision would show a very different feeling with respect to the Reform.

Lord *William Graham* reminded the noble Lord, that the majority which decided at the late meeting against the Reform Bill, was composed of men who had twice the amount of landed property in the county which could be claimed by the minority.

Mr. *Charles Douglas* said, that the county of Dumbarton contained 27,000 inhabitants, according to the Census of 1821, and under a new system, of which population was one of the bases, it was certainly entitled to a larger number of Members than that allotted to it by the Bill.

Mr. *Kennedy* was surprised to hear so much importance attached to the petitions from the counties of Scotland. A few gentlemen assembled in a room in Edinburgh, and determined to oppose Reform, presented a petition from the city of Edinburgh. Then they got up another petition, which they called the petition of the county of Edinburgh, and, being Magistrates of various counties, they proceeded afterwards to them for the purpose of swelling the majorities in favour of petitions of the same description. He entreated the House to look at the divisions which had taken place in different counties on the subject of the Bill, and to take into their consideration the number of persons who decided the fate of the petitions compared with the real amount of the inhabitants. In Banffshire, where there were 43,000 inhabitants, a petition was agreed to against the Bill, at a meeting where there were thirteen persons, four of whom were in favour of Reform, and nine against it. In Berwickshire, with 33,000 inhabitants, thirty-three persons met, and there certainly they were unanimous against the Bill. Then came Dumbartonshire, in which the petition against Reform was carried, as stated by the Lord Advocate, by thirty-six to twenty-five. He admitted there was a majority of persons of property against the Bill, but the members of the minority had greater property elsewhere. Then came the county of Elgin, with 31,000 inhabitants, in which there was a meeting of nine persons. Haddington, with 35,000, in which there were eight in favour and four against; and Roxburghshire, in which the petition was carried by forty-seven to twenty-three. In that county, however, there was a real meeting of the landholders and inhabitants on the next day, and they were unanimous in favour of the Bill. In fact, wherever the real opinions of the people could be collected, apart from those of the voters for the rotten borough system of Scotland, they were unanimous in favour of the Bill. It appeared, indeed, to him most extraordinary that, under such a system, so many persons of property should be found to vote at county meetings in favour of the plan of Reform.

Sir *George Murray* deprecated the use of such language with reference to the county votes of Scotland. The hon. Member, sitting as he did for a set of close boroughs, had been decrying the counties of Scotland, and applying to them, most improperly, the same language which he would use with respect to the rotten boroughs of England. If the hon. member for Preston had used such language with respect to Scotland, he could have understood him, for it was consistent with his avowed opinions on the subject of Universal Suffrage; but it certainly appeared strange that an hon. Member, well acquainted with the nature of the mode of election in Scotland, should characterise the county voters in such terms as those used by the hon. member for Ayr, and decry property, while he cried up the influence of numbers. The hon. Member, in his attempt to prove that all Scotland was in favour of the Bill, had alluded to the county of Roxburgh. Now he happened, by accident, to have in his pocket a letter from Sir Thomas Brisbane, the gentleman who presided at the second county meeting, to which the hon. Member alluded. Great importance had been attached to the opinions of that second meeting, and he would therefore, with the permission of the House, read a short extract from the letter. Sir Thomas said in it, "When I attended the meeting of the county of Roxburgh, to petition in favour of Reform, it was because I believed it to be a Government measure, and before the introduction of the Bill which, I must say now, I consider far too sweeping in its provisions." This was a specimen of that re-action among a higher class, which the member for Preston had already described as having taken place among a lower. That change had taken place among men of education and property, as well as among the lower classes. He never denied that some amendment could be made in the system of Representation in Scotland; but he was satisfied that the plan of substituting for the old a totally new system of Representation would be productive of very injurious consequences. He applied himself particularly to Scotland, because he was better acquainted with that country than any other. He could say of it with sincerity, that its county Representation was as pure and independent as any to be found in England. For himself, he could declare that he was as free to act according to his judgment as any Member of that House. When he was solicited to stand for his native county, for which he had now been returned four times, and the honour of representing which he prized above all other honors, he had expressly stated, that he would connect himself with no party, and bind himself to follow no course of political conduct, save that which appeared best calculated to promote the interests of his country.

Mr. *Kennedy*, in explanation, denied that he had decried the influence of property, and said, he used the term "rotten" with reference to those voters who possessed franchises for counties without any property whatever in those counties.

Sir *James Mackintosh* observed, that the fact of Sir Thomas Brisbane having presided at a second meeting, after attending the first, proved beyond question, that he did not think the first meeting expressed the true opinion of the county of Roxburgh. If the right hon. Baronet spoke of the freeholders of Scotland as being properly represented, or as not desiring some better Representation, he laid himself open to a total contradiction. In some cases they did agree with the opinions of the people of property against the Bill, as other persons agreed with its opponents; but the great majority were decidedly in its favour. The reason why Scotland had increased in prosperity and wealth under the present system, was not because it was a sound one, but because the Constitution of England protected her, and the Representation of England was spread over her as a shield, to guard her from the consequences which might have followed the defects of her own.

Sir *G. Clerk* was not a little surprised to hear the right hon. Gentleman extol the merits of the English Constitution, and speak of the Representation of England as forming a shield for the protection of Scotland, at the very moment when he was using his utmost exertions in support of the Bill which totally changed the nature of that Constitution, and the Representative system which was connected with it. How, he would ask, could the right hon. Gentleman reconcile his praises in the one case with his censure in the other, and say, that system of Representation should be destroyed which he at the same moment admitted to have formed the protection of Scotland from the abuses of the system which prevailed in that country. He contended that those who were opposed to the Scotch Reform Bill formed a vast majority of the men of property of that country; and although the Bill was drawn by the Lord Advocate, and the Government declared they would have that Bill, the whole Bill, and nothing but the Bill, he believed that not a single individual in Scotland was fully satisfied with its details, and he suspected that the noble Lord himself contemplated many alterations and modifications of its provisions in the Committee. If the Bill passed in its present shape, every person in the country saw that it would be impossible to refuse any, even the most extensive changes which might afterwards be demanded from them.

Mr. *Cutlar Ferguson* defended the Representation of Scotland, and contended that its Members were returned by a constituency as pure and incorruptible as any in the empire. The counties of Scotland, although they had few voters, were never bought and sold like the boroughs of England. No man ever came into the market to dispose of the Representation of a Scotch county. The voters were men of integrity and independence, and their property secured them from all improper influence.

Sir *G. Warrender*, after the best consideration he could give the subject, and after attentively examining the opinions of the country, was compelled to come to the conclusion that popular elections must take place in Scotland, and that the present system would not be much longer preserved. All he hoped, and all he asked, from the learned Lord was, that he would give the recommendations contained in the petitions laid on the Table their due attention, and avail himself of their recommendations to improve the details of the Bill. He approved of the principle of the measure, but he objected to that part of it which went to the disfranchisement of some of the boroughs; although he had no objection to a more popular election at counties.

Colonel *Lindsay* remarked on the inconsistency of the hon. Baronet, who said he approved of the principle of the Bill, while at the same time he disapproved of the disfranchisement of the boroughs. For himself, he was strongly opposed to the measure. The people of Scotland were in the enjoyment of property, intelligence, and happiness; but the learned Lord was not satisfied, he wished to give them politics.

Mr. *John Baillie* gave his cordial support to the Scotch Bill. He was opposed to the English Bill, which took a great deal away, and gave very little; but the Bill for Scotland took little or nothing away, and gave a great deal. As an instance of the absurdity of the present system, he stated, that in one of the counties of Scotland he had what was called a Superiority, the value of which was only a few shillings, but which gave him a vote; while in the same county he had an estate worth a thousand a year, in right of which he had no vote at all.

Mr. *Henry Scott* said, that among the landed proprietors of Scotland, there was undoubtedly a strong feeling against the measure which the Government had introduced. They looked upon it as violent and sweeping, and calculated to place the whole power of the elections in the hands of persons of little or no property.

Mr. *John Campbell* stated, that a large majority of the county of Fife was in favour of the measure. There had been no meeting of that county, because the convener, by whom alone a meeting could be called, being hostile to the Reform Bill, resolutely refused to call a meeting.

General *Gascoyne*, with reference to the statement of the hon. member for Middlesex, that there was only one opinion in Scotland with respect to the Bill, and that that was in favour of it, remarked, that it now appeared that no fewer than seven counties in that country had petitioned against it. All that had taken place with respect to the Bill proved how inconvenient it was that a Cabinet Minister did not bring forward a Cabinet measure. There certainly was a general understanding that the noble member for Tavistock had on Tuesday abandoned an important part of the Bill; although yesterday the members of his Majesty's Government appeared to be enraged at the supposition. The noble member for Tavistock certainly did say one thing on one night, and another thing on another. With respect to the instruction to the Committee on the subject of maintaining the proportion in the Representation of the three kingdoms of which he (General Gascoyne) had given notice, he had hoped that the necessity of his interference on the subject would have been obviated; but as that was not the case, he should certainly feel it his duty to persevere. As it was quite impossible that the House could be called upon to pronounce at once upon Monday on the new propositions which the noble member for Tavistock intended to submit, it would be convenient to know what previous time would be allowed for consideration; and he begged to ask the noble Lord what course he intended to pursue?

Lord *J. Russell* said, that it was evident the gallant General wished to avail himself of his (Lord J. Russell's) answer to his question, as an assistance to him in his plan of defeating the Bill. On Monday he would state explicitly what were the alterations which it was proposed to make in the Bill; and when the House had heard that statement, they would be better able to say what course of proceeding ought to be adopted.

Mr. *Henry Fane* observed, that if his Majesty's Ministers had made up their minds with respect to the alteration which they intended to propose, it was their duty at once to state it; if, however, they were merely watching the shifting of every blast of public opinion, they were adopting a wise course. On a subject of such vast importance, it was surely not too much to ask for a few days' deliberation. In his opinion, the real principle of the proposed Bill was, to traffic in the suffrages of the people of England; to sell one man and buy another; to sell one country and buy another; to induce Scotland and Ireland to support the Bill by reducing the Representation of England. He begged to put these distinct questions to the noble Lord—whether it was in contemplation to propose any alterations in the Bill? and, if so, whether they were to be absolute, or to depend on contingent circumstances?

Provision for the Queen.] Lord Althorp brought down a Message from his Majesty, which was read by the Speaker, and which was to the following effect:—

"W. R.—His Majesty, trusting to the affectionate regard of his faithful Commons, both for his Majesty and for the Queen, recommends to them the immediate consideration of a provision for maintaining her Majesty in her Royal dignity, in case she should survive his Majesty."

On the Motion of Lord Althorp, it was ordered that his Majesty's most gracious Message should be referred to-morrow to the consideration of a Committee of the whole House.

Amendments in Real Property Laws.] Mr. *John Campbell* moved for leave to bring in Bills to amend the law respecting Inheritance and Descent, respecting Dower, the Courtesy of England, Fines and Recoveries, and Limitations of Actions. The hon. and learned Member said, that the measures he was about to submit to the House were the results of the inquiries of the Commissioners appointed to investigate the laws as to Real Property. He did not expect, therefore, that they would meet with any opposition. The first Bill to which he wished to call the attention of Members respected the law of Inheritance and Descent. He did not propose to touch the law of primogeniture, which, as it prevailed in this country, was infinitely to be preferred to the law of equal participation, now prevailing in France, where its unfavourable effects upon agriculture were already making themselves felt. But some anomalies connected with that law it was desirable to remove. A father, for example, could not inherit from his child; so that, if a son died without a will, his estate would rather vest in the Crown than go to the father, pursuant to the maxim of law, that land cannot lineally ascend. He proposed to remove that anomaly, and allow a father to be the heir of his own child. Another anomaly was the exclusion of the half-blood; so that if there were two sons by different marriages, and the estate went to the eldest, and he died the second son could not inherit of him, and the estate would rather vest in the Crown. He proposed that the half-blood, under. such circumstances, should be entitled to inherit, with this restriction, that the full-blood of the first possessor should be preferred. Thus, if three sons, the eldest by one marriage, and the two others by another, one of the younger children should have an estate, and die intestate, the father should in the first instance inherit, and afterwards the descent should be, not to the eldest son, but to the youngest, so that the full-blood of the first possessor might have the preference. The next point was, the law of Dower, by which a widow was at present entitled for her life to one-third of any land of which her husband was seised at any time during the coverture. That, perhaps, was a convenient rule in ancient times, when land was the only property: but now it was most inconvenient, being always evaded by conveyances and limitations to trustees to bar dower. Such proceedings to evade a bad law were, however, productive of great delay, inconvenience, and expense. He proposed, that the widow should only be entitled to a life-interest in one-third of the real property of which her husband was seised at his death, undisposed of by will, thereby assimilating this part of the law to the law of copyhold property. He should propose that a widow should be entitled to dower out of the trust estates of which the husband dies seised, which she is not at present; and which would be an ample compensation for any loss widows might sustain by the other part of his proposition. The next subject to which he wished to call the attention of the House was that of Courtesy;—that is, the right the husband has to the lands of his wife on her death. At present he was entitled to the whole of her land for his life, if he has had issue by her, and although her children by a former husband might be wholly unprovided for. He proposed that the husband should be entitled to the whole of the wife's lands for his life, whether there were issue or not. Such was the disposition of the property naturally prompted by affection, and it was absurd to say, that it should depend upon there being issue of the marriage, a rule founded in the customs of feudal times. But children by a former marriage ought to have some provision from the mother's land; and he, therefore, proposed in such cases that the husband should have a life-interest only in one half, the other half going at once to such children. Fines and Recoveries were the next subject to which he should allude, and it was most marvellous, that such barbarous modes of conveying property should have so long held their ground. It could only be accounted for, by lawyers, like other people, being reconciled to anything, however absurd and extravagant, to which they had been long accustomed; by many persons, having a private interest in preventing a reformation in the law; and by a number of officers depending for fees on Fines and Recoveries. Many persons in the profession were attached to the present system, and he had heard of one who said, he would rather suffer death than consent to its abolition. He meant to propose a mode of conveyance, by means of which a person would be able to accomplish in a few hours that which it required a considerable time to do by fine or recovery, and which was accompanied with great expense. There was another subject, respecting Property and Estates, he alluded to the limitation of right, upon which the law was most ineffective. Nominally, there was a limitation in the right of possession for sixty years, which was considered to give a good right; but, in consequence of the state of the law, even after sixty years' possession, a claimant might start up and deprive a man of his property. In case an alienation had taken place, or in case of lunacy on the part of a possessor, this period was held to be not sufficient. Thus, in every transfer of property, it was necessary to look into the title for a long series of years; which was attended with great expense, and great anxiety. He meant to propose, that the period of limitation should be twenty years, and that the undisputed possession of property for that time should, with some exceptions in cases of disabilities, give a complete legal title. Under some circumstances of dispute, this term was to be extended to forty years, but at the end of that period the title was to be unassailable. The hon. and learned Member, after complimenting Lord Tenterden for having brought in a Bill to settle the time of prescription as to Church Property, and after expressing his regret that the heads of the Church were opposed, as he had heard, to the noble and learned Lord's Bill, who was a firm and warm friend to the Church of England, concluded by moving for leave to bring in a Bill to regulate the Descent of Real Property.

Sir *Edward Sugden* seconded the Motion. He expressed his satisfaction at the measure taken by his hon. friend, no man being more satisfied than he was, that these anomalies required to be removed, and no one was more willing than he was, that these unnecessary and antiquated forms should be removed. He was not quite certain considering that fines and recoveries were invented by lawyers to prevent property changing hands, that they ought to be wholly done away with. There were also certain persons who had vested rights under the present law which could not be taken away without compensation, and he wished, therefore, to learn from his hon. and learned friend whether he had calculated the expense of his proposed alterations.

Sir *Robert Peel* stated, that he had the greatest confidence in the recommendations of the Commissioners, but he hoped that by none of these Bills would any patent places be created which it would be necessary hereafter for the public to buy up. He was afraid, that most of the Bills lately introduced to reform the law, might be attended with some such effect. He alluded particularly to the Fraudulent Debtors' Bill which came from the other House under which receivers were appointed who in any future alteration of the law might demand compensation. He trusted that the noble Lord (Lord Althorp) would take care that no such places were made by any of these Bills. He saw much to approve of in the measures proposed, but he wished to reserve his opinion as to their details.

Sir *Charles Wetherell* also expressed his general approbation of the measures, but suggested whether fines might not be advantageously retained. He would also take the liberty of saying, in reference to one remark which fell from his learned friend at the close of his speech, that he was one of those who thought like the heads of the Church, that the Bill introduced into the other House relative to prescription as far as it regarded Church property, might be productive of mischief. He had the highest opinion of the Law Commissioners, but he did not think himself bound to assent to their recommendations, and should therefore examine the Bills closely before he pledged himself either to support or oppose them.

Mr. *Crampton* approved most highly of the proposed measures, and hoped that they might be extended with some necessary modifications to Ireland. He must at the same time say, that all the details of the measures would require to be maturely weighed, and the greatest caution ought to be used in adopting them.

Mr. *O'Connell* also expressed his approbation of the measures, and in particular of the other Bill brought in by the hon. and learned Gentleman, the General Register Act, which he thought would greatly enhance the value of landed property. He could only attribute the opposition which had been got up out of doors to that Bill to interested motives, and trusted that the hon. and learned Gentleman would persevere in his plan and bring forward the Bill as soon as possible.

Mr. *Campbell*, in reply to Mr. Crampton, said, he must leave the project of extending these Bills, should they pass, to Ireland, to some of the learned Gentlemen connected with that country. He should be content if he could accomplish his object as to England. With reference to an observation of the hon. member for Waterford, he had to observe, that he should consider it his duty to the people of England to press for the second reading of his Registry Bill to-morrow—the day for which it was fixed. If it were not read a second time to-morrow, he could not hope to see it passed this Session.

Mr. *Keith Douglass* said, that it would be extremely unfair to the hon. member for Weymouth (Mr. F. Buxton), if any thing were permitted to take precedence of the Slavery Question to-morrow. He therefore trusted the noble Lord, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, would use his utmost influence, to postpone the second reading of the hon. and learned Gentleman's Bill. Unless the Slavery Question had precedence, it would be impossible to discuss it to-morrow.

Lord *Althorp* declared, that certainly no exertion should be wanting on his part to endeavour to induce the hon. and learned Gentleman to postpone his Motion. He felt himself bound in honour to the hon. member for Weymouth to do his best to secure him the precedence.

Mr. *Campbell* was not aware of the difference in the privilege of Government, and of individual Members; nor did he know whether Government had or had not authority in such matters [*none, none!*]. But he certainly did still feel disposed to press for the second reading of the Bill.

Leave given to bring in a Bill to amend the law respecting Inheritance and Descent and to allow parents to succeed as heirs to their children; and collateral relations to succeed as heirs to each other, though of the half blood; also a Bill to amend the law respecting Dower, Estates by Courtesy, and the law respecting Entails, Remainders, and Reversions.

Mr. *Keith Douglass* requested to know what course was to be pursued as to the Slavery Question?

Mr. *Campbell* said, that the importance of the measures he wished to bring under the consideration of the House was so great, that nothing but force should compel him to yield precedence to any other; and he reminded the noble Lord near him, that he had been before disappointed in his endeavours to procure a night for the discussion.

Lord *Althorp* observed, that as the Reform Bill stood for discussion in the early part of next week, it would be impossible for him to promise that any particular day should be afforded to the hon. and learned Gentleman; but as the hon. and learned

Gentleman was aware that the Ministers viewed the Bills he wished to introduce in a favourable manner, he might rest assured that they would do what they could to facilitate the object he had in view.

Mr. *Campbell* knew so well the candour of the noble Lord, that he should feel perfectly easy at putting himself into his hands.

The second reading of the Registry Bill postponed to Wednesday next.

CIVIL LIST.] Lord *Althorp* moved the Order of the Day for the third reading of the Civil List Bill. He stated, that he had drawn up a clause according to the suggestion of the right hon. Gentleman opposite, which he should now lay before the House, proposing to add it as a rider to the Bill. He saw no necessity for it but as it could do no harm he had complied with the suggestion.

Mr. *Goulburn* said, that, as far as he was able to observe, he did not see any objection to such a clause. With respect to the Bill itself, he must say, that it seemed to him to differ from every one that had preceded it. This Bill, for the first time, dissociated the expenses of the Civil Government of the country from those that were required to maintain the dignity of the Crown. When he proposed the bill uniting both these objects, he had not done it merely because he desired not to depart from former precedents, though he certainly had no wish to depart from them, but because he thought that the welfare of the country would be best consulted by uniting both. In his opinion both reason and good sense required that union, for he did not think it advisable to present the Monarch of this country to the people for grants merely for his personal dignity and comfort, but as dispensing favours and offices, and as dispensing rewards for the performance of the business of the country. As this bill had presented the King in the former light only, it appeared to him objectionable. It might, indeed, be thought that at first it would be supposed the Crown had given up 400,000*l.* of its expenditure, but in the present state of the information of the public upon this subject, it must be clear that no one in or out of the House could suppose for a moment that such a saving had been effected. The present arrangement of the Civil List had been made at the desire of those who said they wished to be able to compare the charges of the present Civil List with those of the Civil Lists of former periods; but he believed that when the present Civil List came to be examined, those who had desired the new arrangement would have little reason to view it with approbation. So far was it from being simplified, that he would venture to assert, it was more complicated and involved than it had ever been before. In a Paper, which he unfortunately had not seen till this morning, he found that arrangements had been made for those sums which had not been provided for in the Civil List; and that circumstance alone was sufficient to show that no simplification had taken place. He would give some examples of this. In the first instance, it was intended in the present Civil List that the Crown should retain the power of superintending not only the business but the sports of the country. The Crown, therefore, had the disposal of sums of money for plate to be run for at races, and 4,500*l.* were annually expended in that manner, in order to encourage the breed of horses. Now that sum was made up in the following manner:—The larger portion, or sum of 2,400*l.*, was taken from the Civil List, 1,880*l.* were to be voted in the Committee of Supply, and 220*l.* were fixed as a charge upon the Consolidated Fund; so that on one item alone, which was, strictly speaking, an item of royal expenditure, there were no less than three different sources from which the gross amount was drawn. With respect to the Yeomen Guard in Ireland, the arrangement of the payment to that body had been made for the convenience of the House, as the annual discussions on that branch of expenditure had been found highly inconvenient, yet the present Civil List Bill proposed to go back to the old system which had before been given up at the desire of the House itself. The same was the case with respect to the Royal Palaces, for which a sum of 51,400*l.* was to be given from the Civil List, and 1,300*l.* was charged upon the Consolidated Fund. With respect to charitable donations, the confusion was very great—13,200*l.* were to be taken from the Civil List, 4,500*l.* were to be voted in the Committee of Supply, and 2,250*l.* were charged upon the Consolidated Fund. He should ask those who were the advocates of simplification, whether these instances exhibited any improvement in that respect? It might be supposed that the expenses for the offices of the several Orders of the Garter, the Bath, and St. Patrick might be all put upon the same footing—but that was not the case; for while some were charged upon the Civil List, others were fixed upon the Consolidated Fund. He thought, therefore, that under these circumstances those who looked for a simplified expenditure would find themselves much mistaken. The real amount of the Civil List was what it had been before. The provision for the King was much the same as that which he had proposed. He felt numerous objections to the present Bill; but, as he thought that the grant to the Crown ought to be made in as gracious and considerate a manner as possible, he should offer no objection to it; and, therefore, he cordially gave his approbation to the Bill notwithstanding its many defects.

Mr. *Hume* said, that if he had expected the right hon. Gentleman would have made this charge, he would have brought down papers that would have answered it. The whole of the last Civil List Bill was one mass of incongruities. He wondered that the right hon. Gentleman could stand up in his place and defend such a plan of the Civil List, against one which was founded on a plain and intelligible principle. The former mode of conducting the public accounts had been one mass of mystification, so that he did not wonder the right hon. Gentleman should feel regret that the plan was now so altered, that any man out of doors could understand what had formerly been quite unintelligible to the greater number of Members of that House. The right hon. Gentleman was in a dilemma, for no man could take up the present Bill without knowing what was the amount of that branch of the expenditure of the country, but if he had looked at former Civil Lists, or at that which had been introduced by the right hon. Gentleman in the beginning of last November, he would find that it was impossible to discover any one principle of classification. He (Mr. Hume) had never been able to understand the principle of the distinction made with respect to various public officers, some of whose salaries were charged upon the Civil List, while others were differently provided for. He was so far from agreeing with the right hon. Gentleman as to the impropriety of the present principle of the Civil List, that he thought it was for the honour and interest of the Monarchy that all the items of the Civil List should be fairly laid before the public, so that the people should not attribute to the King an expenditure with which his Majesty had really nothing to do. Under the old system the public saw 1,057,000*l.* voted for the Civil List, and great numbers among them believed that all that amount was required for the personal expenses of the Monarch, for his Majesty and his household. The change effected was calculated to put an end to this error. The right hon. Gentleman was the only man in the country who thought that the change was not beneficial. The late Pension List was not, as it affected to be, the Pension List of the Crown, but of the creatures of the Ministry; and pensions were granted to ladies among the rest, most of which pensions, he would venture to say, were unknown to his Majesty. He regretted that the present Civil List so far imitated the old as to retain the Pension List. He had wished to get rid of it, and was sorry to say, that he had been left in a miserable minority on the point. He was, however, so thoroughly convinced of the necessity of removing this Pension List from the other items of the Civil List, that when the opportunity occurred he should move to reduce the amount of the sum to be granted to his Majesty by the whole amount required for these pensions. He trusted, that the House would then show that they wished to conform to the opinion of the country on that point. He thought that the present Government was entitled to the thanks of that House and of the people, for the reduction they had effected in the hitherto overwhelming amount of money paid for our Embassies to Foreign Courts. The expenditure on that head had never been in the least degree diminished during the two last reigns, and the salaries, by being fixed in the Civil List, could not be interfered with by that House, which could not review a grant for the Civil List after it had been once made. He thanked the present Ministers, therefore, for having so far adopted the recommendation of the Committee, as to put the salaries of Ambassadors on a footing that would enable that House to regulate them in future. The salaries of the present Ministers were about to be reduced, and the Ministers would take care that the salaries of other men should be brought under the review of that House, which never could have taken place under the old system. The next item to which the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Goulburn) objected, was the taking of 100,000*l.* from the Irish establishment; and it was very true, that if the Civil List of the right hon. Gentleman had been carried, the House would have had no control over that part of the expenditure. After that, the right hon. Gentleman proceeded to the hereditary payments in Scotland, 51,000*l.*; but he (Mr. Hume) should be glad to know why any of them should be placed out of the cognizance of Parliament? The present arrangement, by which the Civil List beyond the control of Parliament was reduced from 970,000*l.* to 510,000*l.*, was a most important advantage to the community; and he hoped, therefore, that the House would sanction the change. He hardly knew how to notice seriously the remarks to which the right hon. Gentleman had been driven, when he lamented so bitterly 4,000*l.* hitherto given, as he contended, for the encouragement of the breed of horses, should be taken from the Civil List. The Civil List, as it formerly existed, was certainly well calculated for the encouragement of the breed of another and an inferior description of animal? but, under the new system, he (Mr. Hume) saw no sufcient reason for retaining even the plates for running horses. It was not fit that the public money should be so spent, while the people were starving; and if country gentlemen liked to have sport, it ought to be at their own expense. After lamenting over the decay in the breed of horses, the right hon. Gentleman very naturally descended to the Board of Works, and bemoaned the change that was to be made in this department.

Mr. *Goulburn* interposed to save time; he had not bemoaned the Board of Works, but merely expressed an opinion that the new arrangement would not simplify the matter. His remark regarding the breed of horses was of the same nature.

Mr. *Hume* was very glad to find, that he was mistaken on the point, but really the right hon. Gentleman had no very extraordinary talent at rendering himself intelligible. Perhaps he (Mr. Hume) was in error also as to the rest of the right hon. Gentleman's positions; he had understood him to bemoan the departure from the good old sinecure system of our ancestors; but, after all, he might be well satisfied with its abolition; and he (Mr. Hume) should sit down in the expectation that the vote in favour of the third reading of the Bill would be unanimous.

Mr. *Goulburn* observed, that if hon. Members would so condescend, it would be easy at any time to obtain such a triumph as had been just achieved by the hon. member for Middlesex. The cheers of the three or four hon. Gentlemen round him were certainly an ample recompense, and worthy of his ambition. He was not aware that he had made any admission in favour of the alteration in the Civil List, which, among others, was open to the great leading objection, that the money was to be paid out of three funds instead of one. This change was anything but a simplification.

Lord *Althorp* admitted, that the right hon. Gentleman had brought forward two or three instances of want of simplicity in the present plan, but he had studiously omitted the enormous confusion of his own miscalled arrangement. To show the doubt that was thus created, he would mention, that when he (Lord Althorp) came into office, he did not know the amount of his own salary—a point upon which, probably, the right hon. Gentleman was not equally in the dark. He had thought that it was something more than 3,358*l.* a year, but to his great surprise he found that it was 5,000*l.* a year. The difficulty arose out of the complication of accounts. It had been thought right to separate from the Civil List all that related to the general government of the country, and this point had been gradually approached ever since the passing of Mr. Burke's bill. The five heads into which the Civil List was divided were these—first, Privy Purse; second, Salaries of the Household; third, Expenses of the Household; fourth, Special Services; fifth, Pensions; and what had been done regarding running horses was merely this—to remove from the Civil List the sums paid for this purpose in Ireland and Scotland. It would be for the House to decide whether it would continue this arrangement, for it was one of the benefits of the proposed change, that if it were hereafter found disadvantageous, a different course might be adopted. One principle on which Ministers had proceeded was, to let the people see that the enormous sum hitherto supposed to be expended by the King, was not in fact all for the support of royalty. For this reason, the sum for charities in Ireland and Scotland had been removed from the Civil List, and the salaries of the Board of Works would also be voted in Supply. He did not mean to say, that the accounts were now as simple as they might be rendered, but he contended that they were a great improvement upon those which the right hon. Gentleman had laid upon the Table.

Mr. *Goulburn* said, that the noble Lord might have readily ascertained what his salary was, through the patents in his office. The noble Lord, in addition to being Chancellor of the Exchequer, held an appointment as a Lord of the Treasury; and thus the salary was enhanced to the amount the noble Lord had mentioned.

Sir *M. W. Ridley* observed, that in the country, nothing was less understood than the payments for the Civil List; it was generally supposed that the King had, hitherto, had the uncontrolled command of 1,200,000*l.* per annum. Such, in future, would not be the fact, even with regard to the much smaller sum of 510,000*l.*; but of this he was sure—that the people of England would think the benefit of a Kingly Government cheaply purchased at that expense.

Mr. *Courtenay* gave notice, that after the Bill had been read a third time, and before it was passed, he would move an Amendment, to render it more precisely what it pretended to be.

Mr. *Maberly* was astonished that even the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Goulburn) should be so bigotted to his own plan as not to admit at once the superior advantages of that by which it was superseded. The Monarch was thus relieved from a degree of odium that hitherto had been most unjustly attached to him. It was true that in the Committee he (Mr. Maberly) had supported the proposition of the hon. member for Middlesex, for discontinuing pensions even to the reduced amount of 75,000*l.* upon the Civil List. He still adhered to that opinion; but he saw, nevertheless, the clear benefits of the other parts of the measure of the noble Lord, and he was ready also to admit the impossibility of making calculations on this subject with nicety so as to avoid the necessity of a contingent account to the amount of 5,000*l.* or even 10,000*l.* If the present Government had proposed a plan for the Civil List much more objectionable than that in the Bill, he should have felt himself called upon to support them, as the servants of a Monarch who had already done so much for his people, and who, by the great measure now pending, was about to confer on the country one of the greatest blessings it had received from the hands of a Monarch, since the era of Magna Charta. No Government had ever stood so well, or deserved to stand so well, with the public, or had redeemed its pledges so fully and so faithfully.

The Bill read a third time.

Lord *Althorp* proposed a Clause, to provide expressly that the charges in Schedules 2, 3, and 8, and no others, should be chargeable upon the Civil List.

Mr. *T. P. Courtenay* proposed a short clause, by way of rider, to the effect that no branch of the Civil Government was to be provided for by the Bill.

Mr. *D. W. Harvey* referred to a motion he had formerly made regarding the department of the Woods and Forests, and stated his intention hereafter to renew it. His principal object in rising was, however, that it might not be supposed by his silence that he concurred in the arrangement made in the Bill regarding the Duchies of Cornwall and Lancaster. He thought himself at liberty, though he assented to the Bill, to bring forward any motion he might think proper hereafter on the subject of Crown Lands.

Colonel *Davies* was afraid that, under this new Bill, part of the sum of 510,000*l.* a-year might be applied to swell the salaries of the great Officers of State, instead of being devoted, as it was intended, to support the dignity and provide for the comfort of the Crown. He must also complain of the disrespectful mode in which Ministers had treated the Report of the Select Committee on the Civil List; they had, in fact, thrown it in the face of the Members, and had declared that they would not be bound by any of its recommendations.

Lord *Althorp* said, his hon. friend was in error. The excess in any branch of the Civil List might be appropriated to make good the deficiencies on any other. It was quite a mistake to represent the Government as flinging the report of the Committee in the face of the Members.

Mr. *Briscoe* also regretted that Ministers had not attended to the recommendation of retrenchment contained in the Report of the Select Committee. The country had a right to expect that every practicable saving, however small, should be made. Nevertheless, he supported the measure, for the reason stated by the hon. member for Abingdon (Mr. Maberly), that Ministers deserved well of their country for the great improvement they were about to effect in the Representation.

The Clause agreed to, and ordered to be inserted in the Bill.

Mr. *Hume* rose for the purpose of proposing that something be struck out of the Bill, the effect of which would be, to take from 510,000*l.* the whole proposed amount of the Civil List, the sum of 75,000*l.* allowed for pensions. This reduction would leave 435,000*l.* per annum nett, at the disposal of the King, and would relieve him from a degree of painful responsibility in the distribution of the Royal bounty. He held in his hand a paper shewing the individuals to whom George 4th had granted pensions, and hence it appeared that many had been given to persons whose services had deserved no reward. Did hon. Members consider how much the pensions had increased the National Debt? In the late reign the amount of the sums granted in the way of pensions in England was 890,000*l.*, in Ireland 194,000*l.*, and in Scotland 349,000*l.*; making altogether 1,939,000*l.* paid in pensions, not one in ten of which was merited. Notwithstanding all the pledges which various Administrations had made of economy, here was nearly two millions of the public money thrown to the dogs, for scarcely one of these pensions was merited. The pensions, instead of being rewards for services, were given for other purposes; for the instances were few in which any services whatever had been performed. He altogether reprobated the system of giving pensions, except for great services and meritorious conduct; and it would be far better to pay people liberal salaries, and compel them to provide, out of those salaries, for their maintenance in their old age. In America they gave no pensions to public servants, and yet public business was as efficiently performed as in any other country whatever. He should, therefore, move that the sum of 435,000*l.* be inserted in the Bill instead of the sum of 510,000*l.* thus excluding the sum of 75,000*l* appropriated for pensions.

Mr. *Hunt* seconded the amendment, and said, that he was induced to do so because he had presented no less than sixty petitions to that House, praying for a reduction in the public expenditure; and he thought few items called for reduction more loudly than those on the Pension-list. He should divide the House upon the amendment of the hon. member for Middlesex; for he was aware that out of doors those discussions were called sham debates in which no division took place.

Lord *Althorp* said, that he had so often stated his opinions upon this matter, that he should decline, at the present time, to enter into any arguments on the subject. He should only remind the House, that the present amount of pensions was only about half what had been formerly proposed, and he trusted, therefore, that it would be considered that a sufficient reduction had been made.

Mr. Alderman *Wood* regretted that he should be under the necessity of voting against Ministers on the present occasion. He could not avoid doing so, however, when he witnessed the distress of the country. No less than 300 persons had recently been summoned before him, for the purpose of being compelled to pay the taxes; and their poverty was such that they were wholly unable to do so, unless indulgence was granted to them. He was obliged to give them fourteen days' time, or else to send them to prison or seize their goods. When he had witnessed all this so recently, he felt bound to vote against the application of money, wrung from such persons, to persons who had no right to it, and who were wholly undeserving of it.

Mr. *D. W. Harvey* said, he understood the hon. member for Middlesex to contend that no pensions should be granted until they were, in the first instance, submitted to the consideration of that House. He was opposed to his proposition, for there would be no economy in it. On the contrary, if every pension were to be submitted to party discussion from time to time in that House, it would be found in the end that the Pension-list would be far greater in amount than the sum now proposed. The amendment involved a most important principle. If it was meant to be contended that the Crown should be stripped altogether of the power of rewarding merit by means of a pension, without applying to that House, he must say that he could not consent to such a proposition. At present these pensions were not beyond the control of Parliament, for any Member might call for a return of the manner in which the funds had been distributed. He gave this explanation lest a silent vote should be misconstrued; and he meant to oppose the amendment on principle.

Mr. *Warburton* said, that he could not agree with the argument of the hon. member for Colchester, that submitting pensions to be canvassed by that House, as guardians of the public purse, before they were granted, could have the effect of increasing their amount. To hold such a doctrine was actually a libel on the Parliament, for, imperfect as it was in its formation, it still could not be said that it would so wholly abandon its duty. It should be remembered that it was more than probable, at least it was the general expectation, that we should have a new Parliament within the year. Now these pensions were granted for the life of the King; and as every one must expect, as well as hope, that his Majesty would live much longer than a year, it would be far better to establish the Civil List without the pensions and leave them to be dealt with by the new Parliament called under a new and a better system, in which Parliament they would doubtless meet with proper investigation.

Colonel *Sibthorp* said, that he should feel it his duty, as a guardian of the public purse, to vote for the amendment of the hon. member for Middlesex. He felt confident that if the matter were to be submitted to Parliament, though the pensioners would be liberally dealt with where pensions were merited, yet a stop would be put to the wasteful and unwarrantable expenditure which had been carried on under the present system.

The House divided on the Question that the sum of 510,000*l.* stand part of the Bill; when there appeared, for the Motion 72; Against it 17; Majority for the original grant 55.

Mr. *Hume* then called the attention of the House to the vote of 45,000*l.* for three Princes of the Royal Blood. He wished that this vote had been contained in another Bill, for he did not see how it was connected with the Civil List. He should be glad if all the items which were clearly exclusive of the Civil List had been kept out of it. The three items to which he alluded were 15,000*l.* to the Duke of Cumberland, over and above the sum of 6,000*l.* to Prince George; 15,000*l.* to the Duke of Cambridge; and 15,000*l.* to the Duke of Sussex. Three times he had known resolutions passed in Committees to the effect that it was necessary to bring back all these allowances in a degree proportionate to the old value of the currency. When prices were very high, in the year 1806, the House of Commons, expressly on that ground, granted an addition of 6,000*l.* a year to the salaries of each of the Princes of the Blood, and the state of the country at that time gave those Princes a fair claim to such increase of their salaries. In 1822 that House had moved an Address to the Crown, that all salaries might be reduced as he had stated. A Committee which had recently sat had reduced the salaries of Ministers; and, upon similar grounds, he thought the House was called upon to reduce also the salaries of Royal Dukes, now that prices were below what they were in 1806. He thought they ought to be dealt with in the same manner as other individuals. The hon. Member then moved that the salaries of the three Royal Princes whom he had named should be reduced in the sum of 5,000*l.* each. They had been raised in 1806 from 12,000*l.* to 18,000*l.*, but he now moved, that they should be brought back to 13,000*l.* each.

Lord *Althorp* admitted, that it was the province of the House to reduce salaries; but, in this instance, the House had not the power to do it. These particular allowances were by Act of Parliament, the 18th of George 3rd, which empowered him to divide 60,000*l.* amongst his younger children; the grant not to take effect till after his death. This was part of the hereditary revenues which it was not in the power of his present Majesty to give up to the public; and it was on that ground only that this particular charge came into the Civil List.

Sir *George Warrender* agreed that the reduction could not take place without repealing an Act of Parliament. He should be sorry to take away a moderate allowance granted by Act of Parliament. He thought his Majesty's Ministers had distinctly redeemed all the pledges they had given to the country; he knew that further measures of economy were in progress, and he had the greatest confidence in Ministers.

Colonel *Sibthorp* would vote against the hon. member for Middlesex, as he did not think the sum granted too much.

Mr. *Hunt* said, that these salaries, as he well remembered, had been increased in the year 1806 or 1807, on account of the high price of provisions, and ought now to be reduced.

Mr. *Hume* observed, that as his motion could not effect his object, he would withdraw it.

Colonel *Davies* moved an Amendment, that the second class be reduced to 118,700*l.*, and that there should be added to the third class the sum deducted from the second class, 11,300*l.* He could not do otherwise than complain of the conduct of Government, who in the course they were pursuing with respect to the Civil List, were doing precisely the same thing which lost the former Ministers their places. They were acting in direct opposition to the recommendation of the Select Committee, who called for a certain reduction, though a small one. In wishing to take from the second, and to add to the third class, he was anxious to provide for the splendor and dignity of the Crown, instead of making a large provision for noblemen whose incomes were already very large.

The *Speaker* suggested that the Motion ought to stand as follows: — "That 130,300*l.* be omitted, and 118,700*l.* be inserted in its stead."

Lord *Althorp* said, that the Motion was not, in fact, diminishing the amount of the grant. The object of the Motion was, to prevent his Majesty granting salaries to household officers as they hitherto had been granted. The Bill, as it stood, did not prevent his Majesty from doing it, nor did it compel him to do it. He certainly never had pledged himself one way or the other that salaries should be reduced, or kept to what they were. He wished it to be left to the discretion of his Majesty. If his Majesty chose to reduce the salaries, there would be a surplus to be applied to the Third Class.

Sir *M. W. Ridley* was surprised that the gallant Colonel had made a proposition so unbecoming in the House to adopt, and so insulting to his Majesty—viz. to take it out of the power of his Majesty to make such disbursements as he might please. The House, he was sure, would not approve of any proposal of the kind. It was, in fact, saying, "We will give you so much, but we will restrict you from the absolute disposal of that sum of money, which must be expended as we think fit."

Sir *Robert Bateson* said, that as the late Ministers had gone out upon this question, he thought his Majesty's present Government would be acting a most inconvenient part if they did not uphold the decision of the Committee. He would move that a sum of 12,000*l.* be deducted from the Second Class of 119,000*l.*, and he should not think of transferring it to any other class. He should not be deterred from dividing on the question now, because the Reform measure was coming on next week. He concluded by moving, as an amendment, that 11,500*l.* be deducted from the Second Class.

Mr. *Hunt* said, that although the sum was small, it would be great in the eyes of the people. He hoped his Majesty's Ministers would not let it go forth to the country that on this occasion they had resisted this small economy.

Mr. *Fyler* said, the proposition of the gallant Officer would not benefit the country at large, as it would only shift the expense from the second to the third class, at the same time that it would appear most ungracious to his Majesty.

Mr. *Charles Douglas* said, he would vote for the original proposition.

Mr. *Hume* said, that as the proposition of the hon. member for Londonderry went to remove entirely the sum of 11,500*l.* from the aggregate of the Civil List, and not merely to shift it from Class Two to Class Three he should support it, because he would never sanction the principle on which Ministers were acting—that of opposing the recommendation of a Select Committee.

The *Speaker* wished, before the discussion proceeded further, to explain to the House the situation in which it was placed. The first proposition was, to take 11,500*l.* from the Second Class, and add it to the Third Class, and this they could do. But then came the second proposition, which was, to take away altogether the sum of 11,500*l.* Now, as the whole amount of the Civil List was voted, if this amendment were agreed to, it would have the effect of leaving that sum wholly unappropriated.

Mr. *Ruthven* said, that on the principles of economy and reform, which he had always maintained in and out of the House, he must support the amendment of his hon. friend, the member for Londonderry.

In supporting his amendment, he did not conceive he was in any degree restricting the comforts or conveniences of the Royal person. If he did, he would not support it.

Mr. *George Robinson* thought it not derogatory from the dignity of the Monarch, or in any manner lessening those comforts which the people of this country were disposed to allow him, to give a vote in support of the recommendation of the Select Committee,—that 11,529*l.* should be reduced from the salaries of the officers of the Second Class. The House, he admitted, was not bound by the recommendation of the Select Committee, but he thought some cogent reason should be given why it should not be attended to; and he, not having heard any such reasons, would give his vote in favour of the amendment.

The gallery was cleared for a division, but none took place, the amendments were negatived, and the Bill passed.

HOUSE OF LORDS,
Friday, April 15, 1831.

MINUTES.] Bills. Brought up from the Commons, and read a first time. Civil List; Deputy Lieutenant; (Scotland); Indemnity; and Growth of Tobacco (Ireland).

Returns ordered. On the Motion of Lord WYNFORD, the total amount of all Fees received in the Office of the Chancellor's Secretary for Commissions of Bankrupts, in each year, from the 1st April, 1815, to the 1st April, 1831, distinguishing how much thereof has been retained in each year for the Secretaries, Clerks, and other Expenses of the said Office, and how much thereof has been paid in each year to the Lord Chancellor, as part of his lordship's Emoluments from Bankruptcy; also, the total amount of all Fees received by the Lord Chancellor's Purse Bearer, from the different branches of the Bankruptcy business, in each year, from 1st April, 1815, to 1st April, 1831, distinguishing how much thereof has been in each year paid to the Lord Chancellor as part of his Lordship's Emoluments from Bankruptcy; also, the number of public and private Meetings of Commissioners of Bankrupts, which have been held in London during the years 1828, 1829, and 1830, distinguishing the number in each year, and classing them under different heads, according to their nature and purposes; also the number of Certificates to Bankrupts, allowed by the Lord Chancellor, in the years 1828, 1829, and 1830, distinguishing the number in each year; and also the amount of Fees received by each of the Commissioners of Bankrupts in London, in each of the years 1828, 1829, and 1830, or for such portions of the said years, as the party making the Return shall have held the office of a Commissioner:—On the Motion of Earl GREY, a Copy of the Treasury Minute of the 15th April, with respect to the reduction of the Salaries of Official Persons, being Members of either House of Parliament.

Petitions presented. For the Abolition of Slavery, by the Earl of DERBY, from Warrington:—By Lord SUFFIELD, forty-seven (signed by 2,957 persons) several from different Parishes and Congregations in Norfolk, and several from Parishes in Ireland:—By the Archbishop of YORK, Lord BEXLEY, the Earl of ABERDEEN, the Duke of RICHMOND, and Lord CARBERY, from various Congregations of Dissenters; and from Parishes in the North of England. In favour of Reform, by the Duke of NORTHUMBERLAND, from the Inhabitants of St. Martin-in-the-Fields:—By Lord CLIFDEN, from Carlow:—By the Marquis of HASTINGS, from Loughborough:—By Lord BELHAVEN, from Hamilton, praying to be included in the Renfrew District of Burghs:—By the Marquis of LANSDOWN, from Brandon, Suffolk; from Ayr, and from Grantham:—By Lord KING, from Dunfermline, from the Students of Glasgow, from Wallingford (Berkshire), from Fordingbridge, and from Downton, (Wiltshire):—By the Duke of RICHMOND, from Horsham:—By Earl GOWER, from the County of Stafford:—By Earl CAWDOR, from Cardigan, and Pembroke. By Lord CLIFDEN, from Kildare and Dungarvon, praying that the Grants of Public Money, for the purposes of Education in Ireland, might not be exclusively given to the Kildare Street Society. By Lord KING, for an alteration in the Tithe Laws, from Berkeley; and from Glasgow, for an alteration of the Scotch Law of Hypothec. For the Repeal of the Beer Bill, by Lord FOLEY, from the Magistrates of Worcestershire:—By the Earl of CARNARVON, from the Justices of Peace, for the Bath Division of Somersetshire; and from the Grand Jury of Somersetshire.

POOR LAWS FOR IRELAND.] The Earl *Rosebery* said, that he rose to present to their Lordships a Petition, which he deemed in every point of view to be of the greatest public interest. The petition was that of a numerous and highly respectable Society in London, which associated for the purpose of pursuing the best plans for the encouragement of industry, and for the reduction of the Poor-rates, by rendering the lower classes industrious and prudent. The petitioners earnestly prayed that their Lordships would take some measures to introduce a compulsory rate or tax upon land in Ireland, for the relief of the poor of that country. When he considered that in England, for upwards of two centuries and a half, a poor-rate had been established, which, until the most unjust departure from the original principle of the law, had always been found beneficial,—when he considered that in Scotland, although there was no regular relief for the poor, there was an assessment to make good the deficiencies that might arise in other funds for their assistance,—he could not but [illegible] the greatest surprise that Ireland should be left so totally destitute of any regulations or provisions upon the subject. In Scotland the system had been found to have a beneficial effect upon the moral character of the poor. Ireland combined in itself circumstances of every description which was calculated to render a system of Poor-laws more necessary then they were even in England or Scotland. The rich land-owners and men of property of Scotland, resided in that country, and their local knowledge and immediate acquaintance with their neighbourhood made them sympathise with the poor, and provide for their relief. Scotland, moreover, as well as England, was possessed of numerous large manufacturing towns, which relieved the agricultural districts of their superfluous population. It was well known that Ireland presented in every respect the very reverse of this. Her gentry were absentees, and her population almost entirely agricultural. He hoped that the attention of his Majesty's Ministers would be immediately directed to devise some plan by which the miseries suffered by the poor of Ireland might be alleviated, for at present the evils of that country were increasing, and they would increase, if remedial measures were not adopted.

The Earl of *Limerick* would not be deterred from opposing the prayer of the petition by the popular odium that might be cast upon him, for he was determined on this subject to stand the brunt of prejudices. The petition was of an extraordinary nature, and it came into that House from an extraordinary quarter, for it was presented by a nobleman from Scotland, a country which he verily believed would rather witness the introduction into it of the cholera morbus, than a system of Poor-laws. It was really extraordinary that the petition should have been presented by his noble friend; but from whom did this petition proceed? This was more extraordinary still,—it came from a society of the City, held at the Poultry Tavern. "My Lords," cried the Earl, "Oh, my Lords, my Lords! the Lord deliver me from societies." His noble friend had come forward with the most ludicrous petition from the most ludicrous society, which he (Lord Limerick) had ever heard of. Every thing was now to be done by means of societies. Perhaps the petitioners formed a part of that notable and new society, which was to save the people the trouble of thinking about who were fit to be their Representatives, and to fit them with candidates of all colours and of all sizes. What were now the effects of the Poor-laws? The poor would make improvident marriages, they would get children, and then the cry was that the children must be supported. The tendency of Poor-laws on the population of Ireland would go to an incredible length—there was no foreseeing how far it would go. This was not a ludicrous subject, however it might appear so. He would ask the landlords of the south of England what had been the effects of the Poor-laws? Were not the poor-rates taken with ingratitude, and given with reluctance? It could be shown he thought, from evidence, that the Poor-laws were open to very great abuses; and there was also testimony to show that the supposed evils arising from their absence in Ireland did not reach such a height as the advocates of the measure endeavoured to make out. In particular he might mention, that a Roman Catholic Clergyman, on being asked if he had ever known, in all his experience, any one die of starvation, had stated that he knew but of one case, and that one was distinguished by very peculiar circumstances. A Committee of the House of Commons had sat upon the subject, and he maintained that from the report of that Committee, it appeared not advisable to introduce a system of Poor-laws into Ireland; and the labours of that Committee superseded the necessity of bringing the subject before the House as his noble friend had done.

Lord *Teynham* thought, that the state of the population of Ireland was most remarkable, but he felt confident that Ministers would give attention to the subject, and devise the most eligible system of relief. He was convinced, from the report of the Committee to which the noble Earl had alluded, that the introduction of the Poor-laws into Ireland was a measure of absolute necessity. The condition of the poor in the south of England had not arisen from the Statute of Queen Elizabeth, but from the departure from the principle of that beneficial law.

Petition to lie on the Table.

LOWER CANADA.] Earl *Bathurst* moved that the address delivered by the Lieutenant Governor of Lower Canada to the House of Assembly, at its recent meeting, should be laid before their Lordships.

Lord *Goderich* said, that he had no objection to the production of the document; but if the noble Earl wished also to have the instructions under which the address was made, he should think it his duty to oppose the Motion.

Earl *Bathurst* had no wish for the instructions.

Motion for the Address agreed to.

PARLIAMENTARY REFORM.] On the Earl of Cawdor presenting a Petition from Darlington, in favour of the Ministerial plan of Reform,

The Duke of *Newcastle* said, he wished

to take that opportunity to say a few words on the question of Reform. He was the more desirous to do so, as on the occasion of the irregular discussion which took place previous to the holidays on the motion of the noble Baron (Wharncliffe), he left the House after the reply which had been made by the noble Lord (Durham) to that noble Baron's speech, not conceiving that a proper time to discuss the subject, and he had not, consequently, been present when the observations which had fallen from the noble Duke opposite (the Duke of Richmond) respecting the borough of Boroughbridge, had been addressed to their Lordships.

Earl *Grey* rose to order. He conceived that any reference to a report of what had taken place in a former Debate in that House was quite irregular, and out of order.

The Duke of *Newcastle* thought he ought not to be debarred of an opportunity of replying to the observations of the noble Duke.

The Earl of *Hardwicke* was also of opinion, that it would be out of order to refer to any report of what had taken place there in a previous Debate.

Lord *Ellenborough* observed, that the noble Duke might easily avoid committing a breach of order, by answering the observations in question, without supposing that they had been delivered in a Debate in that House.

The *Lord Chancellor* said, that it would be quite irregular certainly to allude to any observations which had been made in a Debate in that House, but the noble Duke might avoid the difficulty in the mode which had been pointed out by the noble Lord who had just sat down.

The Duke of *Newcastle* said, that the noble Duke opposite had, in a place which he should not mention, made an attack upon that class of persons to which he (the Duke of Newcastle) belonged, which he was anxious to answer. That noble Duke had stated, that the late Attorney-general (Sir C. Wetherell) was retained, by his seat for Boroughbridge, to exert his talents against the measure of Reform. He knew something relative to Boroughbridge, and he would say, that that statement was not founded in fact. He would assert, that the statement of the noble Duke was a libel upon that learned Gentleman, and upon the patron Duke of that borough, and he would maintain that there were not more independent Members in the House of Commons than that learned Gentleman, and the other hon. member for Boroughbridge. It had been stated in that House and elsewhere, that one of the three causes which had rendered Reform necessary, was to be found in certain transactions that had taken place in Newark. He did not think that such a reflection upon his (the Duke of Newcastle's) comparatively pigmy acts came fairly, or with a good grace, from an Administration which had committed much higher and more flagrant acts of a similar description. He alluded to the control which had been assumed by the present Government over members of the Royal Household and over others in the House of Commons connected with Government appointments. It might be fairly said, he thought, that when, in order to carry this measure of Reform, certain persons who had voted against it had been dismissed from the Royal Household, such an act was a grosser attempt to control the public feeling and the votes of Members of Parliament than any thing which could he laid to his account. He thought it his duty to notice such a violent and arbitrary act on the part of his Majesty's Government. And here he could not avoid alluding to the attacks which were made in the public prints upon an illustrious personage. He thought that it was the duty of his Majesty's Ministers to interfere and put down the improper mention of the name of that illustrious personage, which had been made the subject of remark and attack in the public press. He repeated, that he thought his Majesty's Government ought without delay, to put down such means of maligning that illustrious personage. He wished to take this opportunity to ask his Majesty's Ministers whether the statement which he had been told had been put forth with some degree of authenticity, was correct—namely, that in case of a dissolution of Parliament, which he trusted would not take place, it was intended by his Majesty's Government to omit sending writs to those boroughs which, by the present measure of Reform they proposed to disfranchise? He was sure that such a thing would not be practicable, and that the act, if attempted, would be a most arbitrary and unconstitutional one on the part of Government. With regard to Parliamentary Reform, he begged to say, that he considered it wholly unnecessary, and that he would oppose in all its stages the measure of Reform which had been brought forward by his Majesty's Ministers. He thought it wholly uncalled for —that it was a gross delusion upon the public of this country, and that it was attempted, by a species of political turmoil, to carry such a measure through the Legislature. Before he sat down, he wished to point out one little kind of Reform of his own. They had heard of certain Dukes and Marquises who had avowed themselves ready to throw their political interests into the political caldron, and to devote them to the public good. Now if those persons who were concerned in the maintenance of such interests should agree to the forfeiture of them, it was all well, and those noble Lords should be allowed to sacrifice them. He would say, therefore, let those who wished to throw their influence and interests into the patriotic fund, be permitted to do so.

The Duke of *Richmond* said, that he did not rise to answer the observations which the noble Duke had taken three weeks to concoct, nor to reply to the charge which he had made against him; he merely rose to put a simple question to the noble Duke, and in doing so he begged to observe, that there was no man in the other House of Parliament, of whose legal attainments he had a higher opinion than of those of Sir C. Wetherell. He wished to ask the noble Duke whether, if Sir C. Wetherell should on Monday next vote for the Ministerial plan of Reform, he would any longer continue to sit as member for Boroughbridge?

The Duke of *Newcastle.*—I dare say that he would not wish himself to retain his seat for that borough any longer if he did so vote.

Petition laid on the Table.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Friday, *April* 15, 1831.

MINUTES.] Dr. LUSHINGTON took his seat for Winchilsea.

Bills. Read a third time. Sea Apprentices; Corporate Funds; Dean Forest Boundaries; Post Office Sale. Read a second time. Duchy of Cornwall Leases.

Returns ordered. On the Motion of Mr. SPRING RICE, the Treasury Minute of 15th April, 1831, reducing the salaries of persons holding office during pleasure, and being Members of either House of Parliament.

Petitions presented. By Mr. HUME, from Glasgow, praying that no injury might be done to the rights of the West-India Planters, in Abolishing Slavery.

PARLIAMENTARY REFORM.] Sir *J. Walsh* presented a Petition from the borough of Sudbury, stating that the population of the town and suburbs amounted to 5,450, and praying to have their case taken into consideration, as regarded the right of returning Members to Parliament.

Mr. *D. W. Harvey* said, he thought the borough of Sudbury had a fair claim to consideration. He wished to take that opportunity of deprecating an irregular practice that lately prevailed in the House, of commenting upon speeches made out of doors, or in preceding debates. He must particularly object to the custom of some hon. Members rising in the absence of others, and, without any previous intimation of their intention, or communication with the absent parties, making the reports of speeches assumed to have been delivered by those individuals the subject of parliamentary comment. This course had been pursued the other night by the hon. member for Essex (Colonel Tyrell), in relation to something supposed to have fallen from him at the county meeting recently held at Chelmsford on the subject of Reform. The hon. and gallant Member represented him as approving of the Ministerial Bill merely on the ground of its being an introduction to a more sweeping measure of Reform. He denied that this Representation was correct. He had advocated the present measure, as being calculated, in his opinion, to do away with the feeling of discontent so prevalent in the country, and to enlist on the side of the Constitution a large and important class of the community. He referred to what he considered a correct report of his speech, and would read an extract or two from it, in proof of his present statement, and in order to show what sentiments he had really expressed on the occasion in question. The hon. Member read an extract from a report of his speech at Chelmsford, to the effect, that "so far from advocating any thing tending to revolution, he deprecated Annual Parliaments, Universal Suffrage, and Vote by Ballot, as calculated to create a democratic influence in Parliament, inconsistent with a peerage or a limited monarchy. If, however (he had added), some persons thought the country could be better governed without these, he did not deny their right to think so; but he hoped that those who thought so would have the candour to speak out, and let their opinions be known as their own—not his; for when he said this he entirely dissented from those who thought thus, or who advocated the doctrines he had adverted to." The hon. and gallant Member wished, in making his remarks on a former occasion, to impress upon the House the idea that many of the supporters of Reform, and he (Mr. Harvey) among the number, advocated the present Bill because they considered it the lever with which they could hereafter accomplish their revolutionary objects. As far as he was concerned personally, he decidedly protested against this, and he might add, that he did not believe there were twenty men in the county of Essex who would be found to advocate Universal Suffrage and Annual Parliaments, or any who looked forward to this Bill as likely to afford the means of attacking the Established Church. He believed there were not many connected with the agricultural interest in Essex who did not look forward to a beneficial alteration of the tithe system as extremely desirable; but who would nevertheless be very far from attacking the Church. His own sentiments on the subject might be collected from what he was reported to have said at the Chelmsford meeting; and it would appear that they were very different from those attributed to him by the hon. and gallant Member. He had said, "he hoped those interested in the Church would have the good sense to reform it before it became necessary that it should be reformed by others. In the same way he hoped the House of Commons would reform itself; for if it did not, then would come the question of a revolution, which he wished to avoid, because, when a revolution came, no man could say how dangerous might be the consequences to the best interests of the country"—a sentiment which the reporter stated to have been received with loud and repeated cheers. He now asked if he had uttered any sentiment that ought not to fall from an individual favourable to our Constitution, civil and ecclesiastical? In conclusion, the hon. Member took that opportunity to express his dissent from the opinion entertained by the hon. member for Preston, who objected to the Bill because it only added 500,000 persons to the constituency. He was of opinion, if a constituency of 700,000 or 800,000, framed as was now proposed, were not found to work well, that it would not be made purer or more effective by further infusion of the numerical strength of the country.

Colonel *Tyrell* thought the hon. member for Colchester the very last person who ought to complain of any attack proceeding from him; for it had been his misfortune to meet the hon. Gentleman on every public occasion as the political agitator of the county of Essex; and the hon. Member, who was not himself particular as to whom he assailed, ought not to complain so bitterly of having his own sentiments canvassed in turn. The hon. Member had not ventured to contradict the assertion which he had made,—namely, that the question of ecclesiastical Reform did take up a considerable share of the time of the meeting at Chelmsford. He had repeatedly heard the hon. Member, who, in his opinion, made a bad use of his acknowledged talent, decrying and ridiculing the clergy of the Established Church, and holding them up to the contempt and ridicule of the people. It appeared to him that the hon. member for Colchester had availed himself of this opportunity to give at full length that speech which had not been fully reported in *The Times*, and other public newspapers, and of which some notice had been taken. He had expected that the hon. Member would have made some observations on the meeting of the hundred of Rochford; but as he had abstained from doing so, and only attacked him, he would say a few words on that point.

Mr. *L. Wellesley* rose to order. He objected to the course the hon. Gentleman was taking, as irregular.

Mr. *D. W. Harvey* denied, that he had made any attack on the hon. Gentleman. He had, in fact, risen to reply to an attack which the hon. Member had made on him. He now called on the hon. Member to say,—and if he could, to prove,—that he had ever, either at the Essex or any other meeting, made any observations against the Established Church? He requested him to state whether he had ever heard him, on any occasion, utter an expression for the purpose of holding up the Established Church to ridicule and contempt? He was, on the contrary, attached to it; and he did not think that he showed himself less the friend of the Establishment by advocating the removal of such abuses as tended to bring it into discredit.

Colonel *Tyrell* said, the impression on his mind was, that he had heard the hon. Member make observations derogatory to the character of the Established Church.

He spoke of a matter of notoriety—a fact as notorious as the sun at noon day—that the hon. Member was in the habit of making attacks on the Established Church. He had met the hon. Member on various occasions at elections and meetings. He had recently met him; but whether the hon. Member was then acting as a paid agent or not he could not determine.

Mr. *D. W. Harvey* rose, as he said, to explain.

The *Speaker* said, he could not rise to explain in the midst of an hon. Member's speech. He could only rise to order.

Mr. *D. W. Harvey* said, he would then speak to order. He had to complain greatly of the observations made by the hon. Gentleman. The hon. Member said, that it was notorious as the sun at noonday, that he (Mr. Harvey) held up the Established Church and its professors to ridicule and contempt. Such language was, in his opinion, most unparliamentary. He denied the accusation altogether; and when the hon. Member persevered in his attack—neither in good taste nor in good language—he felt that he was bound to rise and to repel it. He was not the heir-apparent to a title—nor was he the expectant of large possessions; but he was the Representative of a large constituency, and, though the son of an humble tradesman, he was as jealous of his honour and character as the hon. Member. He was determined not to allow persons of high pretensions (he did not, indeed, think that the hon. Member was one of these, because individuals of that class would not have introduced such topics) to attack him with impunity. The hon. Member had spoken of him as a paid agent! What did the hon. Member mean? He could tell the hon. Member that he was as independent a man as the hon. Member was.

The *Speaker* said, the hon. Member had a right to appeal respecting the orders of the House when he felt himself aggrieved, and all sides of the House would unquestionably support him. But on the other hand, he had no right, nor privilege, voluntarily to break through these orders. Further he must observe, that when Gentlemen knew what was the press of petitions before the House, and that it was necessary, in justice to the petitioners, to open the subject-matter of those petitions, they must see that the benefit arising from such discussions must be materially reduced, if Gentlemen diverged from the subject-matter, and addressed themselves to circumstances connected with some petition which had been presented, or notice for the future presentation of which had been given. The evil was still farther increased, if, in so diverging, they introduced matter personal to any one in the House or out of it. Such a proceeding, to say the least of it, was employing very unsatisfactorily the time of the House. He hoped, therefore, that Gentlemen would confine themselves to the question immediately before them.

Colonel *Tyrell* said, if in the warmth of debate he had said any thing offensive to the hon. member for Colchester, he regretted it. With respect to the hon. Member's having been a parliamentary agent, he had heard him at one time boast of it, and even say, that such had been his situation on other occasions.

Mr. *L. Wellesley* again suggested the impropriety of wandering from the subject before the House.

Mr. *Western* was sorry that his hon. Colleague had introduced the topics which he had done on the presentation of the Essex petition. Nothing which he had said on that occasion could have justly provoked his hon. Colleague to make the observations in which he had then indulged.

Colonel *Tyrell* did not think that his hon. Colleague had any just reason to complain, as he was present when the observations alluded to were made, and he had not made any remark on them.

Mr. *Blackett* wished, as the Representative of a borough included in one of the Schedules of the Bill, to ask a question of the noble Lord. It appeared that the amount of population was to decide the fate of the several boroughs; but, in some instances, the population of the parish, and in others the population of the borough only, was taken. Now he should be glad to know, as the population of the parish and borough of Beeralston was larger than that of the parish alone, whether the noble Lord would not remove that borough from Schedule A to Schedule B, which would give it the right of sending one Member to Parliament?

Lord *J. Russell* said, there was no intention of removing Beeralston from schedule A to schedule B; and when the proper time arrived, he would state the reason why the alteration would not be made.

Mr. *G. Dawson* trusted, that equal

justice would be done, not only to Beeralston, but to Calne. The population of the borough and parish of Beeralston amounted, it appeared, to about 4,000 inhabitants; and it was stated in the return laid on their Table to-day, that the borough of Calne contained 997 male inhabitants. Now it did appear to him that in common justice the noble Lord ought to remove the borough of Beeralston from schedule A, which would deprive it of both its Members, and transfer it to schedule B, and that the borough of Calne ought to take its place.

Lord *J. Russell* said, he believed that no alteration would be made in the Bill with respect to the borough of Calne. As the hon. Member had asked him so many questions, he would permit him he hoped to ask one in his turn. He should be glad to know, on what principle the hon. Member would place the borough of Calne on either of those schedules? If the hon. Member had any plan to propose, he would be most ready to examine it in the Committee.

Mr. *G. Dawson* said, he had nothing to do with the Bill, except to give it his decided negative, which he had done and would continue to do. He was called on in his situation as a Member of that House, to do nothing but to point out the absurdities of the measure. If any hon. Gentleman could show him any one clause of this Bill which was consistent with common sense or common justice, he should be very much surprised. He defied the noble Lord to point out such a one. If, however, it was intended to carry this measure of Reform into effect, he thought justice, fair and equal justice, should be extended to all the boroughs.

Lord *J. Russell* said, assuredly justice should in all cases be done; and if the hon. Member saw absurdities in the measure, he believed that they originated and rested with the hon. Member himself. The return which he had referred to was one of those made by the returning officers of different boroughs; and he had already said, that his Majesty's Ministers did not mean to proceed on those returns, although it was thought proper that they should be laid before the House. If the hon. Member knew of any better rule for directing their decision than that which had been adopted by his Majesty's Ministers, he ought to point it out. If he could not do this, he was himself guilty of committing one of those many absurdities of which he complained.

Sir *C. Wetherell* said, he would use in speaking of this Bill, a stronger word, and therefore a more appropriate word, than that to which his hon. friend had recourse. He would describe it as fraught with gross injustice. He would maintain, that these boroughs were handed out like bank notes. A bank note to a friend—disfranchisement to an enemy. The fact which had just been stated, proved this. A borough, it appeared, was allowed to stand untouched, which ought to be placed if impartiality were attended to, in the disfranchised list. It turned out, and was clearly shown, that the return for the borough adverted to was wrong; yet that borough was suffered to remain. Ministers ought not to have done so unworthy and unfair a trick as to save a borough because it belonged to a friend.

Lord *J. Russell* said, he was very reluctant to detain the House, but, after the observations which had been made, he could not avoid doing so. The Bill, as he had often declared to the House, and now, for the fiftieth time repeated, was founded, with respect to the disfranchisement clauses, on the population returns of 1821. Wherever that population return justified disfranchisement, according to the line which Ministers had laid down, they had disfranchised; and, whatever the hon. and learned Gentleman might assert—whatever he might be pleased with a loud voice, to charge on Ministers,—he defied him to prove that any partiality had been extended to persons holding a system of politics favourable to this measure, or connected, on the other hand, with those who were of a different party. Some of those who opposed the measure arraigned Ministers for partiality, because one borough was disfranchised, while another was saved. But it was impossible for any person who looked on the subject with candour and fairness, to deny that, taking the test which Ministers had done—a parliamentary return—a record which the present Ministers did not make, and with which they had nothing to do—considering that, and examining that test, he asserted that it was impossible for any man, if he admitted that parliamentary record to be proper to be adopted as a test, to show that partiality had been extended to one borough in preference to, and at the expense of, another. He defied the hon. and learned Member, or any other Member of that House, to prove, that in bringing forward this great measure any partiality had been shown; or that any thing had been done to countenance the accusation of those base and unworthy motives which had been brought against Ministers. If the hon. member for Harwich had any charge to make, let him make it openly. Let him show, if he could, that because this borough belonged to a friend, it was spared; and because that borough was influenced by an enemy, that it was disfranchised. Ministers had adopted no such narrow rule; and he could not but say, that those frequent charges from the Gentlemen opposite rather pointed to the manner in which they themselves would have proceeded — rather showed the manner in which they themselves would have acted, had they been placed in the situation of his Majesty's Ministers—than impugned the honour and integrity of the Government. They only convicted themselves of want of candour, of want of justice, and of want of impartiality, in their manner of conducting their attacks upon Reform.

Mr. *W. Bankes* said, that he should have to present a Petition on this subject from no inconsiderable number of persons, connected with the large and flourishing town of Marlborough, which was situated within twelve miles of the borough (Calne) which had given rise to this discussion, and if the next time the noble Lord travelled that road, he would not use those blinds which he had so expediently adopted in the course of last summer, he would see, that Marlborough, which was to lose one Member, was a large and flourishing town, and Calne which was to retain two Members, was not equal to it. In the petition to which he had referred, the petitioners stated, that there were in Marlborough 300, or nearly 300, persons, who paid an annual rent of 10*l.* each for their houses; while in the borough of Calne, the number of those who paid 10*l.* a-year rent, was 124. Let the noble Lord deal with those numbers, and adopting that new-fangled arithmetic which it was supposed would add greatly to the improvement and prosperity of the country, prove that 124 was a larger number than 300. If the noble Lord would afterwards diverge a little, and proceed to the borough of Downton, he would find that it was a mere village, and that there were but nine houses in it paying 10*l.* a-year, which borough was to retain one Member. It had been very properly asked, who drew the line, and on what principle was it drawn? In this House it was stated that its basis was population; but, in another place, to which he could not regularly refer, he had heard that it was property—nothing but property. But what became of either proposition, when he pointed to the case of Marlborough, and contrasted it with those of Calne and Downton? His objection, under all the circumstances, was to the bill, the whole bill, and nothing but the bill.

Mr. *H. Gurney* said, that looking to all the principles of the Constitution, Ministers had, in his opinion, got themselves into an inextricable dilemma. Every one who knew any thing of the British Constitution must be aware that it depended on separate jurisdictions, exercised by different powers of the State. Those jurisdictions the present bill tended to melt into one. He cared not whether this was called an aristocratical or a democratical Reform; but of this he was certain, that it was a Radical Reform which threatened to sap and undermine all the institutions of the country. The Members who supported the enlargement of the suffrage frequently referred them to the working of the democratical system in America. Now a friend of his who happened at this moment to be in that country, and who had heard of our demands for Reform, thus expressed himself in a letter which he had written to him on the subject:—He said, "that his prejudices in favour of the Democratical System had much abated and that his disposition with respect to it was changed since he had an opportunity of observing its working here," and he concluded by saying, "but whatever you do, take a year to consider of it;" advice which he thought it would be prudent for his Majesty's Ministers to follow.

Mr. *L. Wellesley* said, that every improvement in the returns would tend to make the bill more perfect; and he was much astonished to hear Gentlemen object to alterations which would make it more conformable to their own views.

Mr. *G. Dawson* said, it was due to himself and to the House, after the observations of the noble Lord, to shew what were the absurdities to which he had alluded as being contained in this Bill. His remarks arose from the question which had been put to the noble Lord by the hon. member for Beeralston (Mr. Blackett); who inquired, whether the noble Lord intended, on the consideration of the two schedules, to amend them, where the borough and parish united gave a sufficient number to authorize Representation? In other words, whether when the parish had a population of above 2,000 persons, the borough should not be exempt from disfranchisement. Now it appeared that Beeralston, proceeding on this principle, had a population of 2,198. This was a matter of considerable importance, because when the hon. member for Weymouth, in making his excellent speech on this subject, mentioned Beeralston, the noble Lord said, that the learned Gentleman need not proceed with that point, because the error would be corrected at the proper time. [Lord *J. Russell.*—No.] He understood the noble Lord to say, that the decision with respect to that borough would be suspended. Now he would say that equal justice would not be done, if, taking population as the criterion, Calne should be allowed to send Members to Parliament, while Beeralston and other places similarly situated were disfranchised. The noble Lord, however, had told them that there was no intention of making any alteration as to Beeralston. He was convinced that the House would be surprised when he read the return of the population of Calne, which had been laid on the table this day,—the population of Calne, which was to retain both Members, while Beeralston was to be disfranchised. The return ran thus:—"1st. The limits of the borough of Calne are not the same as those mentioned in the population returns of 1821—viz. the parish of Calne. 2. The borough of Calne is only a part of the parish named in the population return. The borough comprises only 885 acres; but the parish, including the borough, contains 7,964 acres. 3. The population return of 1821 does not distinguish the borough from the other parts of the parish, nor can the population of the borough be collected from the account then taken; but, at the present time, the borough contains 461 houses, and 997 male inhabitants, reckoning all children as well as men." Now, admitting that the females were as numerous as the males, (and the proposition was a very fair one), then the whole population of Calne did not amount to 2,000; and therefore that borough ought not to be represented. Why should Beeralston be disfranchised, then, if Calne is to be preserved? If you include the population of the parish in the one case, why exclude it in the other? If you include the population of the parish in the case of Beeralston, which is part of the parish of Beerferris, you will have a larger population than in Calne, and he repeated that if the Members were retained in the one case, they ought to be in the other. He contended, then, that the noble Lord was not justified in accusing him of absurdity, which he should hope was meant only in a parliamentary sense, when he pointed out some of the great inconsistencies of this Bill. He conceived that the House ought to have an explanation on these points before it went into the Committee; and if such explanation were not given,—if the noble Lord did not give a satisfactory answer to the question put to him,—he would tell him to his face, and in the face of the country, that the Government had been guilty of great partiality in making the selection of particular boroughs for disfranchisement, and exempting others. He repeated, that if the noble Lord did not give a satisfactory explanation on these points, neither his taunts nor the cheers of those by whom he was supported, would redeem him from the charge of partiality. If the noble Lord should give such satisfactory explanation, he (M. Dawson) would retract his charge most readily, for he assured the House that it was painful to him to be obliged to make such a charge, and he hoped that for his own sake the noble Lord might give a satisfactory explanation.

Mr. *Hobhouse* begged to ask, when the right hon. Member complained of the use of harsh terms, who it was that began to use such terms? Did they not come from the right hon. Gentleman himself, who seemed overcome with the situation in which he was placed? He contended that it was the use of harsh terms, begun by the right hon. Gentleman, which caused the noble Lord to use terms which certainly were much less so than those addressed to him. Surely hon. Members on the opposite side could not complain of such terms, after what had been heard from their own side of the House. Had not the House just heard the words "gross injustice" and "trick" applied to the conduct of Government by an hon. and learned Gentleman, who, on this occasion, appeared even more frantic than usual? Why if the House was not familiar to the use of such language from that quarter,—if they had not heard the same style of attack, not only against the present but against former Governments, when they had attempted any measures of improvement,—some more notice might be taken of them than he believed any hon. Member was now disposed to take. He thought it would be a sufficient answer to those insinuations to say, that the character of the members of his Majesty's Government was too well known to require a defence against general insinuations of this kind. But he would ask his hon. friend, (Mr. W. Bankes) who he was sure had too high a sense of honour to make any charge which he could not substantiate,—he would ask him, when he made a charge of partiality against the Government for drawing the line between those boroughs which were to be disfranchised and those which were to remain—he would ask him, did he believe that the exemption of the borough of Calne was made by the Government for the sake of the interest of the Marquis of Lansdown; for the implied charge came to that? Would his hon. friend,—would any man in the country—say, that this was done to serve the interest of the noble Marquis? He was sure his hon. friend or any man of honour would not believe any such thing. But what, he asked, was the allusion to the blinds being drawn up in the carriage to prevent the noble Lord from seeing the borough of Calne as he passed, but a reiteration of the same charge which had been so often insinuated? If his hon. friend, or any other hon. Member, had any charge of the kind to make, let it be brought forward fairly, and not imputed in this indirect manner. His hon. friend had stated, that he had a petition to present from the large and flourishing town of Marlborough. Now he (Mr. Hobhouse) happened to be well accquainted with that town, probably much better than the hon. Member who represented it, and he must say, with great respect for his hon. friend's partiality for the place, that it was neither large nor flourishing. Probably the blinds of his hon. friend's carriage were drawn up when he was there, or it might happen that his hon. friend had never seen it at all, for it was by no means necessary in many boroughs that the Representative should be well known to his constituents. But he would ask his hon. friend whether the petitioners to whose prayer he was so anxious to draw the attention of the House had included in that prayer, that the large and flourishing town should be released from any influence of the Marquis of Ailesbury in the return of their Members? Or did they pray that the 300 householders there should have a voice in the return of those Members, as well as the little knot of thirteen or fourteen who usually returned the Members, but who in the recent march of improvement, and to preserve something more like a constituency, had enlarged their numbers to twenty-eight? Or did they ask that that small body should continue to send the hon. Member and his colleague, against the wishes of the majority of the inhabitants? He hoped, as his hon. friend had, no doubt, a wish to protect the rights of that large and flourishing town, that if the present measure should fail, he would be prepared with some measure which would have that effect. If the hon. Member would visit Calne, he would find it a flourishing town, with two important branches of manufacture. However, let the Committee deal with those several boroughs as it should please when the bill was before them. What he objected to was, the bringing forward charges of this kind against the Government.

Mr. *W. Bankes*, as he had been so positively alluded to by the hon. member for Westminster, begged permission to say a few words in explanation. The hon. Member had referred to the case of Calne. Now he (Mr. Bankes) had undoubtedly taken up an opinion with respect to the conduct of the Ministers; and if he had found, when errors were pointed out to them, they had taken immediate means to correct them, he should have felt bound to alter that opinion. When he saw, however, the arithmetical errors, respecting which there could be no mistake, pertinaciously retained, he must confess that he could not divest himself of an impression that there was partiality in their determination on the subject of some of the boroughs the rights of which were questioned. With respect to the hon. Member's observations on his knowledge of the town of Marlborough, and the opinions of its inhabitants, he could only say, that he had attended in that town on all occasions when an election demanded his presence, and as he was always attended to the Town Hall by a large number of the respectable inhabitants, as well as the Corporation, he must take leave to think that the unanimity of feeling between them and the corporation was much more extensive than the hon. Member seemed to believe.

Lord *Stormont* said, that after all the tact that had been used on this subject, one thing was certain—that in the way in which the case was now left with respect to those boroughs, the Bill was one of great absurdity, or great injustice. It so happened, that all the partiality appeared to be on the side of the Whig boroughs. There was no complaint of any errors in the returns with respect to them. Now it was to him inexplicable, on any fair and impartial principle why a borough with a population of 2,000, and of 4,000, in that and the parish, should be disfranchised, while another borough with a much smaller number should retain its members, or why an union of the parish and the borough should not take place in one case as well as in another—why, for instance, Aldborough, with a population of 2,500, should be wholly excluded from representation. He did not say this from any personal feeling as the representative of that place. He spoke on the general principle, or rather the departure from principle, manifested in the whole measure.

Lord *Eastnor* said, he did not see on what principle it was that they should not adhere to the ancient boundaries of boroughs, or let in the whole vicinity. He wished to know, when the 2,000 could be made up from the vicinity, whether the noble Lord would not think that sufficient for the retention of representatives?

Lord *John Russell* said, that it would be impossible for him to give answers to the various questions which were put to him, without anticipating the statement he intended to make on Monday, and thus bringing on a premature discussion. He hoped, that on Monday he should be able to satisfy the noble Lord and the House that the course which Ministers were pursuing was correct as founded on the Population Returns; and why in many cases they were not guided by the later Returns.

Sir *R. Peel* thought it was of the utmost importance that the House should understand the course which was intended with respect to the Bill when in Committee. The first clause in the Bill would go to the disfranchisement of a certain number of boroughs, not named in that clause, but included in a schedule annexed to the Bill. Now, the first question they would have to decide would be, whether or not they would disfranchise the whole of the boroughs included in schedule A, by the adoption of the first clause; or were they to be called on to consider the schedule by itself, and take each borough separately. He asked, were they to dispose of all the boroughs by a single vote, or would parties be allowed to move an Amendment in each particular case?

Lord *J. Russell* said, that he meant to propose that they should go to the whole clause, but Members would have the opportunity of leaving out any borough they might think proper, as any Member might move an amendment for the omission of a particular borough.

Sir *R. Peel* thought it was very important that they should know the exact course they were to take. The noble Lord said, that opportunities would be given of moving Amendments to schedule A. Then the schedule must be considered before the clause, for what he understood was, that when they voted the clause, they would vote away all the boroughs in the schedule to which it referred.

Lord *Althorp* said, that when the House was called on to agree to the first clause, any Member would have the right to move any Amendment to schedule A that he pleased.

Sir *R. Peel* said, the House were yet not put in possession of the exact course which it was intended to pursue, and it would be a matter of much convenience that they should know on Friday the course which it was proposed to adopt on Monday. The usual course in cases where schedules were annexed to bills was, to go on with the bill, clause by clause, until they came to the schedule. Now he wished to know whether this course was to be adhered to on the present occasion? Were they to go on with the Bill till they came to schedule A, or were they to proceed at once to that schedule as a part of the first clause?

Lord *J. Russell* said, the right hon. Baronet was perfectly correct in asking the exact course which it was intended to adopt, and he had no objection to state it, but he thought it was already known to the House from what he had said. The usual course, as the right hon. Baronet had stated, was to go on with the Bill till they came to the schedule, but in the present case, Ministers thought that that would not be the most convenient. They therefore would proceed with the schedule as part of the clause; but, on this subject, he was anxious to appeal to the opinion of the Chair.

The *Speaker.*—I look upon this in the same light as the right hon. Gentleman and the noble Lord. I think it is quite clear that the Committee could not be called upon to come to a vote upon the clause, until they had the whole clause before them. The clause says, that all the boroughs in schedule A shall be disfranchised, and schedule A has the names of the boroughs which it is so intended to disfranchise: it thus becomes a part of the clause. In ordinary cases the practice is, to leave the schedule annexed to a bill to the last, but that is only in cases where the schedule contains nothing which does not properly belong to it. In cases where forms of conviction are contained in a schedule, this is so, but it is not an invariable principle. In the present case, there is nothing parallel to that where all the subject matter of the schedule is in the clause itself. I own I do not see why the clause should not contain the names of the boroughs, as in some of the other clauses where new Members are given, as to York and Lincolnshire, but the Committee must deal with the Bill as it finds it; and as the whole are referred to as in the schedule A, it strikes me that that schedule should be taken as a part of the first clause, and as so many lines in it. The question then will begin with Aldborough, the first named in the schedule, and so on to the end. If any boroughs remain, the question will be, that the clause so amended stand part of the Bill; but if none are left, then there will be no clause at all.

Petition to be printed.

King's Message—Queen's Dower.] Lord Althorp moved the Order of the Day for the House to resolve itself into a Committee of the whole House, to take into consideration his Majesty's most gracious Message.

The House went into the Committee. —The King's Message was read; after which,

Lord *Althorp* said, it now became his duty to state to the Committee what it was the Government proposed as a provision for her Majesty, should it please God that she should survive the King, and in doing so, he apprehended there would be no difference of opinion as to the course they proposed, for he was sure that all parties would concur in any measure which had for its object the personal comforts of the Sovereign; and he was equally certain that the same feeling pervaded the House in regard of her Majesty, who, during the whole time in which she had honoured the country by her presence, had conducted herself in that manner which was calculated to endear her to the people of England. The proposition which he had to submit was founded on precedent. The dower voted to Caroline, the Queen of George 2nd, and to Queen Charlotte, the consort of George 3rd, was 100,000*l.* for life. Queen Charlotte had assigned to her Buckingham-house as a town residence, and the Lodge in Windsor-park as a country residence. The only question in the present case would be as to the town residence; for it would be admitted, that Bushy-park would be that country residence of which her Majesty would make choice. At present Government had no actual control over any town residence, but, under all circumstances, it was considered most advisable to assign Marlborough-house as a town residence for her Majesty. That house was at present under lease to the duke of Marlborough, but that lease would expire in 1835. The noble Lord then moved, "That it is the opinion of this Committee, that there be granted, as a provision for her Majesty, in case she should survive his Majesty, the sum of 100,000*l.* per annum, for life, to support her royal dignity, and that Bushy-park and Marlborough-house be also assigned as residences for her Majesty for her life."

Resolution agreed to *nemine contradicente*, and the House resumed.

Negro Slavery.] Mr. *Fowell Buxton* then rose, and spoke to the following effect:—Sir, in rising to submit to the House my Motion respecting the Abolition of Negro Slavery, I beg, in the first instance, most sincerely to declare, that I do so without the slightest feeling of hostility towards the West-India interest, and without the slightest disposition to cast reproach upon them, or indeed upon any other persons. The West-India planters are involuntarily entangled in the existing system. They are engaged in it, not by choice, but by inheritance. Far be it from me to charge them with being destitute of the ordinary feelings of humanity. I know among them many gentlemen of as high honour, of as great integrity, of as warm humanity, as any of those whom I address. There are many of these gentlemen who see the existing evils as clearly as any man; and who are anxious to remedy those evils as far as they can be remedied without inflicting personal ruin upon themselves, and beggary upon their families. In what I have to say, then, I do not wish to make one observation painful or reproachful to the individuals to whom I allude. I complain of the system to which they belong; and on that point I have no alternative but to speak fairly out. Sir, the complaint of the West-India proprietors is, that we take a single act, and that we infer from that a general and almost a universal system of oppression and cruelty towards the slaves. That, however, is not the argument which I mean to use. I utterly disclaim all reference to individual cases of atrocity. If it were necessary, I might cite an abundance of cases which would excite the astonishment and call down the loud disapprobation of the House. But this I disclaim. Nor will I allude to the painful fact, that when any act of enormity has been committed, it has seldom happened that the West-India proprietors have not adopted the cause of the criminal, and made his case their own. Those who have attended to this subject well know how prolific the West-India islands have been of the most enormous abuses. But it is not on those—it is not on the fact that those abuses have been vindicated and approved by the West-India proprietors, that I rest my case. My case is, that the whole slave-population of the West Indies are in a miserable condition. My case is, that the whole system pursued in the West Indies with respect to the slave-population is so destructive of their moral and physical welfare, that it ought to be abolished. I repeat, that it is not on those particular cases of cruelty which we all know do exist, that I ground my Motion, but on the general condition of the negro. Sir, it cannot be concealed, that there is considerable difficulty in arriving at the truth with respect to the real condition of the negro in the West Indies. One class of witnesses on the subject declare that the negroes in the West Indies are in a state of surpassing happiness; and that although, theoretically speaking, they may be subject to some inconveniences, those inconveniences are of no great amount, and are amply compensated by the positive and practical blessings which they enjoy. On the other hand it is stated, by witnesses of the highest character, that the compensation is nothing, and that the slave, even in his present improved state, is in the lowest state of moral debasement, and of physical wretchedness. Under this conflicting evidence, it would be extremely desirable if we could obtain any test on the subject; if we could obtain any full, fair, and unequivocal proof of the real state of the negro-population of the West Indies. There is such a test—the rate at which that population has increased or decreased. It is a doctrine admitted by all parties that, under all circumstances, except those of extreme misery, population must increase. Such is the law of nature, and it is conformable to the experience of all mankind. That law of increase may be interrupted, but it can be interrupted only by causes of extreme misery. Now, I beg the attention of the House to this test. I presume it will be a satisfactory criterion to the hon. Gentlemen opposite. They complain of the difficulty of obtaining a hearing of their case. It must be advantageous to them, therefore, to have a test applied, the value of which cannot be comprehended by the unthinking, and can be estimated only by the thoughtful. It is, besides, a test, not applicable to the West Indies alone, but one of invariable reference. Sir, it has been said, that the strength of our case depends on popular feeling. I deny this. I appeal to reason alone. I will attempt no excitement; I will use no *ad captandum* topics; I will refer myself to no popular impressions. On facts, and on facts only I rely. Sir, we have in the West Indies twenty colonies. They are not all, however, sugar colonies. Four of them produce no sugar; and another a very small quantity. Whether or not the mortality in those four colonies was greater or smaller, I will not inquire. Fourteen colonies, however, remained. The question is, whether in those colonies the slave-population has increased, has been stationary, or has decreased? The answer is, it has not increased, it has not been stationary, it has decreased. Not only has it decreased, but it has decreased at a rate so rapid, that I confess it surprises me, and I am sure will astonish the House. In the last ten years the slave-population in our fourteen colonies has decreased by the number of 45,800 persons. The hon. Gentleman opposite shakes his head. I only wish he would investigate the fact. I will let him see the documents from the West Indies, on which I rely for my declaration, that, during the last ten years, fourteen colonies have lost 45,800 of their slave-population. If I do not prove, that there has been a great decrease, and that the decrease has been what I have stated, I shall prove nothing. In the first place I will instance the Island of Tobago—I cannot take a better example. It is a colony exceedingly well circumstanced. Ten years ago the female part of the slave-population in the Island of Tobago exceeded the male. It is a colony in which the hon. Gentleman opposite himself assumes, that the treatment of the slave has been merciful in the highest degree. In the year 1819, the slave-population of Tobago was 15,470; to which must be added during, the subsequent ten years the importation, to the number of 177, and from which must be deducted the exportation, to the number of twenty-seven, and the manumissions, to the number of 172—leaving the population, supposing no decrease had taken place in 1829, at 15,415. By the returns of that year, however, it appears that the slave-population of Tobago at that time amounted only to 12,556; being a decrease, in the ten years, of 2,892, or a sixth of the whole. I challenge inquiry into the exact accuracy of this statement. That is the fact: I make no appeal to the passions or to the feelings of the House; but I simply describe the destruction occasioned by the slave-system. What I have stated is a rate of destruction, which, if it be permitted to continue, will soon sweep away the whole of the black inhabitants of Tobago, and exterminate the whole negro-population of that Island. Sir, I believe the proprietors in the Island of Tobago are as respectable a body of men as any body of proprietors in the West Indies. I believe, that they are as merciful in the treatment of their slaves as the difficulties of their situation permit them to be. In support of that opinion, I refer to the authority of the Governor of that Island, who in the year 1829, stated officially, "that there existed a liberal feeling with respect to the slaves, towards whom no motive existed for unnecessary cruelty." I do not believe, that there have been any instances of unnecessary cruelty towards slaves in Tobago. I admit all that the hon. Gentlemen opposite may be ready to say on that subject, and I acquit the planters of any disposition to treat the slaves with unnecessary cruelty. But, Sir, the more you raise the character of the planters, the more you must deprecate the system which, notwithstanding that character, has been productive of such pernicious effects. It appears that in spite of all the merciful disposition of the planters of Tobago, in ten years one-sixth of the slave-population of that island has perished. Although, therefore, there may have been no unnecessary oppression, it is clear that there has been a necessary oppression, extensively destructive of human life, and which ought to be put an end to. I repeat, that I do not appeal to the feelings or to the passions of the House, but to stubborn facts, incapable of contradiction. I will now refer to Demerara. The slave-population of Demerara in 1817 was 83,372; and taking into the calculation the exportation, the importation, and the manumissions, it should have been an equal number in 1829, but it was only 69,466; so that 13,906 had perished in the interval. At Trinidad there were, in 1816, 25,000 slaves, out of which number 6,000 died in twelve years. Why, Sir, this is a rate of mortality which, in a few years, would render the crowded city of London—would render the whole world—desolate. In one of these three colonies they were so well aware of the rapid diminution of the slave-population—the fact is the same in all three—but in one of them, Trinidad, the planters are so well aware of it, that, as the noble Lord opposite well knows, the planters of that island have endeavoured to repair the evil by a considerable illicit importation. The fact is, that in that island the slaves, as the late Mr. Marryat said, "die off like rotten sheep." Sir, if we allow this system to proceed, we are consenting to the extinction of the whole negro-population of the West Indies. In the three islands to which I have particularly alluded, a reduction has taken place in less than ten years of 22,000 out of 100,000. The whole slave-population of the West Indies is at present 45,800 less in number than it was ten years ago. Such are the facts.

Unless I have forged the documents, which I presume will not be imputed to me, such are the facts. I proceed to state facts with respect to the Colonies generally, on which I am not able to detail numbers with so much precision as with respect to the three particular colonies to which I have already adverted. The main fact is, that since the abolition of the Slave Trade, 100,000, that is to say, a seventh part of the slave-population of the West Indies, has been destroyed. At that period the number was upwards of 700,000: ten years afterwards it was 650,000; it is now less than 600,000. If this be permitted to go on—if the House allow the continuance of such a system, I beg leave humbly to represent to them that they will sign the death-warrant of many hundreds of human beings. If there were no other prospect of the extinction of slavery, it would be found in the rapid extinction of the negro race. Sir, I have hitherto argued this question most unfairly towards my own case. I have argued it as if a population ought only to maintain its numbers. I have said nothing of the increase which ought to have taken place in the population. The law of nature is, that a population should increase—not that it should decrease, not that it should be stationary, but that it should increase. In all countries, except those in which the population are drained off by extraordinary circumstances, that law invariably operates. To avoid all possibility of confutation on the ground that I am comparing blacks with whites, that I am comparing the poor with the rich, that I am comparing the inhabitants of one soil and climate with the inhabitants of another, I will again refer to the colonies of Demerara and Trinidad. The free black and coloured population of Demerara, in 1811, amounted to 2,980; in 1825, to 4,700, being an increase of 1,720, or deducting the manumissions, of 1,282. While the black free-population thus increased at the rate of from 1,000 to 2,000, the black slave-population decreased at the rate of from 1,000 to 500. I might illustrate this position further by a reference to the Maroons of Jamaica; but I prefer an instance more conclusive in showing the uniform increase of free blacks, and the uniform decrease of blacks in a state of slavery. I allude to the Island of Hayti. While the population in the slave colonies has been unable to maintain its numbers, in the free colonies it has increased. It appears by official documents, that in the course of the last few years, that the French held the Island of St. Domingo, 100,000 negroes were imported into that colony, shewing that as slaves the population did not keep up its numbers, while the free-black population of Hayti, which in 1804 was only 423,000, was found twenty years afterwards to have increased to 935,000. Those are the two facts on which I mainly dwell. In slavery the blacks have not been able to maintain their numbers—in freedom they have doubled their numbers. In Demerara, blacks in slavery have decreased rapidly, —in Hayti blacks in freedom have increased rapidly. I ask the hon. Gentleman opposite for a satisfactory explanation why, in the Island of Trinidad, the free blacks increase in number two and a half per cent per annum, while the other blacks decrease in a similar proportion? and why in Hayti the free blacks more than doubled their numbers in twenty years, while all the negroes who are slaves are in a progress of extirpation? ["Look at Barbadoes."] The hon. Gentleman desires me to look at Barbadoes. Sir, there is a great difference between the two islands. Although the population of Barbadoes, as compared with the population of Trinidad, is 78,000 to 25,000, yet there is not a quarter of the sugar grown at the former island that there is at the latter. I do not mean to allude to the colonies which are small sugar-growers. One Trinidad merchant does as much business in the article of sugar, as four or five in Barbadoes. If the hon. Gentleman is anxious for more particular information on this fact I will give it him. The population of Barbadoes is 81,000—the population of Trinidad is 24,000: being only about a third. The average quantity of sugar exported annually from Trinidad is 394,000 hogsheads, while the average quantity of sugar exported annually from Barbadoes is only 298,000 hogsheads. These, Sir, are facts on which I defy contradiction. I have shown, in the first place, that in the fourteen West-India colonies to which I have alluded, there has been a decrease of population where there ought to have been an increase. I have shown, in the second place, that in the same colonies the free-black population has greatly increased. In the third place, I have instanced the case of Hayti in support of my argument. And with respect to Hayti, let it be remembered that the black inhabitants of that island are said to be in a state of great demoralization—that in that island there is no commerce, no cultivation of sugar, no civilization. The population is admitted to be slothful, sensual, and improvident. Vices such as these are inimical to population. It is, therefore, an additional fact, of great importance to my argument, that even under such disadvantageous circumstances the population of Hayti has greatly increased. If slavery, therefore, be not justly chargeable both for the decrease in population which it causes, and for the increase in population which it prevents, I wish to know with what any system is chargeable? The slave-population of the colonies ten years ago was 650,000, in round numbers. If the blacks in slavery had increased as the free blacks have increased, that population should have added 200,000 to its numbers; whereas that number has been diminished by 45,000. To keep *pari passu* with the free blacks, the blacks in slavery should have increased 20,000 a year; whereas they have decreased 4,000 a year. They should have increased fifty a day, whereas they have decreased ten a day. For this effect, this striking exception to the universal law of nature, there must be a cause. It could not occur by accident. What is the cause? I will tell the House what it is not. It is not, as it has been said to be, any disproportion between the sexes; any deficiency in the number of females. In 1814 the number of male slaves was 295,909; the number of female slaves, 300,930. The cause, therefore, of this decrease in the slave-population is not any disproportion between the sexes; it is not war, sweeping away its thousands, it is not climate, it is not soil. If any one thinks that the two last circumstances may operate injuriously upon the slave-population, I ask him why, under the same circumstances, the free-black population has so much increased? Sir, the real cause is the forced labour in the sugar colonies, and nothing else. The law of nature would be too strong for any other cause. It is too strong for climate, witness Bencoolen. It is too strong for war, witness Africa. It is too strong for savage life, witness the Maroons of Jamaica. It is too strong for vice and misery, witness Hayti. All such impediments yield to the law of nature; but the law of nature yields to the cultivation of sugar in the sugar colonies. Where the blacks are free they increase. Climate, soil, war, vice, misery, are too feeble to stem the current of nature. But let there be a change in only one circumstance; let the population be the same in every respect, only let them be slaves instead of freemen, and the current is immediately stopped. It is forced labour in the sugar colonies, and nothing else that has so destructive an influence on the population. That influence, so fatal to human life, is confined to the field slaves—it does not affect the domestic slaves. It is a remarkable fact that the children of slaves do not feel this influence until after a certain time of life. Up to ten years of age the number of deaths is not larger than a just proportion; they then enter on the cultivation of sugar, and the consequence which I have described ensues. These, Sir, are my proofs that forced labour is the cause of the evil. There now comes another important consideration. Why is the cultivation of sugar by the slaves so destructive to them? A West-Indian of no mean authority—a merchant of twenty-eight years' standing in the Island of Trinidad—in giving his evidence before the West-India Committee, let out the secret. It is the intensity of their labour. He was asked if free labourers could not cultivate sugar? His answer was, no, if they were expected to work sixteen or eighteen hours in the day, like the slaves; but if they were expected to work only ten hours in the day, they could. According to Mr. Mitchell, a degree of physical exertion is required from the slaves which the human constitution cannot endure. Mortal diseases are the necessary consequences in those countries of such intense and unrequited toil. Sir, I am dealing fairly with this question. I do not say, that the destruction which takes place among the slaves is attributable to the whip. I have heard some good friends to abolition out of doors talk of the whip as the cause. I do not believe that it is the whip; but I believe that it is oppressive labour. Terrible accounts have been received within the last day or two of the mortality among the slave-population. But, Sir, although I do not say that the cause of the decrease of the slave-population is flogging, the case is bad enough without that, yet I must observe, that punishments take place in the West Indies with a frequency which it is painful to notice. In Trinidad, which was an ameliorated colony, and in which a check has been given to severity, there were 11,131 plantation punishments in two years. In Demerara there were in that time 21,000 cases of punishment. Notwithstanding all the Orders in Council, such are the facts. I do not mention them to excite horror at the extent of torture which is thus inflicted; although it might justly be a subject of consideration whether we ought to tolerate a system under which 21,000 punishments, averaging twenty lashes each, have been inflicted in two years in one colony; but I mention them to show what the system of slavery is under its best and most mitigated form. If such severity be necessary, in what a degraded condition must the unfortunate negroes be placed! if not necessary, words cannot express, or the art of man conceive, the wickedness of those by whom it is inflicted. I must say, however, that from all the accounts which have reached me, I believe that such is the present condition and character of the slave-population of the West Indies, that punishment is found but too frequently necessary. I will not adduce any instances of individual cruelty, although it will be admitted there is at this moment some temptation—nor will I refer to any particular murder, because I think our cause has rather been injured than served by bringing such things forward in too prominent a manner. But, Sir, I take my stand upon the fact, that there has been an immense destruction of human life in our sugar colonies. It is a melancholy fact, that 45,000 innocent persons were found to have perished at the end of ten years. Having now briefly and temperately, but, I fear, feebly explained my views of the subject, it only remains for me to say, that I have not brought forward this Motion from any feeling of hostility to the West-Indian interests, or from any party or personal motives, but from the conviction that there is a destruction of human life going on, which demands the attention of the Government. I hope the Resolutions I intend to submit will appear temperate, although I declare myself no friend to ameliorating measures, in which I have no faith. I do not think that by such measures the mortality can be repressed. Besides, I must tell hon. Gentlemen that I look upon the enslaving of our fellow-men as a crime of the deepest dye; and I therefore consider that it should be dealt with, not by palliatives, but by destroying it altogether. I accordingly felt it my duty, in spite of painful obstacles, to bring the question broadly before the House. That there are many obstacles I have said, and amongst the most considerable of these is to be found the argument so frequently and strongly urged—that property should be held sacred and left untouched. But have we not already acted too long in obedience to this principle? Have we not, within the last ten years, sacrificed 45,000 innocent men to the respect for property and to vested rights? Are we to go on in this course till the whole race of slaves is exterminated? No, Sir, however cautious we may be in dealing with property, I say it is not to be protected at all hazards, and at the expense of all crime. There is a greater consideration than the protection of property—that is, the preservation of the lives of innocent men. The men exposed to perish are British subjects, and we are bound to save them, however useful the system that would destroy them may be to individuals. The hon. Member concluded by moving the following Resolution:—"That in the Resolutions of the 15th of May, 1823, the House distinctly recognized it to be their solemn duty to take measures for the abolition of Slavery in the British Colonies; that in the eight years which have since elapsed, the Colonial Assemblies have not taken measures to carry the Resolutions of the House into effect; that deeply impressed with a sense of the impropriety, inhumanity, and injustice, of Colonial Slavery, this House will proceed to consider of and adopt the best means of effecting its abolition throughout the British dominions."

Lord *Morpeth*, after saying, that, in seconding the Motion, he would imitate the moderation of his hon. friend who brought it forward, proceeded to observe, that being so closely connected with a Cabinet Minister, it might be supposed he was acquainted with the course which Government proposed to pursue upon this question; but the fact was, that he came forward without the authority or knowledge of the Administration. He had even abstained from inquiring how they intended to deal with his hon. friend's proposition, in order to leave his independence and separateness still more indisputable. But he had another and more close connexion in the House than the one to which he alluded, and which qualified him to come forward on this occasion—his connexion with the county he had the honour to represent. The 500 petitions he had presented, the general and ardent feeling, the uplifted voice, of the county of York, urged him forward—that county which selected and still referred to Mr. Wilberforce as its favourite Representative. That feeling he shared, and he adopted the Resolutions of his hon. friend—Resolutions which he considered eminently deserving the consideration of the House; for while they did not abandon the high ground, or give up any principle, they did not rush with a blind and uncalculating zeal to a decision which in its suddenness might be ruinous. The principle was upheld, but the steps by which it was to be carried into effect were consigned to the responsibility of Government and the careful wisdom of Parliament. The Resolution invited deliberation; but proclaimed it to be the duty of the House to do something, and pledged it in the face of mankind to perform that duty. There was not, he considered, any difference between the state of things at present and in 1823; if, therefore, they commanded then, they should execute now. Although he admitted the question was involved in much embarrassment and difficulty, yet the system was founded on a principle of such intolerable wrong that they were compelled to meet it. The difficulties and embarrassments he had said were great, but by their faintheartedness they had increased them. If they would, on the contrary, only grapple with them boldly, they would be assuredly reduced. In a letter addressed to the right hon. member for Tamworth (for the contents of which he was not of course answerable), many difficulties of a strange nature were pointed out. Mr. Gladstone, a Liverpool merchant, said in this, "Do not emancipate the children, because, if you do, you will excite dissatisfaction in the minds of the adult slaves." But he (Lord Morpeth) asked how it was possible to get rid of that as long as negroes were permitted to get children? Mr. Gladstone again said, "Do not fix a period for emancipating the negroes, for if you do, they will be impatient, and you have no reason to give for not emancipating them immediately." How could this ever be got rid of until the slaves were convinced that liberty was not more advantageous than slavery? Again it was argued, that their African constitution and tropical climate were a great obstacle to their emancipation; but he never would admit, that the want of qualifications which slavery could not engender, should be urged as an argument against these unfortunate persons. And as to climate, he asked did it affect the energies of Toussaint or Bolivar? He would say with the poet—

"Unmanly thought! what seasons can controul,
What fancied zone can circumscribe the soul,
Which, conscious of the source from whence she springs,
By Reason led—on Resolution's wings,
Spite of her frail companion, dauntless goes
O'er Libya's deserts and through Zembla's snows?"

Mr. Gladstone farther said, in respect to slavery, that it was not for him to attempt to determine the system of Almighty God, but it appeared He had permitted slavery in certain climates since the origin of society. Yes, and Almighty God permitted the Inquisition, and permitted Pagan darkness, and Mahommedan fanaticism, and Christian bigotry, and the scourge of tyrants, and the rage of multitudes, and the horrors of war; but far be from him the philosophy which inferred from the fact of the permission the possibility of the sanction. Touching the question of property and vested rights, he stated that he had no objection to a rational compensation. But he wished to see the present system abolished as speedily as possible, for he considered it alike injurious to both parties interested—to the slave in his unrewarded toil and unrequited wrongs, and to the planter, because it confers upon him a power, of the merciful and discreet administration of which human nature is not capable. This made him despair of ameliorating measures flowing from the spontaneous bounty of the local legislatures. Their modes of thinking on these subjects were different from ours—they partook of the same nature, and shared the same passions and sympathies with ourselves; but he knew that if even we, ourselves, were free from the operation of law, and custom, and opinion, with the spirit of society, running in one direction, we could not fail to be affected by it. The planters, in fact, had their eyes not averted, but blinded; and their hearts not hardened, but deadened to the system which they saw pursued around them. For his part, he considered the system laboured under the displeasure of the Omnipotent. He therefore exhorted them to undertake, in a sober spirit, the great work of national reparation, and in the spirit of Holy Writ, given under both dispensations, he would say, let us bind up the broken heart — let us proclaim liberty to the captive, and open the doors of the prison of him who is confined. Let us strive that from those who live under our rule no sigh should reach us. Let us give them that liberty which is their birth-right here, and endeavour to bestow upon them that religion which may be their blessing hereafter. Let us make to rise around us the anthems of the free in the confident hope that we shall be conferring a blessing on both portions of the empire—the colonies and the mother country—and that we shall receive an abiding and abounding reward. And that, at last, happen what may, we shall enjoy the proud consolation of having done that which seemed to be our duty and we may trust the event elsewhere.

Mr. *Keith Douglas* said, he was glad that, on the present occasion, the subject was treated with more temper than in former instances, and he hoped the same tone would continue to mark the discussion and the determination of the House; for, unless they were actuated by principles of reason and justice, it was impossible that the result to which they should come could be regulated by that proper spirit which ought to distinguish their measures. The hon. Member now pursued a new course in treating this question. He said he would not cite any particular instances of cruelty or oppression. This was certainly a new mode, for on former occasions he had made those points form a prominent part of the statement by which he had endeavoured to induce the House to enter into his views of the subject. He said that the lives which had been lost by the cruel use of the whip should not form part of the statement which he laid before the House. With regard to the amelioration of the condition of the slave-population, as proposed by the Resolutions of 1823, the hon. member for Weymouth said, he would throw that object and those resolutions out of view altogether, and come at once to the question of the immediate emancipation of the slaves; and that proposition he grounded upon the one general point, that the state of slave labour in the sugar colonies was such as to risk the lives of the slaves. Upon the general assumption of the cruelty practised by the proprietors towards the slaves, the hon. Member founded the case upon which he called upon the House to take measures for the immediate emancipation of the whole slave-population. He was prepared to meet the hon. Gentleman upon these grounds. He should have considered, that the most consistent course would have been, to move for a Committee to inquire into the circumstances upon which he grounded the inferences which he drew. That would be the true means of ascertaining their correctness. But the hon. Member had contented himself with the authority of his own assertions. He had mentioned that in Demerara, Trinidad, and Tobago, a great decrease had taken place in the numbers of slaves; but the hon. Member, to make that argument of any avail, ought to have produced returns of the number of births, and the relative number of the sexes, as well as of the ages of the different populations, at the two periods he had referred to. In some colonies, he believed that there was an excess of females above males, but he also believed that, in a great number of estates in the colonies, the hon. Member would find a gradual progress taking place towards the balance which a settled state of society would produce. He could give one instance of an estate, where the numbers, having been 189 four years ago, had now increased to 204, and he believed wherever the population consisted of nearly an equal number of the sexes the same increase was taking place, and that the population was rising towards a regular state. Looking at Demerara at this moment, there were 37,000 males to 32,000 females. It could not be expected that the population should maintain the regular proportion of a settled state of society. In Trinidad the proportion was pretty much the same; in the more lately settled colony of the Mauritius there were 47,000 males to 29,000 females. At the Cape of Good Hope the numbers were 21,000 males, and 14,000 females. [Mr. *F. Buxton* intimated, that he had excluded the Mauritius and the Cape of Good Hope altogether from his calculation.] The references which he had already made were sufficient for his purpose. But if they were to look to those places where society had attained a more settled basis, they would find the relative proportions somewhat different. Let him look at Barbadoes for example. How did the case stand there? 37,000 males, and 44,000 females, was the population. It should be remarked that that was one of our oldest-settled colonies, where the population had attained the proportion of a regular state of society. By the returns made in the year 1826, the population was 78,000; and by the last returns, up to 1829, it amounted to 81,000. Thus in that colony there had been in three years an increase of 3,500. If he went to St. Christopher's, which was an old settled colony, he should find an increase of the same description;—from 18,000 the population had risen to nearly 19,500. In the Island of St. Lucia an increase had taken place in a similar proportion. He wished the hon. Gentleman had moved for a Committee to inquire into the intricacies of this part of the question. It would be the means of ascertaining the true state of the facts, and of doing away with those horrid statements which were so distressing, not only to persons here, but also in the colonies. So far from opposing such a motion, he should have been happy to second it. The hon. Gentleman asked how it was to be accounted for that so great a decrease took place in the numbers of the field slaves, while it was not the case amongst the domestic slaves? He (Mr. K. Douglas) would observe, that the domestic slaves were constantly receiving increase from other quarters. But upon what authority did the hon. Gentleman assume, that there was that difference in the proportions of the population between the field slaves and domestic slaves? How did he attempt to prove this? He offered no other authority or proof than his own assertion. He thought the Resolutions of the hon. Gentleman by no means in accordance with his speech; and, although he should most willingly have supported a motion for a Committee, he could not approve of the Resolutions now before the House.

Lord *Althorp* said, I feel it will be convenient that at this early period of the discussion, I should state the line which his Majesty's Government propose to adopt upon the present occasion. I need not say for myself, that I have always been a friend to the Abolition of Slavery,—that I have always voted for the Abolition of Slavery—and have always felt the greatest anxiety that the period should arrive when the emancipation of the slave might be safely undertaken. The hon. member for Weymouth says, he will have nothing to do with ameliorating measures—measures for the improvement of the slave-population; and if they were indeed intended to effect nothing but amelioration, I should be inclined to agree with him. But the object in view is, first to place the slaves in an improved condition—and the ultimate object is, to set them in that state of freedom to which we always desired to raise them. It is superfluous to say, that the question is of a most delicate and important nature. The hon. member for Weymouth has chosen the right mode in which to bring forward this question. He has made his statement with great moderation, and in the most temperate manner. This is the mode in which it should be discussed. It is not enough that the question should be brought forward in a temperate manner, and that the Resolution proposed should be temperate; but we should also take care not to do or say anything which might cause the danger we are anxious to avoid, and which intemperance in discussion might produce. I confess I have an objection to the hon. Gentleman's Motion. The last Resolution expresses the intention of the House forthwith to adopt measures for the emancipation of the slaves. Certainly, I am not prepared to go this length. From all that I know of the slave-population, they are not in a fit state for emancipation. And, Sir, another objection of mine to the hon. Member's Motion is, that I consider it too vague. It is not sufficiently specific, and is therefore liable to misconstruction. If we were now to say forthwith, it would be impossible to avoid raising expectations which would be injurious to the West-India interests. On the other side, I admit that great delay has taken place. Eight years ago a Resolution was passed, declaring that the slave-population should be ultimately emancipated. In consequence of this Resolution, Orders in Council were issued to carry its spirit into effect; but, up to this time, in none of the Colonial Legislatures have the recommendations sent out been adopted. It is impossible, in my opinion, consequently, that the House can stand still; I think, however, my hon. friend ought not to ask us to go farther than in 1823; we then determined to take measures to ameliorate the condition of the slaves, with a view to their ultimate emancipation. We are nearly in the same situation now that we were in then, because the recommendations contained in the Resolution have not been tried. Some new regulations, it is true, have been made by the local legislatures, but the vital recommendations have not been adopted, except in those colonies which are under the immediate control of the Crown. Sir, we cannot stand still; I admit we must adopt some measures, but, I contend that they ought not to be adopted, without due notice. Often have I heard Mr. Canning say from this bench, that fair notice had been given to the colonists, that unless they voluntarily adopted the Resolutions, it would be necessary for the Government and this House to take some strong measures to enforce their determination. The time, Sir, I think, is come, to give notice to the colonists by other measures than those of mere recommendation. We must adopt some means to convince them we are in earnest, and will persevere in the steps we have recommended, and satisfy the country that the Resolutions we passed were not intended to be a dead letter on our Table. On the other hand, I do not think the West-Indian interests should be surprised, after so long an interval, if Parliament should at length take steps to carry its will into effect. There are two modes by which this may be done; it may be done by direct legislative interference in colonial affairs—we may pass laws in the Imperial Parliament to impose regulations on the colonies. But, I admit, this is a step which I should wish very much to delay, although, ultimately, if the colonies persevere, it will be the bounden duty of Parliament to act on this principle. The best mode in which I can express myself is, to state to the House certain Resolutions which I shall propose for the adoption of the House; for, after what has passed, I think it will be admitted, that I have said enough to show, I do not agree with the Resolution proposed by the hon. Member. I agree with the object which the hon. Member has in view, but not with the Resolution by which he proposes to effect it. I shall feel it my duty, therefore, to negative that Resolution; but, after having done so, I shall move others to the following purport—"That this House, in its Resolutions of the 15th of May, 1823, distinctly recapitulated the evils under which the slaves in the colonies laboured, and the duty of the colonies to take such decisive measures to relieve the slave-population, and to prepare the negroes for participating in the privileges enjoyed by the other subjects of those colonies. That in those colonies in which there are no Legislative Assemblies, laws have been promulgated for ameliorating and improving the condition of the slave population, but in those which have Legislative Assemblies, though eight years have elapsed since this House passed the Resolutions referred to, and though these colonies have been repeatedly urged to enact similar laws, no such laws have been enacted, nor have any measures been adopted to give effect to the Resolutions of this House, to the urgent opinions of the Government, or to the wishes of the British nation." And then, Sir, I shall propose a mode in which the colonies will find, that they have an interest to adopt the proposition before made by the House. I do not wish to interfere directly with their proceedings by a legislative enactment, but I think we ought to make it their interest to do what we require, and to show them that we will take active steps to enforce obedience to the wishes of the British nation. The Resolution I shall propose for this purpose is as follows:—"That in the rate of duties levied on the produce of the labour of slaves, such a distinction shall be made as will operate in favour of those colonies in which the Resolutions of this House have been adopted, and the wishes of the Government complied with." This is a proposition which will make it the interest of the colonies to adopt the measures that have been recommended by the Legislature; it is a proposition that calls on them for a compliance with our wishes, by making an appeal to their interests. This appeal, I admit, would not be a fair or justifiable proceeding, if we asked from the colonies anything that was unreasonable; but we ask nothing of the sort—nothing which it has not already been proved might be safely adopted—nothing which has not already been carried into effect with the utmost degree of security in the Crown colonies, and which, indeed, has worked so well at St. Lucia, that that colony has sent up an address to the Government, expressing their warm approbation of the measures which the Government has adopted, though it states at the same time, that on the first appearance of these measures, they were viewed with some degree of prejudice. I know it may be objected to the measure which I have just had the honour of stating to the House, that it will bear more upon those West-India proprietors who are resident here, than on those who are settled in the colonies; and that the proprietors here are most anxious to adopt the recommendations of this House, but have no power of compelling the adoption of those recommendations by the colonial assemblies. I cannot conceive that the West-India proprietors resident in this country are so totally without power and influence over the colonists themselves, as that objection seems to imply. But even if I could suppose this to be true, the course I propose must operate upon the residents in colonies themselves; and by giving a worse market to those who will not adopt our Resolutions, we shall be sure to affect both the proprietors in this country and in the colonies. I am ready to say at once, that I regret much to be obliged to press upon the West-India proprietors in this country, but we must resolve on some measure of this kind; and the course I propose will only injuriously affect those who refuse to adopt the measure we have recommended; for, with respect to others, it would be an advantage, and the colonies that are determined to resist the expressed wishes of this House, will alone be affected by the pressure of the regulations I propose to adopt. It will be said, perhaps, that these Resolutions, like those we have before passed, will have no effect. If so, then we must take other steps; but I wish to try them in the first instance, as the milder course, as a measure that may be put in advance of others of a stronger kind, to see at least what we can do by the simple intimation of our resolution to carry our wishes into effect; and if this measure does not produce the desired end, we must proceed further. I prefer this proposition to that of my hon. friend, for to a certain extent it has a different object in view, and at the present moment I think we ought to urge nothing more than an amelioration of the condition of the slaves, with a view to their ultimate emancipation. The propositions which have been pressed upon all the colonies have not been adopted, except in those belonging to the Crown, and some of the most important of them—such as the compulsory emancipation, and the institution of the office of Protector of Slaves—have not been adopted in any of the colonies having a Legislature of their own, and not being dependent on the Crown. The creation of the office of Protector of Slaves is a measure of a most important kind, and the adoption of it is one great step towards a practical amelioration of the condition of the slaves. Allusion has been made by the hon. member for Dumfriesshire to the appointment of a Committee to inquire into the state of the negroes in the colonies. If I rested my case upon the argument of their condition, and on that alone, I should say, that a Committee might be a fit and proper mode for attaining the object in view; but I do not rest my case on that argument alone. I think it is impossible to say, that a state of slavery, whether productive of a diminution in the amount of population, or of whatever other evil it may be productive, is not to be regretted, and there is no man in this House, who will stand up and say, that it is a state which it is not desirable to get rid of. Every exertion ought to be made to rid us of its presence. Of the evils of its existence we are assured, and I do not, therefore, see the advantage of appointing a Committee of Inquiry. The point on which I put the case is, that these Resolutions to which I have referred, were unanimously agreed to eight years ago—I put it on the Orders in Council, and on the adoption of those Orders in the Crown colonies—an adoption which has been followed by nothing but the most beneficial effects — and finally, on the fact that these Resolutions have been pressed upon the other colonies; but in them they have not been adopted. These are facts, Sir, which we do not require a Committee of Inquiry to make out. We know what are the laws that have been adopted in the Crown colonies, and what are those that are in force in those which possess Legislative Assemblies; and I, therefore, think, that a Committee of Inquiry would be useless, and that this House, if it consults its own dignity, and the wishes of the country, will do nothing but insist on the enforcement of the measures which they have desired should be adopted.

Mr. *Burge* observed, that this was a question surrounded with difficulties, and one to the consideration of which that House came under no circumstances of advantage, since they knew nothing of the state of society in colonies at a distance of 4,000 miles from the place at which they were debating. The importance of the question must be manifest, when it was considered that the colonial produce equalled an amount of sixteen millions, and all the property there was at stake when it was proposed to be effected by legislative enactments in this country. The hon. Member who opened the discussion wished for immediate emancipation, but the noble Lord opposite differed from him on that point, and desired to proceed with greater caution, proposing to effect the ultimate object of emancipation by the means of gradual improvement. A great many charges had been made against the colonists, but he denied that they took pleasure in cruelty, or that they administered the rules of justice by punishing crimes only when they were committed by particular persons. He insisted that some inquiry was necessary before that House could pretend to legislate on this subject, for they knew absolutely nothing of the real condition of the slaves at the present moment. There had been no real inquiry since 1799, and, therefore, the House was not in a state to pronounce judgment on the subject. How was it possible to pretend, that in the short space of twenty-two years, a change of the most extensive kind had taken place in the condition and character of the negroes, for twenty-two years only had elapsed since their civilization had really begun, by the abolition of that infamous slave-trade, which had so long disgraced this country, and which the colonists never wished to be continued? He repeated, that it had never been the wish of the colonists that that trade should be continued: it was the trade, not of the colonists, but of those merchants who had embarked their capital in the traffic of slaves. The colonists of Jamaica were particularly anxious for the abolition of the slave-trade; and if they had succeeded in obtaining their wish some years earlier, the condition of the slaves would have been by this time much more ameliorated. He begged to remind the hon. Gentleman who had introduced this discussion, that the Resolution he had proposed went much farther than those of Mr. Canning, in 1823; for that right hon. Gentleman had never looked forward to anything like an immediate emancipation, and he referred the question of compulsory emancipation to the decision of the colonial legislature. Had the wise efforts of the colonial legislatures—he more particularly alluded to Jamaica, with which he was best acquainted—been permitted to be carried into effect, the condition of the slave-population would have been far different from the present, and far other than the rash propositions of the hon. Member and his party could possibly lead to. Only the Colonial legislature could superintend with advantage the workings of any plan intended to improve the negro-population; for they were not only best acquainted with the condition and habits of that population, but had the deepest interest in its well-being. The hon. Member and the noble Lord opposite had told them what had been done in the Crown colonies, but the House ought to recollect that these colonies could not be properly compared with the others, on account of the peculiar differences of their extent, and the amount of their population. He must say, that no fallacy could be more mischievous and unjust to the slaves themselves, than to argue, because certain experiments had been tried in Trinidad and other small islands with success, therefore, they might with equal ease and advantage be extended to Jamaica, and the other large independent colonies. For instance, in Trinidad, where slave manumission had been successfully carried into effect under certain regulations, the slaves were familiarized with the principle and conditions of manumission — for such manumission was a part of the old Spanish law, which had obtained in the island before it came into our possession. Therefore such an experiment would not be attended with all that tumultuous excitement which might rationally be expected from abruptly announcing to the slave a compulsory right of manumission. Besides, the island was so small, it could, so to speak, be compassed in a morning's ride, that there would be little difficulty in applying a prompt remedy to any evil that might arise from the attempt to effect a great change in the habits of the slave-population, as there would exist little difficulty in superintending the operations of any plan to which it might be expedient to give a trial. But the case was very different with a large and populous colony like Jamaica,—an island 150 miles long, and containing upwards of 4,000,000 of acres. In such a place there could not possibly exist an equal facility to arrest the evils which the numbers and character of the population would tend to multiply. The matter, then, evidently, had better be intrusted to the local legislatures, who not only eagerly acted upon every suggestion of Parliament and the Government to improve the condition of the negro-population, but actually went beyond their instructions, in extending the benefits of freedom to the slaves in the different islands. It had been said, he was aware, that such was not the case,—that the local legislatures had neglected the admonitions of the colonial authorities resident in the mother country: but what was the fact? Did Mr. Canning's celebrated Resolutions of 1823 insist upon compulsory manumission? Did Lord Bathurst's subsequent circular point it out to immediate adoption by the Colonial legislatures? By no means; both wisely placed a discretionary power in the hands of those legislatures which had never been used, let the hon. Member and his party assert what they would, but for the benefit of the negro; and he would ask, were the rights of the people of Jamaica to be sacrificed to comply with the wishes of pseudo-zealots? Was the property of the West-Indian planters to be the only one which the law could not protect? And was not the slave a species of freehold property? [*marks of dissent.*] He defied any man to deny the fact, and he, therefore, would again ask, was the owner to give up his freehold right in the slave without compensation? ["*hear*" *and* "*Oh! oh.*"] Hon. Members might exclaim, but if the law of the land, and usage, and statute upon statute, bestowed and guaranteed a right of property, the West-India planter had a freehold right in the negro slave. This law and usage might, if they liked be bad, and ought to be altered, but it was law and usage; and though it might answer the purposes of the moment of those who trafficked in public clamour to assert a contrary doctrine on the public hustings, he would appeal to the deliberate judgments of the impartial and enlightened, whether, so far as statutes and law conferred a right of property, the owner of a slave did not possess such a freehold right in his services? They might say, that such a law and such statutes should be no longer permitted to exist—that they were based in injustice—but they could not deny the fact. They might repeal those statutes,—they had it in their power to destroy the institutions of centuries,—they might deprive the West-Indian colonists of their property; but if they did so, where, he asked, would be their boasted justice? But he did not anticipate such results,—the rather, as the Jamaica legislature had given the most unquestionable proof of the perfect good faith and earnest sincerity of its efforts to improve the condition of the negro-population so as to admit them, with permanent advantage to themselves, and the colonists, and the empire, to the entire possession of the privileges of British subjects. This, that legislature had done by removing in the first instance all those obstacles which were in the way of the emancipation of the slave-population. In the United States, for example, the distinction of colour was found to be almost insurmountable in the way of raising the negro to a civil equality with the white. But this obstacle had been removed altogether by the Jamaica legislature; and in doing so, it had contributed more to ameliorate the condition of the negro-population than all the Orders in Council and Acts of Parliament which had ever received the sanction of that House. It was in evidence in the Colonial Office, that he was no friend to slavery, for he had zealously applied himself, when filling an official situation in Jamaica, to ameliorating the condition of the slaves in that island, and the local legislature was, and still is, actuated by the same beneficent spirit. It had been a question as to the best mode of effecting the freedom of the slave, and it had been determined on by the Jamaica legislature, that to hold a small portion of property, (and they were aware how easy a bit of paper or parchment-right of property was bestowed,) entitled the holder of a slave to demand his freedom,—thus opening the door to his obtaining that freedom, as he was prepared to appreciate its fruits. Besides this, great exertions had been made to extend the means of religious instruction to all classes of the negro-population; the number of clergymen had been increased, and several houses of worship had been built to effect this desirable object. Another great benefit, in the conferring of which the Jamaica Legislature had not only acted in obedience to the resolutions of that House, but had actually gone beyond them in favour of the negro-population,—this was the admissibility of the slave to give evidence even against his employer. It might be recollected that Mr. Canning's resolution had made the owner an exception to the evidence of a slave; but, as he had stated, the local legislature had extended the right of giving evidence without any exception whatever. In addition to these excellent arrangements, a bill, now on its way to this country, had passed the Jamaica legislature, for facilitating as much as possible the admission of the slaves to a state of freedom. And after these facts, corroborated as they were by the statements of respectable clergymen of the Established Church, was it too much to ask that House to repose confidence in the local legislatures—the persons best accquainted with the wants of the colony, and most interested in their properties? He asked, were not clergymen of the Church of England as trustworthy, as much to be depended upon for zeal in the cause of truth and justice, as the Missionaries of a body who had arrayed themselves in black hostility to the West-India planters —of a body proverbially unscrupulous in misrepresentations and even in calumny, to effect any object they proposed to themselves, and which had left untried no means by which they could poison the public mind against the holders of West-Indian property, as men bereft of the best feelings of humanity? He must observe too, that sufficient time had not been afforded for the operation of the Order in Council of April, 1830, in Demerara and Berbice, to warrant their extending them to Jamaica and the other larger Islands. The circumstances of the places were so different, that it did not follow, that because a plan succeeded in Demerara, or Berbice, or St. Lucia, or some other small place with a comparatively small population, that therefore it might with equal ease and advantage be tried in a large and populous country like Jamaica. He repeated over and over—and he appealed to the resident clergy of the Established Church for the fact—that the local legislature had left untried no measure for the amelioration of the negro-population, compatible with the interests of the colony; and would promote, as far and as soon as was in its power, their admission to a state of perfect civil freedom. "But," said the hon. member for Weymouth, "don't trust to the local Legislatures, emancipate the slaves yourselves at once; for if you wait for them, the negro is condemned to eternal slavery." But why this declamatory appeal to the mere prejudices of his hearers? Were they, in obedience to such a wild proposition, to shut their eyes to history, and, contrary to the uniform succession of cause and effect, and the very principles of the social Union, expect a great miracle in the case of the negro slave? The same hon. Member had dwelt much on the diminution within the last few years of the numbers of the negroes, as a physiological proof of the evils of slavery; but the hon. Member should recollect that the problem of the ratio of increase of the negro-population of our West-Indian colonies, had not had a fair trial; for that in which the diminution had taken place was not born in those colonies, but had been brought there through the channel of the now-exploded slave traffic; and that they must wait till a negro generation, born in the West-Indies and thereby inured to its climate and habits, should have grown up and had time to multiply, before they should hazard any assertions as to the tendency of the condition of the slaves to abridge the duration of life. In this and other points connected with the improvement of the condition of our negro-population, the best course was, to co-operate with the local Legislatures, and not to be influenced by the misstatements of a party not very precise in their assertions. He could assure his Majesty's Government that whatever information they might have received to the contrary was erroneous, and likely to deceive them. He felt himself bound to complain of the very extraordinary manner in which the hon. Gentleman had blended together the population of the colonies, calculating one portion of it at one time at the highest, and another portion of it at another time at the lowest possible rate. He believed that the lowest rate gave the slave-population at 700,000; whereas the hon. Gentleman had taken it at 600,000 for the whole fourteen colonies. He denied, that the decrease in the slave-population had been any thing like that which the hon. Gentleman had represented it, or that the increase of the free-population had reached any thing like the amount to which the hon. Gentleman had raised it. Besides, there were several reasons why the free-population should increase faster than the slave-population besides those which the hon. Gentleman had stated. The free-population was habituated to the climate, the slave-population was not; and that circumstance was sufficient in itself to account for the comparative increase of the free beyond that of the slave-population. If the population returns were accurate, the difference of the rate of increase between the two classes of the population might be accounted for; but he doubted the accuracy of the population returns, for he knew that in the more populous colonies it was matter of extreme difficulty to get a correct census of the population taken. Having made these remarks on the speech of the hon. Gentleman, he would proceed to state the objections which he felt to the resolutions proposed by the noble Lord the Chancellor of the Exchequer. He thought that no one would deny, that the colonists, as the subjects of his Majesty, were entitled to the protection of his Majesty's Government. But, when he saw the resolutions which were now proposed by Ministers,—resolutions which asserted that the colonial Legislatures had done nothing at all to ameliorate the condition of the slave,—he thought that the colonists had reasonable grounds to complain that the resolutions did not set forth how far they had carried into effect the instructions contained in the Order in Council of 1823. He had also another objection to these resolutions. There was a strong likelihood on the face of them that the noble Lord was preparing to abandon the policy which had received the unanimous approval of both Houses of Parliament in 1823,—which had received confirmation from them both in 1824,—and which had again been sanctioned by them in 1826. When he saw so much of the resolutions of 1823 taken up on the present occasion as was calculated to throw odium on the colonial Legislatures, and so much of them omitted as recognised the rights of property and the consideration due to the well-being of the slave, he felt himself justified in asking, first, whether the policy of 1823 was to be departed from; and next, if it was not, why was such a sacrifice to be made to public clamour as was shown in the present resolutions? He apprehended that, from the observations which had already fallen from him, the House would feel, that it could not, consistently with the resolutions of 1823, consent to the resolutions proposed either by the hon. member for Weymouth, or by the Chancellor of the Exchequer, inasmuch as the resolutions proposed by both of them involved an abandonment of the policy of 1823, and gave a decisive opinion on the measures of the colonial Legislatures, without even knowing what those measures were. The House was called upon to come *per saltum* to a decision against the colonial assemblies, and to say that the laws which they had passed for the amelioration of their slave-population were not adequate for their professed object, without knowing what the laws were which those assemblies had enacted. There was also another provision in these resolutions to which he must object. The noble Lord, standing upon those broad constitutional principles which it was only natural to expect from him, had said, "that he would not pretend to legislate in the House of Commons for the internal condition of the colonies; but that he would by a fiscal regulation compel the colonial Legislatures to adopt these resolutions." What, would the noble Lord impose upon them external taxation, in order to enforce an internal regulation? If the noble Lord felt that, acting upon sound constitutional principles, he could not call on the House of Commons to legislate at once for the internal regulations of the colonies, would he condescend to apply external taxation to their trade, their revenues, and their importations, not for the sake of raising a fund for his Exchequer, but for the sake of imposing on them an internal regulation which he not only openly avowed that he had no right to force upon them, but also declined to embody into any act emanating from the Imperial Parliament of these realms? He considered this as one of the most peculiar features of the resolution of the noble Lord. But the House must also look upon it in another point of view. If the House were to pass such resolutions as were now proposed to them, and if the colonial Legislatures, consulting the interests and the personal safety of their constituents, and acting on much more extensive and certain local information than the Parliament of the mother country could possibly accquire, should refuse to give their assent to them, what would be the consequence? Why, that the tax, which the Imperial Parliament of these realms would impose on colonial produce, would operate as a tax, not on the real delinquents, supposing for the sake of argument delinquency to exist, but on those to whom even the suspicion of delinquency had never attached. For he had the right to put the question upon this point thus—planters, who were not in debt to this country, would not send their produce to England, but would send it to the Continent, and thus would escape the operations of the tax. Those who were compelled by circumstances to consign their produce to this country, would continue to send it here, and they who would have to receive it namely, the planters who resided in this country, would be punished by the tax, though they were not delinquent, and though they might even be doing every thing in their power through their agents to stop the delinquency. But did the House suppose that the colonial assemblies consisted of the attornies, or overseers, or managers for non-resident planters, and not of local proprietors? Did they suppose that any members of those assemblies, for the paltry commission which they received, would expose the colony in which they resided, and in which they held their property, to the probable chance of ruin and destruction? If the House supposed that the state of society was thus low in the colonies, it was egregiously deceived. He had endeavoured to bring before the House the important changes which had been made by the colonial legislatures for the benefit of the slave-population. If the House at present attempted to do more, it would find that with all its desire to emancipate, it would only defeat and retard the accomplishment of its own wishes. The fact was, that the slave-population was not yet in a fit condition for emancipation. That, in itself, was a sufficient answer to the Resolutions proposed by the hon. member for Weymouth. To the Resolutions proposed by the noble Lord his answer was, that he (the Chancellor of the Exchequer) proceeded upon an unjust representation of the policy which had been observed towards the colonies since the year 1823, and which up to this time had never been abandoned. It was too much to call upon the House of Commons to say that the legislative measures passed by the Colonial Assemblies were inefficient for their purpose, when the House did not know what they were, and to form the Order in Council into a law when time had not been given to have it fairly tried. He called upon the House, in justice to its own character, and in justice to the colonies, to pause before it gave its consent to a measure, which would retard the period when emancipation could be granted beneficially to all parties. The proposition which he had intended to have laid before the House, and which he would take the liberty of moving when the amendment was disposed of, was, first of all, to re-affirm the Resolutions of 1823; and next, to place the House in a situation to know how the instructions contained in the Order in Council of the same year had been complied with by the colonial legislatures, by appointing a Committee to inquire into the subject. The hon. and learned Gentleman, in conclusion, thanked the House for the patient attention with which it had listened to the observations which he had ventured to obtrude upon its consideration.

Lord *Howick* said, that he would not follow the hon. and learned Gentleman through the long detail into which he had entered of the Acts passed by the colonial legislatures, although he must say, that there were some of those Acts which the hon. and learned Gentleman had most unaccountably overlooked. He thought that the objections which the hon. and learned Gentleman had made to the Resolutions proposed by his noble friend near him were very slight, and that the House was bound in vindication of its own dignity and consistency to take some additional measures to compel the colonies to ameliorate the condition of their slave-population. The difficult task of framing laws to control the despotic power of the master over his slave had been undertaken by legislatures in the colonies, not anxious to discharge that duty fairly and honestly, but driven and goaded on by public opinion here to adopt measures which they detested in their hearts. In looking over the debates on the slave-law, which had recently taken place in the Colonial Assembly of Jamaica, he had found a passage which illustrated so strongly the spirit in which their Acts were passed, that he could not refrain from reading it to the House. The subject under discussion was, whether the Slave Act should be passed with a suspending clause. In the course of the debate one gentleman objected to the insertion of a suspending clause as a violation of the local Constitution of Jamaica. A Mr. Davis, in answering the objection, used this extraordinary language:—"So far am I from thinking that a clause suspending this law in certain cases would overturn the Constitution, that I can even imagine cases in which we may turn such a clause to our great advantage. We may, for instance, be obliged to pass bills which we may wish to have an opportunity to revise, and about which we may be indifferent and careless—nay, even wishful that they may not be confirmed." From a Legislature which avowed that it might be wishful that its bills might not be confirmed, he, knowing its prejudices on the slave question, could not expect any serious interference between the master and the slave. The slave bill, however, passed that Assembly with the two clauses to which Mr. Huskisson had so justly objected, and which had of course prevented it from being confirmed. It had since been passed in a shape which had been approved, and it was curious to observe the nature of the amendments which had been proposed by the Colonial Assembly. In every clause which inflicted a penalty on the master for an abuse of power over his slave, the amendment made was in mitigation of the penalty inflicted on the master; but in every clause where a slave was to be punished, the penalty was not mitigated, but increased. For in one instance the penalty imposed on the owner for not allowing his slave a proper portion of land to cultivate was 50*l.*; and that had been mitigated from 50*l.* to 20*l.*: and in another the punishment on the slave was increased from three days to a month's imprisonment. It was a singular fact, that in no colony had a Protector of Slaves been appointed in compliance with the instructions contained in the Order in Council. The hon. and learned Gentleman who had just sat down said, "Oh, that is no matter, for the Attorney-general of the Colony acts as the Protector of Slaves." He was surprised that the hon. and learned Gentleman should have ventured to institute a comparison between two officers so dissimilar. The Protector of Slaves, though appointed by the Assembly, was to be paid by the Crown, was to have no property in slaves, and his duty was not merely to examine into all cases of grievance which might be brought before him by slaves, but even to look about him, and to discover them. Now the Attorney-general of the colonies, though he was appointed by the Crown, was paid by the Assemblies. [Mr. *Burge*, "No."] He was paid by fees arising out of the prosecutions which he conducted; and he (Lord Howick) asked the hon. and learned Gentleman, whether those prosecutions must not meet with the approbation of the Colonial Assemblies before the expenses of them could be defrayed by the local Treasurers?

Mr. *Burge* again interrupted the noble Lord. He had himself been Attorney-general for the colony of Jamaica, and he could say that he had never been paid by fees upon prosecutions. He was paid a fixed salary, by warrant from the Governor-general, and he had always been perfectly independent of the Colonial Assembly.

Lord *Howick* said, that he had not been speaking of Jamaica specifically. Whatever might be the case in Jamaica, he knew that in the smaller colonies the Attorney-generals were remunerated by the Assemblies. The offices of Protector of Slaves and of Attorney-general were as distinct as two offices could possibly be. "But," said the hon. and learned Gentleman, "we have in Jamaica a Council of Protection, which answers the same purpose." Now it so happened, that in the year 1826, Lord Bathurst had sent out draughts of certain bills, formed on the Order in Council, which he wished to have proposed to the different Colonial Assemblies. They were referred to the different colonial Attornies-general, with orders that they should report their opinion upon them. In the Report received from the Attorney-general of Jamaica was this sentence,—"The Council of Protection has a very different duty to discharge from that assigned to the Protector of Slaves." That Report was signed, "William Burge, Attorney-general for Jamaica." He fully agreed with that learned personage in that opinion. For there was this objection to a Council of Protection, that it divided among a number of individuals a responsibility, which was more strongly felt when it rested upon a single individual only. He believed, that in the case of Kitty Hilton—a case of which he had laid a history on the Table of the House, with mingled feelings of regret, and shame, and horror, not one of the twenty individuals who had voted in a body against prosecuting the reverend tyrant who had so cruelly maltreated her, would have given such a vote, had they had each to incur an undivided responsibility. So much as to the hon. and learned Gentleman's contradiction of his noble friend's assertion as to the Council of Protection. He would now call upon the House to examine how far this law, of which the hon. and learned Gentleman boasted so much, carried into effect the principle which Mr. Canning laid down in his celebrated Resolutions of May, 1823. In the eloquent and memorable speech which Mr. Canning made upon that occasion in 1823, he used this language:—"In raising any class of persons from a servile to a civil condition, one of the first principles of improvement is in the observance paid to the difference of sexes. I would therefore abolish, with respect to females, the use of the whip, not only as a stimulant to labour in the field—I would abolish it altogether as an instrument of punishment, thus saving the weaker sex from indecency and degradation."* Where was the Englishman who would not agree with Mr. Canning in these sentiments? Where was the Englishman who would not reject with contempt as a measure of amelioration any measure which would not carry into effect that principle? And yet the amended law of the Colonial Assembly of Jamaica did not abolish the punishment of the whip for females. The next point to which he wished to call the attention of the House, was the separation of families. On that point Mr. Canning had said, that he thought that the process of the writ by which the slaves were sold separately from the estate on which they were located ought to be abolished. It was clear that if they wished civilization to make any progress among the slave-population, they must inculcate and observe a respect for their domestic situation, and must regard those sacred ties which formed the strength and comfort and happiness of private families. Now what had the Assembly of Jamaica done upon this point? They had done this—they had directed the Provost Marshal, in making levies, not to separate the members of a family from each other, unless they could not avoid making that separation without exposing themselves to an action for an excessive levy. Thus the Provost Marshal could still divide the husband from the wife, and the mother from her child [Mr. *Burge*.—"No, no."] The hon. and learned Gentleman again contradicted him; but he would ask the hon. and learned Gentleman, whether he could point out to him any clause in any law in the whole Statute-book of Jamaica in which this practice was denounced and prohibited as contrary to law? He knew the excuse which the hon. and learned Gentleman would offer: he would say, "True it is, that the law is faulty there, but the moral feeling is excellent." [Mr. *Burge*.—"The Courts of law would set such a sale aside."] The hon. and learned Gentleman said more than he had anticipated. He said, that the Courts of law would annul any sale which separated the members of the same family. If a Court would set aside such a sale as this, he could only say, that it was most extraordinary that the Assembly at Jamaica should have refused to agree to a clause prohibiting such sales. The hon. and learned Gentleman had complained that these Resolutions were couched in terms more inculpatory of the colonists than the other Resolutions. This complaint, however, appeared to him to be most unfounded; indeed, he had heard it with the greatest surprise; for the fact was, they had taken care to soften the terms of the Resolutions. Thus, in the former Resolutions, there was the expression, "no adequate measures have been adopted," which expression they had changed to "adequate measures have not been adopted." It was true, they said, in the Resolutions, that enough had not been done, and what Gentleman would doubt the propriety of saying this, when he was told that women might still be flogged. The hon. and learned Gentleman had also told them, that the slaves were not yet prepared for the amelioration proposed; and yet the hon. and learned Gentleman had, in another part of his speech, entered into a long argument, the object of which, was, to show how much the Assemblies had done with the view of ameliorating the condition of the slaves, and how successful the Assemblies had been. Could it be supposed that the exertions of the Assemblies—if they had made any—could have been attended with success, if the slaves were in the state of brutality which the hon. and learned Gentleman had described? [Mr. *Burge* did not say they were in a state of brutality.] The hon. and learned Gentleman had not, perhaps, used the word "brutality," but his (Lord Howick's) observation was only a fair inference from the description which the learned Gentleman had given of the slaves, and especially from the retention of the whip as a means of punishment for women; because, if that were necessary, the slaves must be in a state of brutality, and if it were not necessary, the brutality rested somewhere else. The hon. and learned Gentleman asked them if they meant to abandon the policy of 1823, and to sacrifice property? For himself, he had no hesitation in answering in the negative. He would unquestionably preserve the rights of property, but he would not preserve them at the expense of the rights of the slaves. He thought that property ought to be considered and respected, for the sake of the slaves themselves; but he was not prepared to say, with all his respect for the rights of property, that they who had been partners in the guilt must not be partners also in the suffering. He considered the whole system of slavery as one of such deep oppression and iniquity and cruelty, that, if he could be satisfied that it was safe to emancipate the slaves now, he would say, "Do so, and do it at once; and we will settle scores among ourselves afterwards, and determine in what proportion the penalty of our guilt is to be paid: but the victims of that guilt must continue to suffer, while we are haggling about pounds, shillings, and pence." On mature consideration, however, he had seen that it would not be safe to the colonists, nor advantageous to the slaves themselves, that slavery should be abolished immediately and at once; and he believed that the course which his hon. friend the member for Weymouth proposed for their adoption would be attended with many dangers to the slaves themselves. If, too, he were prepared to agree to actual emancipation at once, he should consider that the only wise mode of carrying it into effect would be, by a full and detailed measure; and, until some safe and practical plan of emancipation were laid before the House, he should protest against the adoption of Resolutions which could only have the effect of irritating the master, and of exciting in the breast of the slave expectations which must be disappointed. He perfectly concurred in the observations of the late Mr. Canning on this subject,—namely, that emancipation must be gradual, and through the planter, and that, if it were not, it would raise a flame which could only be extinguished by blood. He believed that emancipation must not only be gradual, but that it must be gradual by removing suffering, by abridging labour, and by lessening dependence. The fetters of the slave must, in his opinion, be loosened by degrees, and not struck off at once. He should not propose to emancipate a large number of slaves, if he had the power of doing so, but rather to take off a part of the weight of slavery, and he rejoiced to say, that they had the means of doing that. To lighten the weight of slavery was a project perfectly feasible—a project which, with the support and sanction of that House, the exertions of the Government would, he was persuaded, be fully equal to. The Government had in contemplation measures for such an amelioration in the condition of the slaves, as might fairly be called a practical good, and a real progress in the course to which the Legislature were pledged by the Resolutions to which it had agreed. There was in the course of preparation an amended Order in Council, the adoption of which, word for word, it was proposed to render imperative upon every colony which sought for the indulgence it held out. ["*Hear, hear,*" *from Mr. Burge.*] He understood the cheer of the hon. and learned Gentleman. The hon. and learned Gentleman meant, that although this was not a direct interference in the internal affairs of the colonies, yet that it would in effect act in a compulsory manner upon the colonies. It would so. This Order in Council would include many points of amelioration. In the first place it recommended the adoption in every colony of such regulations for improving the condition of the slaves, as had been tried and found to answer in other colonies. It would be recollected that Mr. Canning had observed—and, in his opinion, with great truth and propriety—that regulations which had been found productive of benefit in one colony, could not, with reason, be rejected by another colony. He believed that much progress had been made in some colonies towards raising the character and the condition of the slaves, by abolishing the whip as an instrument of punishing women; and it was proposed that the use of the whip with regard to women should be abolished in all the colonies. It was proposed, too, that in cases of punishing men, not more than fifteen lashes should be inflicted in the space of twenty-four hours, and that this punishment should not take place until six hours after the commission of the offence. With regard to labour, it was proposed to suggest a modification of it, so that labour should not be so exacted to the extreme point of man's strength. He knew that it was not to be hoped, at present, that the master would give his slave wages: that, he knew, must come by and by: but if the master did not compel his slave to work by hours, but gave him task work to a reasonable amount, much good would be effected. By this change they would reduce the whip to an instrument of punishment, and it would be no longer used, as it was now, as a stimulus to labour. The slave would no longer be like a horse in a team, who worked through fear of blows, but like a rational animal. They would appeal to the reason and the hopes of the slave, and not to his instinct and his fears. The next point was the separation of families, which would be effectually guarded against. In the same manner the right of compulsory manumission would be fully established. And here he could not refrain from alluding to what had fallen from the hon. and learned Gentleman (Mr. Burge) on the subject of compulsory manumission. The hon. and learned Gentleman had contended that it was unjust to compel a master to dispose of his own slave against his will. Did the hon. and learned Gentleman mean to say, that it was unfair to make a man part with his slave for the value of that slave, when they every day compelled a man to part with his property for the mere convenience of the public? When, for the purpose of constructing a rail-road or a turnpike-road, they compelled, by an Act of the Legislature, any man to sell property which he had neither acquired nor held by guilt; and this, too, upon the mere ground of public convenience; was it to be said, that they were to be barred from pursuing the same course where the subject of the compulsory sale was that which no man could have acquired, or could retain, innocently —the power over another man, that freedom which is the birthright of every human being? He confessed, that he had heard this doctrine of the hon. and learned Gentleman with the utmost astonishment. But it was the intention of the Government to go farther, and to give to the slave the power of purchasing his freedom, not only in the gross, but, if he might be allowed to use the expression, in the retail also. It was their intention to revive and enforce in our colonies an old law which had formerly obtained in Cuba, and which enabled the slave to purchase one day in the week. He was sure the House would see the great and valuable utility of such an arrangement. A negro could hardly be expected to struggle on through his condition of slavery, and to persevere rigidly until he had acquired the whole *50l.* or *80l.*—in some cases he believed it was *100l.*—that was requisite for the purchase of his freedom; but this arrangement would enable him to acquire the first step—a step which would inspire him with better hopes, and excite him to renewed exertions, thus rendering the other steps comparatively easy, and certainly effecting a vast amelioration in his condition. By this means, too, freedom would come upon the slave by degrees, he would be fully prepared for it, and it could not, therefore, be attended with any of those dangers which were to be apprehended from an abrupt transition from slavery to freedom. Again, slaves would not only have the power of thus purchasing their own freedom, but the power of purchasing the freedom of their children also. From this part of the arrangement he anticipated very beneficial results. A child when first born was of very little value to the master, and a small sum might, perhaps, induce the master to give up his claim to the child, while the parents would doubtless be anxious to relieve their offspring from the miseries of the condition in which they had the misfortune to be placed. The regulations with regard to Sunday would be, that no manner of labour should be required of the slaves on that day, and, which was of more importance, that every care should be taken that the slaves might have free access to places of public worship. The hours of labour and the quantity of food would be carefully looked to, in order to prevent the slaves being ill-fed or too hardly worked. He believed, that he had then stated to the House the principal points of the Order in Council which the Government had in contemplation. He trusted the House would see that these arrangements tended to a practical and substantial good, and that they were not a mere device to enable the Government to extricate themselves from a popular question, but that they constituted an important step in that course to which the Legislature was pledged. He entirely concurred with his hon. friend, the member for Weymouth, in his view as to the necessity of putting an end to the abominable system, but he differed from his hon. friend as to the mode in which he would carry his views into effect. He was disposed to recommend greater caution than his hon. friend. Under these circumstances, he hoped that his hon. friend, would not press his Motion, but allow the Resolutions proposed by his noble friend to come under the consideration of the House. He begged to thank the House for the indulgence with which they had listened to a statement which he was afraid had been very tedious, and which he could not help feeling that he had very imperfectly expressed.

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* Hansard's Parliamentary Debates, New Series, Vol. ix. p. 283.

Mr. *M. P. Stewart* felt himself impelled from a sense of duty to explain the vote he intended to give—from a sense of duty, connected as he was, by property, with the West-India proprietary—and also from a sense of duty to slave labourers, for whose happiness and safety every West-India proprietor was responsible. In common with every West-India proprietor, he was anxious for a full and fair adjustment of this question. He was quite willing to attribute unsullied purity to the motives of those who were anxious for the immediate abolition of slavery; but he claimed that the same charitable construction should be put on the motives of those who were opposed to the immediate abolition. He did not so far wrong the hon. member for Weymouth (Mr. F. Buxton) as to suppose that he wished for the settlement of this momentous question upon any thing else but fair and equitable principles, and, assuming that he was right in that supposition, he did not hesitate to say, that the hon. Member would find no enemy in the West-India body. One great difficulty which beset this question was, the necessity of guarding against the feeling, so natural, but dangerous to the fair and equitable adjustment of this question—he meant the abhorrence to the name of slavery. He could not compliment the hon. member for Weymouth on the time he had chosen for bringing forward this question. The attention of his Majesty's Ministers, of the House, and the country, was absorbed by another great question; and it was impossible to give this question that calm and dispassionate consideration which was necessary for its proper and final adjustment. But that the time was unfavourable and unfair was not the only objection he had to the hon. member for Weymouth's motion. The hon. Member's Resolution was founded on an assertion which he (Mr. Stewart) might be permitted to deny. The assertion which he denied was, that the colonial legislature had done nothing in favour of the slaves, and in conformity with the Resolutions of the House. Nothing could be more erroneous than that assertion, which would be immediately and inevitably refuted if an inquiry took place. That it was erroneous was with him a reason for objecting to the proposition of the noble Lord, which rested also upon the erroneous assumption that these legislatures had done nothing. So far from this being the fact, all the propositions of the hon. member for Weymouth, fourteen in number, with the exception of three, were at this moment in force in our colonies. The three exceptions embraced subjects of so questionable a nature, that the colonial legislatures wished for time to consider them. One was compulsory manumission, another the non-removal of negroes from the island, the third the emancipation of children born after a certain date. The other eleven propositions had been enacted by the colonies; yet our West-Indian fellow-subjects was to be disturbed and distressed, and their property was to be placed in jeopardy, on mere unsupported allegations. He asked for previous inquiry, which was an act of simple justice even to the negroes themselves, of whose real condition neither the House nor the country was properly informed. The hon. member for Weymouth, and other sanguine and worthy individuals, were opposed to inquiry; but if the result of such inquiry showed, that the state of the negroes in our colonies justified those who asserted that the colonial legislatures had done much, and were willing to do more, then the most ardent abolitionists would stop or hesitate before they proceeded. Nobody, either in the House or out of the House, either in England or in the West Indies, was an advocate for slavery; every rational man was desirous of getting rid of it, but he was also desirous in doing that not to inflict a greater evil than slavery itself. With respect to the substitution of free labour, look at St. Domingo, once a garden, now reduced to the cultivation of a single product—coffee, and that was in a declining state. When the Americans sent cargoes to that island, and were to receive timber in exchange, with which the island abounds, they were obliged to send men to cut it down and bring it to their ships. Such were the fruits of free labour in St. Domingo. In Trinidad, it appeared by a despatch from Governor Woodford, in 1826, that 400 free negroes had been employed for no less than five years in building a barrack, which Government had been anxious should be completed in a short time. In Berbice there was a class of free negroes, who were left to seek their living; they were eighty in number, and their annual cost to Government was 1,500*l.* He mentioned these details, to justify the opinion he entertained, that it was impossible at the present moment to substitute free for slave labour. It would be a benefit to the colonists if it could be accomplished consistently with the rights of property. But in the present circumstances of the colonies, the House should pause before it broke up a state of society which was not sufficiently known to the House to enable it to create something much better. It should be recollected that one cause of pauperism in Europe was the emancipation of slaves. It began by the Christians emancipating slaves for the good of their souls, and by the Mahommedans doing that for the increase of their religion. "This disorder," said Gibbon, "of giving liberty to great numbers of slaves upon their profession of Christianity, grew to such a height, even in the time of Constantine the Great, that the cities of the empire found themselves burthened with an infinite number of men, who had no other estate but their liberty, of whom the greatest part would not work, and the rest had been bred to no profession. This obliged Constantine to make edicts in favour of beggars; and from that time hospitals and almshouses, not formerly known in the world, began to be established. But, upon the rise of the Mahometan religion, which was chiefly advanced by giving liberty to all their slaves, the Christians were so molested by the continual rebellion of theirs, that they were at length forced to give liberty to them all; and this is the rise of that great mischief, under which, to the undoing of the poor, all the nations of Europe have ever since groaned." The principle of compensation, it appeared, was now yielded, and well it might. There could be no doubt of the right of property existing in slaves. Lord Stowell had declared this. "There has been no Act whatever (he said) that could even formally destroy those various powers of property which the owner possessed over his slave by the most solemn assurances of law. If slavery be a sin, it is a sin in which this country has had its full share of the guilt, and ought to bear its proportion of the redemption. How this country can decline to perform the act of justice, in performing the act of charity, men of great wisdom and integrity have not been able to discover." He felt, and he expressed the feelings of the colonists when he said, that there was a spirit adverse to the colonies abroad in this country. This revived a warning which had been addressed to the House of Commons by Mr. Burke, previous to the separation of the American colonies, and which applied most appositely to the last of the Resolutions proposed to the House. Burke said—"When I consider that we have colonies for no purpose but to be serviceable to us, it seems to my poor understanding a little preposterous to make them unserviceable, in order to keep them obedient. But, remember, when you have completed your system of impoverishment, that nature still proceeds in her ordinary course; that discontent will increase with misery; and that there are critical moments in the fortunes of all States, when they who were too weak to contribute to your prosperity, may be strong enough to complete your ruin"—a prophecy which he prayed might not be fulfilled. All he asked, all the colonial interest wanted, was inquiry,—unflinching inquiry.

Mr. *Sykes* wished to record his opinion, that no compromise should take place on the subject. Since the plan of Government detailed by the noble Lord (Howick) contained a large measure of relief, he hoped that his hon. friend, the member for Weymouth, would not persist in pressing his Motion to a division. The abhorrence to negro slavery had become a settled religious feeling, and as long as slavery existed, that feeling would strengthen and increase.

Mr. *Horace Twiss* said, there were various difficulties connected with this important question. He had hoped, that his hon. friend, the member for Weymouth, would have found a way to relieve the measure from some of those difficulties, by adhering to the principles contained in the Resolutions of 1823. It appeared, however, that there was now a disposition to abandon those Resolutions. By them, however, that and the other House of Parliament were pledged to the final extinction of slavery, as soon as it was compatible with the well-being of the slaves themselves, with the safety of the colonies, and with the equitable consideration of private property. Such was the language of the Resolutions, and therefore the question was not now whether slavery was to be abolished, for that had been already decided, but whether the Resolutions were to be broken through, and violated by hurrying on the emancipation of the slaves? Hon. Members who had taken a part in that discussion had accused those with whom he thought and acted, of abandoning the Resolutions of 1823; on the contrary, he was satisfied that a calm and impartial estimate of all that they had said and done upon that most momentous occasion, would lead to an entirely opposite conclusion. According to the course which certain advocates of abolition would recommend them to adopt, for the purpose, as it was said, of adhering to the Resolutions of 1823, they would urge them now to break through the most solemn parliamentary resolutions by hurrying them on into precipitate measures, alike inconsistent with the well-being of the slaves themselves, and with that respect for private property and vested rights which Parliament had hitherto shown, and from which, he trusted, no such considerations as had been urged that night would induce them to depart. He felt the more disposed to resist the Motion of the hon. member for Weymouth, and even to charge him with inconsistency, when he remembered that that hon. Member was a party to those Resolutions—not only a party to them in the sense in which every Member of that House was mixed up with its proceedings, not merely as voting for those Resolutions, but more stringently did he make himself a party to them by accepting them in lieu and in full compensation of his own, which he had then submitted to the House. He thought himself also justified in complaining that the hon. Member had found fault with the Resolutions of 1823, for not working out all the objects which were expected from them in the short space of seven years. It was hardly fair or reasonable to expect that the work of two or three generations could be accomplished in the short space of one apprenticeship. He was sure the House could not but regard such expectations as purely visionary. He entreated the House to remember that, by the Resolutions of the hon. Member himself, proposed antecedently to those of 1823, the abolition of slavery was postponed to an indefinite period. His object, as distinctly stated, was the most gradual extinction of slavery; from the language used by him in 1823, tha principle evidently appeared. He would quote the hon. Member's words, not to taunt him with having professed such sentiments, but to hold them up to the admiration of the House, and as worthy of its adoption. "The object," said he, "at which we aim, is the extinction of slavery—nothing less than the extinction of slavery—in nothing less than the whole of the British dominions; not, however, the rapid termination of that state—not the sudden emancipation of the negro—but such preparatory steps—such measures and precaution as, by slow degrees, and in a course of years, first fitting and qualifying the slave for the enjoyment of freedom, shall gently conduct us to the annihilation of slavery. Nothing can more clearly shew that we mean nothing rash—nothing rapid—nothing abrupt—nothing bearing any feature of violence, than this—that if I succeed to the fullest extent of my desires, confessedly sanguine, no man will be able to say, I even shall be unable to predict, that at such a time, or in such a year, slavery will be abolished. We are far from meaning to attempt to cut down slavery in the full maturity of its vigour. We rather should leave it gently to decay—slowly, silently, almost imperceptibly, to die away, and to be forgotten."* Those were the sentiments of the hon. Gentleman years ago; and let the House now compare them with the language they had that night heard from him; and let them at the same time look to the general effect of what had been done on the suggestions of the late Government. He had also, he conceived, a right to complain of the tone and manner in which the legislature of Jamaica had been spoken of by the noble Lord opposite. That noble Lord had taken advantage of an indiscreet expression of a single member of the legislature of Jamaica, for the purpose of imputing *mala fides* to that Assembly. He sincerely hoped that the observation of the noble Lord would not go forth to the public as the opinion of the House of Commons; for it was as little the opinion of the House, as was the indiscreet expression alluded to, the general feeling of the House of Assembly in Jamaica. In making that remark in reference to a colonial Legislature, he begged it to be distinctly understood, that nothing could be further from his mind than to say that the colonial Legislatures had done all that might be done for that degree of amelioration which all were agreed upon as practicable, and all were anxious to see accomplished. But though he was willing to admit, that enough had not been done, he would gladly learn with what consistency the hon. member for Weymouth inveighed against the faith of the colonial Legislatures. In making that observation, he was, however, perfectly willing to admit, that, up to the year 1827, nothing had been done except in the Island of Tobago; since then, however, every one of them had been proceeding gradually and regularly in a course of amelioration. He did not stand up to say he was satisfied with what had been done by the colonies; but with what justice were they acting towards those colonial Legislatures, which were to be the instruments by which this House was to work out its object, when they denied that those Assemblies had done anything. He regretted as cordially as the hon. Member, that the application of the whip in the punishment of females had not been universally abolished; but England was hardly entitled to take a very high tone of moral indignation on this subject, when it was remembered that it was only a very few years ago, in 1822, that even in this country of humanity, civilization, and freedom, the whipping of females was finally abolished. Since 1827 the progress of improvement in the colonies had been gradual and effectual, and in that year despatches had been sent out from the Government, eulogizing the colonies of Dominica and Barbadoes for what they had done. In 1828, the ameliorations had been extended to Bahama and Bermuda; in 1829, to Grenada. In 1829, Tobago had passed a law for the admission of slave evidence. Then there was the consolidated slave-law of Jamaica, which was not to be considered as now existing, merely because it had not been formally laid upon the Table of the House. The ameliorations which had taken place in the Crown colonies, containing one-third of the whole number of slaves in the British colonies, and which ameliorations were now going on, were such as ought to satisfy the most sanguine. The House could not, however, have failed to notice, in the course of the hon. Member's speech, that he thought nothing of all that had been done in the Crown colonies—a portion of the West Indies which included a full third of the slave-population. The noble Lord opposite affirmed that no compensation ought to be given—that not a moment was to be lost—and yet he admitted that some time was required for the purpose of preparing the slaves for the freedom which they were not yet capable of enjoying. Time was confessedly necessary, and he would maintain that that time ought to be occupied in estimating those claims, and the amount of that compensation, and of those claims which, according to acknowledged principle ought to be admitted. He altogether denied the necessity for that precipitancy which the noble Lord so earnestly pressed, and he entreated the House to remember the blood that had been shed in St. Domingo, though he did not mean to assert that similar scenes must necessarily take place in Jamaica or in British Guiana; but he entreated the House to remember the weighty obligation under which they lay, not to risk the repetition of such scenes, by incurring the risk of rash liberation. There was not the least doubt, that any man having the slightest knowledge of the above population must admit, that they ought to be ripe for freedom before it should be conferred upon them, and that they were not yet in that state of ripeness, which qualified them for emancipation, he would quote another passage from the speech he had already quoted, to prove. "If we could clothe them, not only with the rights and privileges, but with the virtuous restraints of social life; if I did not know that the same system which has reduced them to the condition of brutes, has brutalized their minds; if, in fact I deemed them ripe for deliverance, my moderation, I confess it, would be but small. I should say, the sooner you cease from doing injustice, and they from enduring it, the better: but, alas, Sir, the slave is not ripe for liberty."* All this while, however, he was perfectly ready to admit, that the proposition of the Government had something plausible in it, at least apparently so, to such as were practically unacquainted with the working of colonial affairs. But, from his experience while in office, he was enabled to say, that, practically, the proposition of the Government would prove a measure of coercion which nothing but extreme force could carry into effect; for so independent had the colony of Jamaica, for example, become, owing to the union between the free people of colour and the whites, that, as he had already said, nothing short of the extremity of force could coerce that alienated colony. He hoped, therefore, sincerely hoped, that the noble Lord would pause before he brought the mother country by a fiscal regulation into conflict with a large colony all the inhabitants of which were united by one common interest. It was in that view of the subject, and recollecting the wide difference which subsisted between the proposition of the hon. member for Weymouth, and that which had the support of his Majesty's Government, he could not refrain from expressing a hope that the House would not unite with them in an attempt to pursue such a dangerous course as that which they proposed on the subject of Colonial Slavery. He thought it also especially unwise and mischievous to have such discussions brought under the consideration of Parliament at a juncture like the present; and supposing that the House could be induced to agree to the proposition of the noble Lord, if the Government failed—as fail they must in the execution of the measure—he put it to the House, must not such failure be attended with infinite disadvantage to the negroes themselves, and the utmost danger to the white population and to British interests in the colonies?

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* Hansard's Parl. Deb., Vol. ix, New Series, p. 265.

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* Hansard's Parl. Deb., Vol. ix. p. 271.

Doctor *Lushington* had much pleasure in finding imself able to congratulate the House on the fact, that all who took a part in the present discussion shrunk from the task of defending slavery in the abstract. He remembered when they used to come to the discussion of that question under very different circumstances,—when the system of slavery used to be regarded as a something so closely interwoven with the frame of colonial society, that it could not be put an end to without the utmost danger to the existence of the colonies. It was looked on as a source of national wealth, and as one of the elements of national prosperity, which could not be meddled with except at the risk of overwhelming ruin. Happily, however, that condition of parliamentary and public opinion was now at an end; and ceasing to be a question of abstract principle, it had now become one of time and manner; and the only point upon which a difference of opinion could arise was, the ripeness or unripeness of the slaves for emancipation. The hon. and learned Gentleman who spoke last had threatened them with a union between the free people of colour and the whites. He was authorized to state, that the free people of colour in Jamaica were perfectly ready to give up their own slaves if the Government required such a sacrifice. But he was sure that threats, of the nature to which he alluded, could have no weight with that House. If the 24,000 whites in that colony dared to breathe one word of sedition, they might rest assured, that did the authority of the King need such support, the free people of colour would put down by a single effort any such pitiful attempt. The 2,000 troops on that Island were under the command of the King; and though they were maintained there, at a frightful expenditure of human life, for the protection of the white-population against their own slaves, yet still they were troops under the command of the King, who would not passively see his authority insulted. He must deny, that the proposition that night brought forward was a violation of the Resolutions of 1823; but that, on the contrary, its operation would be, to carry those Resolutions into effect. Could it be said, that any one of the colonial Legislatures had acted upon the Resolutions of 1823? The hon. and learned Member then referred to a great variety of instances, implicating the character of several individuals, to prove that the slaves derived no protection from the Attorney-general, who was stated by the hon. and learned Gentleman opposite to be the protector of the slaves. That hon. and learned Gentleman had thrown doubts on the statements of the hon. member for Weymouth as to the mortality among the slaves, but he could confirm those statements by an unexceptionable authority. The hon. and learned Member accordingly referred to the work of a clergyman of the Church of England, and the Rector of St. Thomas, to show that those sentiments were correct, and that the mortality among the slaves was much greater in the sugar plantations than in the coffee plantations. There was one class of men who had been much censured, whom he was ready to defend. The Wesleyan Methodists had risked their lives, and submitted to live on the smallest possible pittance, in order to carry the truths of Christianity among the slaves. Than the Wesleyan Methodists there was no more meritorious body of men in the colonies, and they were the first and real promoters of all improvement. They were the causes of that progress which had been made. He was sorry that he could not bear the same testimony in favour of the Bishop of Jamaica; but truth compelled him to declare, that that Prelate had not done his duty, and had not merited the approbation of that House and the country. He would not then enter into the particulars, but the time would come when he might bring the subject under the notice of the House. They had heard a great deal, of the distress of the colonies, but he was prepared to prove, that all that distress arose from the injustice of the colonists. Several years ago he was member of a Committee appointed to investigate this subject, and several West-India proprietors gave evidence before that Committee, that for the preceding thirty years they had not received more than four per cent on their capital. That was the punishment ordained, he believed, by Providence, for trampling on the laws of humanity and justice; for never was injustice unpunished here, as well as elsewhere, and never did justice go without its reward, it being attended even with pecuniary blessings. In his opinion, no time was to be lost in bringing forward measures of emancipation, though he did not advocate the propriety of immediately passing a law to give the slaves their freedom; but he did desire to see measures immediately brought in now and adopted, which might lead to the gradual extinction of slavery. He expected even, that good would result from bringing forward the Resolutions of that night, and he implored the House not to stultify itself, after it had passed the Resolutions in 1823, by now consenting to inquire whether what yet remained to be executed of those Resolutions should be carried into effect. To them all parties were pledged, and they must be executed. Emancipation, indeed, he believed was much nearer at hand than his hon. friend and his noble friend seemed to suppose; it could not be for ever delayed, the great danger was in postponing it, and it could not with safety be much longer withheld.

Sir *Robert Peel* said, that if there were any prospect of carrying into effect the Resolutions of the hon. member for Weymouth, he could understand the speech of the hon. and learned Member who had just sat down. But when the Ministers said that the Colonial Assemblies must carry the measures of emancipation into effect, he could not understand how the hon. and learned Gentleman could make a speech so full of vituperation, nor how such a speech could promote the object he had in view. He did not mean to vindicate the conduct of the Colonial Assemblies; he was not satisfied with the course they had pursued; but if it was true, that the time was not come when we could interfere, it was not prudent to indulge in such language, and to censure so heavily those who must continue the masters and legislators of the slaves. He thought that the noble Lord (Althorp), whose moderation on this question had always been conspicuous, must have been much disappointed by the speech of the hon. and learned Member, and still more disappointed by the speech of the noble Lord who was the Representative of the Colonial Government in that House. He certainly felt as much indignation at the atrocities which had been adverted to as any man, but he hoped that no feeling of compassion for the slaves would be suffered to pervert the cool and deliberate judgment of the House, and hurry it into actions that might be equally injurious to the interests of the slaves, the interests of humanity, and the interests of the planters. He entreated the House not to be too hasty in coming to any Resolutions. Already they had experienced the inconvenience of pledging themselves as to some course in relation to the Abolition of Slavery to be pursued hereafter. He trusted the House would be careful not to imitate the former plan, and would not adopt another Resolution to be hereafter carried into effect. He called, therefore, on the House to refuse to express any opinion that night on either of the Resolutions which had been proposed; one of which—that moved by the noble Lord—a great many of the Members had not heard read. It was impossible, indeed, that the House should with propriety express an opinion on those Resolutions. He again conjured the House not to pledge themselves. He remembered, that last year he had refused to pledge himself upon a Motion which had been made by the present Lord Chancellor, calling on the House to pledge itself to take the situation of the slaves into its consideration at an early period of this Session, with a view to their speedy emancipation. But now the Government, of which that noble Lord was a Member, declined to deal with the question, and proposed that it should be left to the House of Representatives in the Colonies. Nothing was so unwise as for the House to pledge itself to any course to be adopted hereafter, and he conjured the House to pause before it assented either to the Resolutions moved by the hon. member for Weymouth or by the noble Lord. He would ask, was the proposition of the noble Lord even consistent with justice? The learned Gentleman who last addressed the House (Dr. Lushington) had intimated to them, that the free civilized population were ready to use their utmost efforts to compel the refractory whites to obey the orders of the Government. He had told them that 70,000 persons—for such is said to be the number of the free-coloured population – were ready, with the aid of the army, to accomplish what was desired. Oh! he lamented to hear such arguments made use of in that House. He lamented to hear the appeal to mere brute force brought forward as one of the arguments to induce the House to give its assent to the proposition now before it. He asked again, was it consistent with justice to subject the sugar cultivated by the free-coloured population to additional duty, because the white legislature, over which they could have no control, refused to obey the Resolutions of the Government? Again, did the noble Lord fully estimate the difficulties which stood in the way of his carrying the Resolution into effect? The noble Lord might subject the estates of particular refractory proprietors to the duties of which he had spoken. That he (Sir Robert Peel) could understand. But was he sure that the legislatures which refused to obey the Orders in Council, were really so much under the control of the proprietors of estates who were disposed themselves to obedience? He had heard much of the iniquity of punishing the inhabitants of certain town-lands in Ireland, by compelling all to pay the fines which were incurred by the offences of a few; but certainly that iniquity would be fully equalled by the execution of the project of the noble Lord with respect to the planters of the West Indies. The noble Lord believed that he held a sufficient control over the planters, through the means of their avarice, when he threatened them with additional duties; but he might find there were more serious and more powerful passions to be conquered. He might find there was pride to be overcome. He might find there was a spirit of resistance to what they believed to be oppression, which would prove too powerful for their legislative enactments, and which would hamper the working of the most energetic Resolutions. There was another absurdity connected with these Resolutions, which the noble Lord did not seem to have taken into consideration. Sugar was said to be the most profitable article of cultivation, as well as the most destructive to the life of the slave. What, then, would be the consequence of the duties which the noble Lord proposed to place on that article? The noble Lord laid a duty which amounted to prohibition on the refractory colonies, and therefore encouraged those which consented to comply with the orders of the Government. What, he asked, would be the consequence of this? Why that the increase of the consumption would increase the labour for the purposes of supply, and the noble Lord would give a premium which benefited the obedient planter, but inflicted additional labour, and, therefore, additional injury, on the innocent slave. Did the House know the ease with which the cultivation of particular crops was changed in the West Indies, and land which grew coffee could be converted into plantations for the produce of sugar? He would give them an instance of it. In the year 1817 the Isle of Mauritius produced only 96,000 cwt. of sugar; but in consequence of certain regulations, passed with respect to the admission of the produce of that colony, in three years afterwards that quantity was quadrupled, being, in the year 1820, near 400,000 cwt. Again, there was another objection to the Resolutions. Every one knew there were certain commercial reasons, advantages and regulations, which made this country the dépôt for all the sugar supplied to the continent of Europe. Had the noble Lord considered well the consequence of depriving this country of all that carrying trade, and making America the storehouse, and its shipping the means of transit, of all the sugar consumed throughout the world? These would be some of the effects of agreeing to the Resolutions; and he therefore asked the House to ponder upon and consider them before they decided. Even if it should be considered just, to deal with the colonies in this manner, he thought that they should not pass the Resolutions immediately, but give notice, on the contrary, to the colonists, that at some future time to be named they would impose such regulations on those which continued refractory. The noble Lord, the Under Secretary for the Colonies, said, however, there were other plans behind this, and he had explained to it the terms of a document which was yet in the archives of the Colonial Office, but which was to be sent out to the colonies, and which their legislatures were to adopt, not in substance, but in every letter, not abating even one. His ears were still ringing with the declarations of the Government on another great and important question? his ears were still ringing with the declaration that the House must take the Bill—the whole Bill, and nothing but the Bill. And yet schedule A had been altered, and schedule B had been altered, and other parts of the Bill would doubtless also be altered; and were they then to be told that there was something behind these Resolutions;—that in agreeing to them they were also agreeing to a document which they had not seen, of the contents of which they knew nothing, except from the noble Lord's statement and which might be doomed to similar alterations? Were they, he would ask, on such a statement, to adopt such resolutions? The noble Lord said in substance, "I feel entire confidence that the document, which the House has not seen, but which is to be sent to the West Indies, and which the Colonial Assemblies are to be told they must adopt, under the penalty of having the Sugar Duties increased—I feel entire confidence, said the noble Lord, that this document will have every support in the House of Commons." He must however say, that if there was any spirit in the House of Commons, they would reject that Resolution, which was but the taking the first step in a course of proceeding of which the issue was to be the sending such a document to an independent legislature. He would say no more, but he would repeat, that, if the House of Commons had any spirit, it would refuse to adopt a Resolution which was to be carried to such an extremity.

Mr. *A. Baring* said, that the question was one necessarily of vital importance to the maritime and commercial interests of the country, and ought not to be looked at with any narrow views. Our naval greatness and our general prosperity depended on preserving all our colonies. At present, too, there was a great want of employment for our people, which made the preservation of them more than ever necessary. Under these circumstances he was sensible of the position which the House had been brought into, by the power exercised by one Association, which, through what he must call a misapplication and gross exaggeration of facts with regard to the colonists, had excited a strong feeling from one end of the country to the other against them. He did not think the enthusiasm of that Association ought to dictate the conduct of the Legislature. He was a disinterested party, never having owned a slave, and therefore considered the subject dispassionately. It was impossible, then, looking at the population of these countries, and their means of living, not to be convinced that we wanted the continuance of every relation with all our colonies, both of America and the East and West Indies; and that none of them could be destroyed without a loss, of which many persons could form no adequate notion. He was not, therefore, one of those to undervalue colonies, as was the habit of some; and if we threw them into the sea, the consequence must be destruction. If it were true, that the whole population of our West-India Islands were truly depicted in the representation, published by the body he alluded to, he would admit that no consideration of national power or wealth could allow any Christian to tolerate such a system. But we should consider whether extirpation were the proper remedy, or whether the end desired could not be better effected by more prudent regulations. The hon. Mover of the Resolution was neither acrimonious himself, nor was his speech; on the contrary, his statements were fair and candid; he reserved all his force for the end; and the Resolution with which he concluded was most violent. He wished the hon. Mover to consider the consequences of that Resolution. That hon. Gentleman admitted that the cultivation of sugar was most onerous; and if the slaves were liberated, it would be impossible that the negro and the white man could live together, because it was out of the question that the whites could possess their property while the others possessed greater force, both from their congeniality to the climate, and their immensely greater numbers. Would the black man then cultivate sugar, which the advocate of his cause contended was the cause of the loss of human life? If the negroes were liberated, where were we then to get sugar? The consequence would be, that we should not only lose the capital already sunk, but our money must go to foreigners for sugar, and we should have no other sugar than that produced by slave labour; for let it be relied on, there would not be one slave the less, and we should lose that power of ameliorating the condition of the negroes we now possessed, which would be totally out of our power with respect to Cuba, the Brazils, and other colonies belonging to foreign nations. He would go still farther, and say, that by this we should renew the slave-trade; because these foreign colonies, in order to keep up the supply, would, in spite of all our treaties with Spain, and Portugal, and France, and all our pestilential establishments on the Coast of Africa, still carry on that trade, viewed with so much horror. Taking away the Jamaica sugar would double its price all over Europe, and the increase of that cultivation would cause the importation of 600,000 or 800,000 Africans, which, from the dangers run, and the loss of lives, would certainly cause three times the number to be, in the first instance, taken away from Africa. In case of the success of the present proposition, it would be better at once to make the slave-trade free, unless you could hermetically seal the ports of that Continent. Philanthropists here were greatly mistaken as to what would be the result of their own measure. It was of extreme importance that this subject should be fully understood, because the people of England were misled by gentlemen, no doubt, pure in their intentions, and through whom, he admitted, great amelioration had been effected. The state of the West Indies ought, no doubt, to be open to inspection; but he much doubted the present sources of what he must call exaggeration, and he, therefore, hoped the House would now, or in another Session, appoint a Committee to satisfy the country, from which 6,000 petitions had come, and to inquire whether these cases of cruelty so much dwelt on were isolated, or really of daily occurrence. It was undoubtedly true that there were cases of cruelty by masters in the colonies, but so was it of masters in England; but could any one say that these cases presented a true picture of English habits. It was a deception to paint these extraordinary acts as the daily habits of life. The whip, it was true, was used, but those who regulated the number of lashes to be given admitted that some discipline was necessary. It would be worth while, he thought, to inquire into that fact and into the possibility of rendering the labour of the slaves lighter in the cultivation of sugar. There was another point upon which he wished for inquiry, and that was, to what the decrease of the slave-population was owing, and its origin. If it were attributable to the sugar culture, some regulations might be adopted as to the hours of labour which would prevent such a waste of life. Another subject of the Committee of Inquiry ought to be whether, supposing they came to the conclusion that slavery ought to be put an end to, free labour could be had; and whether 300,000 or 400,000 negroes, strong and healthy, would not speedily extinguish a few thousand poor emaciated whites. Caution, however, abundant caution was very necessary. A rash step would ruin the colonies and sacrifice all their inhabitants. Nothing, in his opinion, could be more rash or more likely to produce bloodshed; and nothing could be more imprudent than a Resolution of this House, that slavery should be put an end to; for the moment that such intelligence reached the colonies, these poor men would at once act upon it, and they could not be retained in subjection even for one week. All the 5,600 petitions which had been presented on the subject came, like those on another great subject, from one shop. The delusions practised, too, in order to work upon the people, and excite their sympathy, were of a ridiculous nature; and when his noble friend (the Lord Chancellor) stood for Yorkshire, there were persons led about in chains, with blackened faces, in order to rouse the feelings of the people. Of course his noble friend was no party to this—for at most popular elections things of this kind were done. The gentlemen who took up this cause, too, were, of all others, least anxious for information and inquiry; they were satisfied with the impulse of their benevolent feelings, and if any disinterested persons, such as officers of the army and navy, having no connexion with the colonies, gave evidence, as they generally did, favourable to the West-Indians, no pains were spared to show that they must be interested parties. The Bishop of Jamaica had been exposed to the attacks of these zealots because he gave an opinion as to slavery different from theirs. He was sorry that his hon. friend (Doctor Lushington) had contributed to strengthen that charge, though it was, he was persuaded, wholly unfounded, by his observations. That respectable Prelate ought to have an opportunity of rebutting the charge made against him, and the whole subject ought to be inquired into, so as not to leave it at all in doubt. As to the question of to-night, however, he meant to vote for the motion of the noble Lord. The opposition given by the right hon. Baronet (Sir Robert Peel) to the amendment of the Government rather astonished him, for he could not see what difficulty there should be in voting for it. There could be no difference of opinion as to the propriety of enforcing the principle of amelioration in the West Indies. He desired that as earnestly as the most strenuous advocates of the negroes; and if it could not be accomplished by any other means, he would go all the lengths of those Gentlemen. He would wish the right hon. Baronet, then, to say how they could do better than proceed on the principle of the Resolutions of 1823. He was aware of the difficulties to be encountered; but the more he reflected, the less able he was to see how the object of the House could be otherwise attained. It must be attained either by direct legislation or by coercion; and this effect would attend direct legislation, that, if we were to supersede, in one instance, the local legislature, it would appear so degraded in the eyes of the blacks as to lose all respect; and, therefore, the measure ought to be effected through and by the colonial legislatures. The best way, he thought, to enforce obedience to the Resolutions of 1823 was, to threaten them with discriminating duties, and to communicate to the Jamaica Legislature that, if it did not act according to the Resolutions of 1823, the threat would be carried into effect.

The *Attorney-General* had endeavoured to catch the Speaker's eye after the right hon. Baronet had sat down, but he was not sorry that precedence was given to the hon. Gentleman who had just spoken, for the latter speech had completely demolished the positions of the former. The question before the House was best explained by what had been said in reply to the right hon. Baronet—namely, "What were we to do if we were not to abide by the Resolutions of 1823?" The right hon. Baronet had said, that the House was hampered by these Resolutions; but this was the first time he (the Attorney General) had ever heard that asserted. The right hon. Gentleman had himself supported these Resolutions, which were proposed as an amendment to a motion of the hon. member for Weymouth; and if there was any faith in pledges, the right hon. Gentleman ought to feel bound, for he had actually spoken in favour of Mr. Canning's Motion, who had declared himself to be compelled by what he termed a *trinoda necessitas*. Mr. Canning then said, that "there were three possible modes in which Parliament might deal with the people of Jamaica. First, as I have said, it might crush them by the application of direct force; secondly, it might harass them by fiscal regulations and enactments restraining their navigation; and thirdly, it might pursue the slow and silent course of temperate but authoritative admonition. Now, if I am asked, Mr. Speaker, which course I would advise, I am for first trying that which I have last mentioned. I trust we shall never be driven to the second; and with respect to the first, I will only now say, that no feeling of wounded pride, no motive of questionable expediency, nothing short of real and demonstrable necessity shall induce me to moot the awful question of the transcendental power of Parliament over every dependency of the British Crown."* The course Government now wished to pursue was that recommended by Mr. Canning. The right hon. Baronet, too, had astonished him by expressing a feeling of being taken by surprise by these Resolutions; but certainly had not displeased him by wishing that those who had not heard the Resolutions should not vote upon them. He (the Attorney General) was the last person to wish any man to vote who had not heard a subject discussed; and if hon. Gentlemen were accustomed to leave the House, as perhaps might have occurred on the Timber Duties, and if they did not find the debate interesting enough to attend to it, God forbid that he should wish to coerce their consciences by forcing them to vote.

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* Hansard's Parliamentary Debates, New Series, Vol. x. p. 116.

The course of admonition having, then, failed, unless the House were prepared to abandon the Resolutions of 1823, force being out of the question, the matter to be considered was, whether the time was not come for this country to act in the other way pointed out by Mr. Canning. He certainly was surprised at one part of the speech of the hon. Member who had last spoken—the proposition for a Commission of Inquiry, which he considered absurd; for to suppose that there was any well-informed man or woman in England that did not possess a sufficient knowledge of West-India affairs, was a thing not to be imagined. Was the House to go to the West Indies in a body and converse with the slaves; and unless it did that, he did not know what sort of inquiries could add to its present information. The case of Kitty Hylton, which had already been alluded to, was one of the most atrocious cases that had come under the public eye, and committed by one in a station of life whose duty it was to protect and cherish the helpless, was alone decisive of the merits of that system of which it was a perfect sample. It made the blood run cold and the heart writhe with agony. It was not, however, the fault of the local authorities that the crime was not punished, for it appeared that the Attorney-General instituted a prosecution, but the Grand Jury, to do justice, ignored the Bill; and this, if any other proof were wanting, showed the necessity of adopting some coercive measures. The hon. member for Callington, indeed, seemed disposed to ridicule these tales, and treated the House like a terrified woman who had "supped full of horrors." That had generally been the policy of the hon. Member; and on a former occasion, when some frightful stories were brought before the House, the hon. Member said, "Tell me no more of these oft-repeated tales; I am sick of the worn-out names of Hodges and Huggins." The hon. Member then threw doubts on those horrid tales; but even while he was expressing his disbelief, the official accounts of the cruelties committed at Berbice arrived in England, and startled the credulity of the most eager advocates for slavery. Still, however, men's avarice conquered their humanity, and all sorts of pretexts were invented as an apology for not doing justice. It was said, that if the slave-population was set free, we should lose the colonies. But was Mexico lost? And was it not possible for emancipated slaves to live in the same country with their former masters? Mexico, Jamaica itself, and other countries furnished a proof that it was. The government of the blacks in Hayti, too, gave protection to all white residents who conducted themselves properly. Such examples might relieve the House from all alarm, and might convince it that emancipation might be granted with perfect safety to all the inhabitants of the colonies. The alarm afterwards, however, took a different form, and assumed an apprehension for the slaves themselves. If, it was said, you grant peculiar advantages to one island, in that island the people will be worked to death to keep possession of your markets. The apprehension was, that lowering the duties on sugar would, in some places, increase its growth, and harass the people by excessive labour. That fear was purely chimerical, for there could be no doubt, if the country shewed itself in earnest, that the refractory colonies would immediately give way. The fear, too, was inconsistent, for one part of the regulations by which these advantages were to be obtained, consisted in abridging the hours of labour. Gentlemen who threatened the House with resistance from the sugar islands, could hardly be serious, but if they were, it might be some consolation to them to know, that such treasonable schemes would be put down by the free men of colour, who had now the enjoyment of personal freedom, and a share of political rights. The loyalty of the people of colour would be a bridle on the disaffection of the planters. The present proposition exposed its movers to none of the dangers which had been implied, for it gave no pledge; it redeemed one; it performed the promise given long ago, and kept the word the House had sent forth in 1823. The right hon. Baronet, who appealed to the spirit of the House to oppose the Motion, did not inform the House what he himself proposed to do. He had devised no remedy for the disobedience of the colonies, and proposed no other alternative than the three brought forward in 1823. Not a word did he say of the tardy and lingering inquiry which the hon. and learned Gentleman wished to interpose, feeling, probably, that the object of delay was too apparent to be kept out of sight by his ingenuity. He had not adverted either to the *ultima ratio* of Mr. Canning, the crushing the colonies.

The friends of the right hon. Baronet must themselves yet be in the dark as to the course he meant to pursue on the vote he appealed to them to give. For his part he appealed, like the right hon. Baronet, to the spirit of the House; not to the spirit of false pride and wounded self-importance, still less to the spirit of animosity excited, perhaps, by other measures, but gratified by opposing this; but to the spirit of justice, of mercy, of real and honourable consistency; he would not appeal to the spirit of deference to public opinion, though that ought to be cherished in a representative body, but he laid it as a charge to the conscience and honour of every Member to bear his part as an Englishman in wiping off the foulest stain that ever rested on the character of the country.

Sir *R. Peel* explained, that he had appealed to the spirit of the House, because he understood the Under Secretary for the Colonies to require the House to adopt a certain course, on the faith of a document that was yet incomplete in the Colonial Office.

Lord *Howick* had only referred to that order as an illustration of what the Government was disposed to do.

Mr. *Hunt* moved the adjournment of the Debate.

Lord *Althorp* did not rise to oppose an adjournment if any hon. Member, had yet to speak; but, owing to the Reform Question coming on next week, he was afraid there would not be an open day that week.

Debate adjourned till Tuesday week.

EAST INDIA COMPANY'S CHARTER.] Mr. *C. Grant* said, the East India Charter naturally terminated in 1834; but it was necessary, according to the Charter, that notice should be given. This he proposed as a matter of course. The public owed a debt to the Company of 1,200,000*l.* in the three per cents; and this must be paid off at the expiration of the Charter. In bringing forward this subject he had no intention of committing the House, but wished the question of the Renewal of the Charter to remain open. He proposed, therefore, to refer to the 47th and 53rd of Geo. 3rd, by which it was necessary that the debt and the arrears should be paid on the 22nd of April, 1834, and that the Speaker should intimate the same in the usual form to the East-India Company. The right hon. Gentleman accordingly moved the following Resolutions, "That notice be given that the sum of 1,207,559*l.* 15*s.* and all arrears of annuity payable in respect thereof, being the remainder of the capital, stock, debt, or sum due from the public to the United Company of Merchants of England trading to the East Indies, will be redeemed and paid off on the 22nd day of April, 1834, agreeable to the power of redemption contained in the last-mentioned Act."

The Resolution agreed to. And it was ordered that Mr. Speaker do, on the 22nd day of April, 1831, signify, by writing, to the United Company of Merchants of England trading to the East Indies, the said Resolution of this House.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Monday, April 18, 1831.

MINUTES.] Bill. Civil List, read a second time.

Petitions presented. In favour of Reform, by his Royal Highness the Duke of SUSSEX, from Hammersmith, Kensington, Halifax, and St. Luke's, Middlesex:—By the Earl of CARLISLE, from Banf:—By Lord DURHAM, from the Ward of Bridge:—By the Earl of FIFE, from Stannington. By the Earl of HAREWOOD, from two places in Yorkshire, against the Register Bill; from Kingston-upon-Hull, against the monopoly of the East India Company; and from the Worsted Spinners of Yorkshire, against part of the Bill for Regulating the Hours of Working in Factories. By Lord SUFFIELD, from several places in Norfolk, against Slavery.

MINISTERIAL PLAN OF REFORM.] Viscount Hood presented a Petition from the county of Warwick in favour of the Reform Bill.

The Earl of *Warwick* had no objection to receive the petition; but he wished it to be understood that it was signed only by the High Sheriff, and did not represent the sentiments of the whole county of Warwick.

The Earl of Eldon rose to say a few words; but gave way to

Lord Calthorpe, who expressed his regret that a measure of such importance, casting a stigma on both Houses of Parliament should have been brought forward without due deliberation. It was a measure requiring the most patient attention and the greatest care—and this measure, it appeared, had received neither. He regretted, too, that any allusion should ever have been made to the will of the Sovereign, to promote a measure that demanded the greatest coolness. He lamented, also, that it should have been propounded to the people when in a state of excitement, so that they were prevented from forming a cool opinion on the subject. He begged it might be understood, that in making these remarks, he had no hostility to the Ministers; but he wished their scheme, which to him appeared wild and bewildering, to lie over for another Session.

The Earl of *Eldon* was not going to discuss the Reform Bill, when the only question before the House was, whether or not the petition should be received. He wished then to observe, that the whole of their Lordships' proceedings, in relation to the Bill then before the other House, had been more irregular than anything he had ever known in the whole course of his parliamentary life. He would not enter into any arguments on the subject; he would only say, that he hoped their Lordships would take care how such irregular conduct was drawn in to establish a precedent; and to prevent this, when the present motion was disposed of, he would submit a proposition to their Lordships.

The Earl of *Walsingham* declared himself opposed to every kind and species of disfranchisement.

The Earl of *Harewood* did not mean to discuss the subject to which the petition related; but there were some matters connected with the conduct held with regard to that Bill, which he thought it his duty, as a Peer and a subject, to advert to. The Bill had been proposed to the House of Commons by the Government in a complete state of excitement, and when the people were also in a state of excitement; and means had been used to make them come to a conclusion on these important matters which they would not have formed under the influence of a calm judgment. That House, too, had heard—and very sorry he was that it ever had heard—something in the nature of a threat directed against both Houses of Parliament. The other House of Parliament had been threatened with a dissolution, and that House, though not threatened with a dissolution and re-election, had had intimated to it that there was danger to that House in refusing its consent to the measure. He did think that, for any purpose, to make use of such threats was very disrespectful. It was impossible also for the Government to carry on a business of that nature, and not be acquainted with the proceedings of the Press. That Press he respected in common with other men; but, at the same time, if he were a member of the Government, and found that Press advocating his cause in a manner that threatened the existence of the Parliament, and almost the safety of the Crown, could he allow the Press so to proceed? He would not say that he would stop it by coming into collision with its proceedings; but he should think it his duty, in that situation, at least, to disclaim the arguments by which the Press was supporting his cause. A measure of that nature, perhaps, ought not to be brought forward at a time of such discontent; and it was the duty of the Government not to have proposed such a measure, when the country was in a state of excitement from causes external to the country; but they ought to have waited till the country was restored to a state of satisfaction. He was old enough to remember former times. In looking at the subject now moved, he found himself carried back to former times, and general principles. He was old enough to remember what passed after the first French Revolution, and there were many circumstances now in connexion with this Bill, not dissimilar to those of that period. Another remark which he considered it his serious duty to make was this:—he could not conceive that any person except one willing to risk the great injury to the country which the present opportunity of the excited state of the public mind, from extraordinary circumstances afforded, would bring forward a measure of that kind which had not been sufficiently considered. Was this a time to take advantage of that excitement? The noble and learned Lord (the Lord Chancellor) knew the transactions which had occurred in a county with which they were both then connected. He admired that noble Lord's great ability, and knew the great extent of his general information, and he had been anxious to hear his explanation, and know what plan of Reform he recommended. He was pleased then to hear the noble and learned Lord propose a plan which he conceived went to remedy the defects of the Representation. The noble and learned Lord described himself as the champion of Reform, and he had stated, that he would be ready to give one Member to such a number of voters as would enable the elections to be concluded within a reasonable time, and avoid the expense and inconvenience that now accrued from a protracted contest. He spoke, too, of doing away out-voters, and giving votes to copyholders. Those were, he believed, the chief alterations then proposed by the noble and learned Lord. He wished to ask why the noble and learned Lord now agreed to a measure so different from the one he had formerly recommended? Whether that noble and learned Lord had changed his former opinion or not was not for him to say. Such a Bill, though received favourably by the public, had created great confusion throughout the country, and seemed to him a premature and unprepared measure. The more he examined it, the more he was confirmed in this opinion. He begged pardon for saying one word on the subject, but it excited in him great interest, and weighed upon his mind. He believed, that discussion would throw light upon it, and make the people better understand it. He was not an enemy to alterations, if made at suitable times, but he could not support the Reform Bill. The noble Lord concluded by declaring that his opinions were not, either on that or on any other subject formed with a view to popularity.

Earl *Grey* entirely agreed with the noble Earl opposite in one of his remarks, in thinking that the discussion of the question of Reform could not be attended with any disadvantage, because he considered that the measure would gain much by discussion; therefore it was, that to discussion at a proper time he had never shown himself adverse; nay, even at irregular opportunities, although the noble Lord on the cross-bench deprecated discussions on such occasions as unusual and irregular, he did not feel himself called on to oppose their Lordships' entering into a Debate, as there was a disposition in the House to entertain the subject; neither did he think himself precluded from taking the opportunity to vindicate that measure, for which he, in common with his colleagues, stood responsible; and to endeavour to remove, as far as he could, the misapprehensions with which it had been received by some individuals. He was the last man to impute to the noble Lord any desire of popularity, nor did he know any thing that had passed on the present occasion, either by sign or look, that could have induced the noble Earl to enter into a vindication of his own motives in relation to this question. Undoubtedly popularity was not the course which the noble Lord could be justly accused of pursuing; but he must congratulate the noble Earl and the public on at least one good effect of the Reform measure—namely, that the noble Lord, who on every occasion that this question of Reform had presented itself—Reform, either extensive or limited—Reform even confined to the transfer of the abused franchise of a decayed borough to a great and opulent town—that he whom, till this night's Debate, no man in the House or in the country had ever heard acknowledge that under any circumstances, at any time, or in any degree, should any proposition for the amendment of the Representation be assented to, had at length learnt from these discussions that some Reform was necessary, and now professed himself ready to agree to some changes. Amidst all the imputations cast upon his Majesty's Ministers—amidst all the objections offered to their measure—the proposition was at least entitled to the credit of this good effect, that it had produced in the noble Lord's mind at last a conviction that some Reform was indispensable. And even to that Reform intended to be brought forward by his noble and learned friend on the Woolsack (and which he regretted that his noble friend had not been able to propose in the House of Commons, were it only for the sake of seeing the votes upon it), the noble Earl, it seemed, would have consented, although till this moment nobody had ever heard any thing from him but the most violent declarations against Reform generally. He did not intend to go into a refutation of all the noble Lord's observations, but there were one or two things which the noble Earl had stated, that he could not suffer to pass without remark. By the way, the noble Lord had shown by what he stated, that he was not present during the Debates on this question; for if he had attended the discussions, it would have been impossible for him to have stated that any threat or intimidation had been used upon the Ministerial side of the House. With respect to one particular threat alluded to by the noble Lord, he himself, so far from resorting to, had disclaimed it, stating that he neither possessed the inclination, nor was armed with the authority, to use it; at the same time he stated, that he felt fully committed to the measure of Reform brought forward by himself and his colleagues, and that he was prepared to advise the adoption of whatever means could be resorted to in a constitutional way for its accomplishment. With respect to the other more general threat, he wished to know to what extent the noble Lord wished to carry it. He said, that not only had the other House been threatened with a dissolution, but their Lordships had been menaced with the consequences that might ensue from the rejection of the measure. Was it to be described as a threat, if taking all the bearings of the question and arguing upon them, different persons on one side or the other chose to point out the dangers that might result from a decision contrary to that which they believed to be advantageous to the country? If this species of argument were to be objected to as involving a menace, it would preclude the use of an important branch of consideration in the hands of any statesman, and in relation to many subjects where the question was—what did the circumstances of the country require; and what were the consequences likely to arise from the adoption or rejection of any given measure? Was it possible to discuss public measures and avoid mentioning such topics? Was the noble Duke opposite (Wellington) accused of threatening the Legislature, when he stated, three Sessions ago, as one of the chief grounds of the Catholic Relief Bill, the evil effects that had resulted, and were likely to result, from the measure not being granted, and when he held up to their Lordships the dangerous state of Ireland, present and prospective, in the event of its failure? Was the noble Duke accused of menace because he declared that, should that bill fail it would be impossible for the Government to be conducted as heretofore, and that, knowing the evils of war, he deprecated as more distressing than any other the evils of a civil war? These sentiments were not considered as threats, but as fair and legitimate statements, calculated to justify the noble Duke's motives in bringing forward the measure. He was not aware of any thing different from this in principle being said on the present occasion. He did think that there was a strong feeling in the public mind on this question, as indeed the noble Lord expressly acknowledged when he talked of excitement; and certainly every man who considered the state of popular feeling must also take into consideration the effects which the rejection or accomplishment of the measure was likely to produce. Disclaiming any thing like the use of threats in support of the measure, or any thing beyond a fair and constitutional line of argument, and looking at the general state of the country, he contended that it was wise and politic to look to consequences. If danger had been stated on one side as likely to result from the rejection, was not danger asserted by the other to be the consequence of the adoption of the measure? He did not complain of this mode of arguing in the opponents of Reform as involving threats, but was it not as like a threat as the same species of reasoning when employed by the supporters of the Bill? If the noble Lord's complaint applied to the friends of the measure, it was at least equally applicable to its enemies. "But," said the noble Lord, "it was improper in his Majesty's Government to introduce this question at a period of excitement." Now, that some such measure was generally looked for—that the country was calling for it, he certainly thought. He had stated this fact before he came into office, and he had repeated it since. Further, he had stated his firm conviction, that compliance with the public wish in this respect would be of the greatest importance to the public tranquillity; he had stated this, and on this principle he had recommended the measure to his Majesty. The question he proposed was, whether the strong excitement that so generally prevailed was more likely to be increased, and made more dangerous, by attending to the wishes of the people, than by pertinaciously withholding those changes, to which they looked forward as a source of positive and incalculable benefit as well as a relief from their grievances. It was upon this consideration that he had to make up his mind, and feeling that the balance preponderated infinitely in favour of the former alternative, it was on this ground that he and his colleagues had proposed the measure of Reform, and not with a view to increase, but, on the contrary, to diminish the existing excitement, as well as to prevent its recurrence. He had never taken any step to promote the getting up of petitions upon the subject, and whatever endeavours might have been used by persons on the other side of the question, he would say, that there never was a more spontaneous expression of feeling on the part of the people. On no occasion had there been so fervent and unanimous a popular feeling in favour of any public measure. He would now briefly allude to what had been said respecting the Reform

Bill being a hasty and an ill-prepared measure. Whether this were the case or not, would appear when the measure came before the House; all that he could say was, that he had been convinced of the necessity of proposing some measure upon the subject, and both he and his colleagues had given their most anxious attention to the best means of carrying such a measure into effect. The Bill might be appealed to in defence of his conduct; but it was not a hasty measure, it was not brought forward without consideration; nor was it without the most careful examination that the plan had been proposed to Parliament. If he had failed in producing a good measure, it must be attributed to his want of ability, and certainly not to his want of care. The noble Lord had then asked, whether he was aware of the state of the public Press. He had asked whether he read the daily libels, the violent attacks upon all persons opposed to the measure, and the vehement addresses made to the passions of the people in order to excite them. The noble Lord had hardly uttered these expressions, before it was evident that he felt the impropriety of them. Could any man ask him how he could put down the publication of the articles that appeared in the Press? He never had had much communication with the Press at any period of his life, and he now knew no person whatever that conducted a public paper. He must confess, that he had seen much to disapprove of in the public journals, but he had likewise seen much which excited his admiration, and which he believed to be calculated to produce great public benefit. At the present moment the daily Press of the country displayed more ability than it ever had done at any former period. But was he to be called upon to disavow or discountenance what appeared in the newspapers? Really he found that he had a great deal to do, both in that House and out of it—much more than he found it convenient to perform—and if he were to have added to his duties that of coming down to that House and following the noble Lord into all the publications of which he might disapprove, he should say that it was a duty that never had been imposed upon any Minister, and one which he should feel himself unable to discharge. But he would ask, were the libels only on one side—was intemperance, was violence, was abuse, confined to only one side of this question? Could not the noble Lord lay his hands upon newspapers that poured out the most intemperate violence and rancorous abuse upon all persons who advocated the cause of Reform? Were they not vituperated as enemies to the country, as traitors to the Sovereign, and as persons actuated solely by desires to promote their own views? He (Lord Grey) had often been the subject of such attacks, but he had trusted his defence to the good sense, the intelligence, and probity of the public. He had heard other persons complain of being libelled by the Press, and he had been at the same time as much as any man exposed to such libellous attacks, but he thought he had done much better in not interfering. He had trusted his public conduct to public opinion, well knowing that no evil would arise from such a confidence, for truth would ultimately prevail, and compensate for any temporary confusion or inconvenience. He could not but deprecate the most inconvenient mode that was now pursued of getting into long debates when petitions were presented to the House, and he hoped the example of that night would not be drawn into a precedent. He was, however, anxious to discuss the question of Reform upon every possible opportunity, believing that the measure was founded upon the known and established principles of the Constitution, and that the more it was discussed the more it would gain upon the sober and temperate conviction of all men; and this alone was necessary to the complete success of the measure.

The Earl of *Harewood* explained that, in his opinion, there was a difference between opposing a particular measure, and being a party for or against Reform in the bulk. He did not require the noble Lord to control the public Press, but he thought it would be prudent on the part of Government to disavow some of the arguments which the Press advanced in favour of the measure.

The Petition to lie on the Table.

BREACH OF PRIVILEGE,—CASE OF "THE TIMES."] The Earl of *Limerick* said, that he did not rise to prolong the discussion upon the previous question before the House, but he felt himself compelled to get up and address their Lordships in order to rescue a single individual Member of that House, one who had long had the honour of sitting in it—from an attempt to cast a public odium upon his character. The question he was about to address their Lordships upon had nothing to do with a Reform of Parliament, but it had much to do with the privileges of that House, and with the freedom of Debate in both Houses of Parliament; which would be quite a farce if their Lordships were to be called to account every morning by the lords of the Press for what did not meet with their approbation. Was it to be allowed, that a newspaper should publish the Debates, not for the purpose of letting the world know what passed in that House, but of dealing out its abuse and threats against any Member who did not agree with that paper in opinion? For himself, he had only to say, that if any paper used threats against those Members of the Legislature who did not agree in the measure which it advocated, so far as he was concerned, he was determined to resist it. He never rose with greater reluctance or more unpleasant feelings than he then did, and nothing should have induced him to address their Lordships upon the subject if he did not think that his personal character and honour were involved in the question he was about to bring before the House, for the calumny which had been cast upon him by the Press would continue to produce its effect until he took the mode he was about to adopt in order to answer it. Their Lordships might recollect a discussion that had taken place in that House on Friday last, when a noble Lord opposite (the Earl of Rosebery) had presented a petition, praying for the introduction of a system of Poor-laws into Ireland. It would be remembered that he (Lord Limerick) had addressed their Lordships upon the subject of the petition, and that he had differed from some of their Lordships on that occasion. The discussion in the first instance had not been brought on by him, but he had felt it his duty to address a few observations to their Lordships, not only on account of the nature and object of the petition, but because of the observations that had fallen from the noble Lord who had presented it. What he had said on that occasion was reported in a morning newspaper of the following day, and there appeared in the same paper an article or paragraph which reprobated him in the strongest terms—not, it was true, by name, but it described him so that it was impossible for any person to doubt to whom the writer intended to apply his attack. He was the last person in the United Kingdom who would wish to fetter the liberties of the public Press. He had always been favourable to the freedom of the Press, persuaded that it was the great promoter and preserver of the liberties of the country. He would repeat, that he was an advocate of the freedom of the press, and for that very reason he was an enemy to its licentiousness. He would ask noble Lords, what could be more mischievous than the license of the Press that sported with private character, that wounded the feelings of individuals by the basest insinuations or the most insidious calumnies? A great statesman of the last century, when speaking of the Press, had applied to it the terms of a "chartered libertine." If that statesman could now return to life, and see the Press in its present state, in what terms would he not describe it? He would describe it as a chartered tyrant—a tyrant that ruled all things—that pressed every thing under its feet. The newspaper to which he alluded was *The Times* of Saturday last. The article he had to complain of, and for which he should move that the editor of the paper be called to the bar of the House, began by describing him as a "thing," and it proceeded to accuse him of using brutal ridicule and impious scorn. He would put it to their Lordships, whether he should have been allowed to proceed for one moment in addressing that House if his conduct had been such as had been described, or such as to warrant the comments that the writer in the newspaper had passed upon it. It was well known, however, that he had not been interrupted in what he had addressed to their Lordships. The next point he should call the attention of the House to was, the writer in question attacking him as an Irish absentee. The writer said, " Will any man credit that an Irish absentee Lord could say what he is reported to have uttered in the House of Peers last night?" It was a novel doctrine, that because a gentleman refused to reside on one part of his property, and preferred residing on another, he should be accused of betraying the rights of the people, and of being unworthy of any consideration. How many of their Lordships who now heard him had estates in different parts of the kingdom, and they must either be absent from one or the other, or be divided and in different places at once. He was sorry to say, that that part of the south of Ireland in which his property was situated had got from bad to worse. The riotous conduct of the people in the county of Clare had spread into the county of Limerick, and bodies of 600 or 700 men went out in different directions, doing all the mischief they could, and committing every possible outrage. He would tell those who railed against absentees, that it was not so very pleasant as they might imagine for a person to reside amidst a population in such a state of disorder and excitement. It was not very pleasant to live in a country where a man's house must assume all the appearances of a garrison besieged—where the doors must be barricadoed and the windows barred —where a watch must be kept, and a man could not put his foot out at night if he had not an escort of armed policemen, or the protection of a body of troops, and even with this defence he could not be secure from attacks. When a country was in such a state as he had described, some apology might be made for absentees, and men might be allowed to live on other estates than those they possessed in such disturbed districts. He would beg their Lordships' attention whilst he read to them the whole of the paragraph he complained of, in *The Times* newspaper of Saturday: — "Yet mean, cruel, and atrocious as every civilized mind must consider the doctrine that Ireland has no need of Poor-laws, or some equivalent for them—hateful and abominable as is such a screen for inhumanity—there are men, or things with human pretensions, nay, with lofty privileges, who do not blush to treat the mere proposal of establishing a fund for the relief of the diseased or helpless Irish with brutal ridicule, or almost impious scorn. Will any man credit that an Irish absentee Lord could say what he is reported to have uttered in the House of Peers last night, when Lord Rosebery presented a petition, praying that a compulsory tax on land might be introduced into Ireland towards alleviating her poor? We shall not name him, because the House of Lords is armed with a thing called a bar, and other disagreeable appendages. But there are Members of that House who surprise nobody by declaring their indifference to popular odium, especially when they are at such a distance from Ireland as to ensure the safety of their persons." This was the paragraph which had appeared in *The Times*, and that paragraph he treated with the most sovereign contempt. He was well known in Ireland; he had had the misfortune to serve in that country during the Rebellion of 1798, and all such imputations as those now attempted to be cast upon him he could treat, and did treat, with the highest scorn. He apologized for having occupied the attention of the House so long; but he must say, that he hoped he should not be considered to have wasted the precious time of their Lordships, for the case was not merely personal to himself, as it involved the breach of their Lordships' highest and most valuable privileges—the freedom of discussion. He had endeavoured to abstain from all partial and personal statements. He had endeavoured to bring forward the question which concerned the privileges of free Debate, and he trusted that the House would call to the bar the person guilty of writing what he was sure their Lordships could not justify.

The *Lord Chancellor* reminded the noble Earl, that the course to be taken in such a case, where a complaint was made of a breach of the privileges of the House, was for the complainant to give in the paper complained of. Their Lordships would then have the paper read by the proper officer of the House, and it was then that the noble Earl might make what motion he might think fit.

The Earl of Limerick then put in a copy of *The Times* newspaper of Saturday the 16th inst.

The Lord Chancellor, put the question, whether it was their Lordships' pleasure that the part of the paper complained of be now read. The question being followed by a cry of "read, read," the part of the article, as quoted above in Lord Limerick's speech, was read by the Clerk of the House.

The Earl of *Limerick* said, that there could be no question that the paragraph alluded to him, for he was the only Peer that spoke upon the subject that night, except the noble Lord who presented the petition, and to whose observations the article in *The Times* did not apply.

Several Peers cried "Move, move, move;" and

The Earl of *Limerick* then moved, "That the editor of *The Times* newspaper be ordered to attend at the bar of that House to-morrow."

The Earl of *Haddington* said, that before proceeding to move that the editor of the Paper should attend at the bar of the House, it was necessary that their Lordships should determine whether the paragraph in question were a libel or a breach of privilege.

The question was then put from the woolsack.

The *Lord Chancellor* perfectly agreed with the noble Earl that it was absolutely necessary for the House to protect its rights and privileges against all persons whatever, who, by conduct or speaking, or who, by writing or in printed papers, should make those privileges the subject of attack. At the same time he would deliver one humble observation, — an observation uttered to their Lordships in the way of very earnest and not injudicious and, he trusted, not unacceptable, advice—that the subject of all such conferences as that on the brink of which they now stood, brought their Lordships into very painful dilemmas, and ended in regrets that they had ever been embraced. The whole result of all his experience whilst he had held a seat in another place,—a place in which complaints of a similar description were much more frequent than in their Lordships' House,—was, that without any one exception to a speaker, or to what he might call a private person or private Member of the House, in no case did they ever get into a conference of such a description as that now proposed without afterwards repenting of it. He did not see any occasion to strengthen the privileges of the House in the way now proposed. If there were a clear and undoubted case of offence,—if there were a plain and manifest infringement of the privileges of their Lordships' House—if there were an indisputable outrage—an outrage manifest to the House itself—no man could doubt that it was a fit subject of investigation at their Lordships' bar, and no man could hesitate to say, that it was in their Lordships' power to deal with such an offence as they might think necessary for the defence of their privileges, and the support of their dignity. If, however, the conduct of a noble Lord was made the subject of an attack by the Press or otherwise, he could only observe that in citing the offender to the bar, he got into great difficulties by the rules of proceeding, and by the privileges of the House in their strict letter as they now stood. The privileges of the House were part of the law of the land, for they were given to the Houses of Parliament for the sake of the subject, and not for the convenience of the Member. The bare publication of the debates of either House was a breach of privilege, and no man could deny, that it was a breach of privilege to make observations upon the discussions of the House, even if such observations were not unfavourable to the noble Lord to whose speech they applied. Even the saying out of that House that a noble Peer, in the course of a discussion, had said so and so, was a breach of privilege; and to advert even in the most decorous language, and in the most respectful terms, to what any noble Lord had uttered in his seat was, past all controversy or contradiction, a decided breach of privilege. In point of fact, it was notorious that the privileges of that House were so extraordinary, that the very excess of the law, prevented its being put into practice. The privileges of Parliament were excessively cumbrous—they were excessively embarrassing in their application and in their operation; and the consequence was, that whenever a Member of either House called a person to the bar for a breach of privilege, he was obliged to be content at best with an ample submission and a complete apology. The printer of a Paper was the only person legally liable in such cases, and as it was impossible to avoid voting such a publication as that just read to be a breach of privilege, the case would be like a hundred others:—after a long debate upon the subject, every man, and most of all he who originated the proceeding, would wish to get rid of the difficulties, and be anxious that the whole affair should end. This was the result of all experience, not only of his own, but of all others with whom he had talked upon the subject. In his own mind this formed the most sound and exigent reason for inducing their Lordships to be extremely slow to interfere in any case except where the dignity of the House rendered interference absolutely unavoidable. He could not be suspected of approving of the paragraph which the noble Earl had read to the House. The expressions were coarse and indecent; but for his part he had no means of knowing to whom they applied, though the noble Earl had attributed them to himself. He was bound in truth and fairness to confess, that he had daily and weekly seen paragraphs and articles in newspapers ten thousand times worse than that now complained of. Ever since he had come into Parliament, he had seen articles in the Papers ten thousand times worse than this, and yet no Member of the House ever took any notice of them. What person had ever been twenty-five years in Parliament, taking an active part in political discussions, and had not been attacked in a manner that involved a breach of the privileges of the House. He was sure that the noble Duke near him (the Duke of Wellington), as well as himself, about two years ago had been the object of constant attacks, and compared to which, the article now complained of might be considered as the language of panegyric. The present attack was nothing compared to what the noble Duke and himself, as well as many noble Lords who now heard him, had weathered in their political course through the last few years. He had always disregarded these things, both upon principle, and from an experience of the extreme difficulties of meeting them by any parliamentary proceedings at the Bar of the House. He had always made it a rule to live upon his acts, to proceed upon his principles steadily and firmly, and to trust to the country for the defence of his reputation, being convinced that in the end truth would prevail: even if there were very little charity in the world, truth in such cases would always prevail, and prevail with an efficacy proportioned to the time and manner in which she had been suppressed. But he would call the attention of their Lordships to the words of this paragraph—"Will any man credit that an Irish absentee Lord could say what he is reported to have utttered." But where was he reported to have uttered this? To what report did this allude? If the proceeding were persevered in, it would be necessary that their Lordships should have before them not only this newspaper, *The Times* of Saturday last, but all other newspapers, or how could their Lordships ascertain what had been reported of the noble Earl and of his speech upon that occasion? In the situation in which he stood, he certainly should not think himself justified in dividing the House, if the noble Earl should think fit to press to a division; but he, for one, did not deem it right, that after such an abundant opportunity of clearing himself, and which was not at all necessary, the noble Earl should go to such an extreme. He trusted that the noble Earl would not do wrong in listening to him (Lord Brougham), and to his other friends, who advised him not to press the subject further. There never was a time when, in a period of political heat—at a period of great conflict,—and of much animosity,—he spoke of the daily Press—for he saw little more, and not much of that,—but there never was a time, when, under such circumstances of excitement, the daily Press was conducted with more ability or with greater purity. There were two modes by which the Press might attack individuals: there was the public attack, an attack against public conduct, guided upon public principles, and directed to a public object; and there was the method of assailing persons by private slander. He would say, and without fear of contradiction, that the daily Press did not deal half so much in personal private slander, as it had done even so recently as when he had first come into public life. It was of the highest utility to keep this great organ of communicating public discussion to the people as pure as possible; and if their Lordships showed a little tenderness to persons who it was evident had wholly moved upon public grounds, they would not be doing a little service to the community.

Lord *Eldon* rose and spoke in a low tone of voice, but just as he was becoming audible,

Lord *Rolle* exclaimed, "Silence at the bar! if silence is not obtained at the bar, I will—"

After a little confusion occasioned by this sudden interruption,

Lord *Eldon* proceeded. He maintained, that no man living could deny that the publication which had been read to the House was a libel, and the noble Earl (Limerick) was the only person in that House to whom such a paragraph could apply. The paragraph not only attacked him on public grounds, but it charged him with inhumanity to the poor. This was a libel beyond all question, and it was for their Lordships to say, as the case had come before them, whether they would pass it over or not. He regretted to hear it asserted by so high an authority of that House, that when a complaint of a breach of privilege was made by a Member, the House was so weak that it would have to regret if it interfered. This declaration would amount to an absolute fiat to all publications whatever. If the noble Lord pressed his motion to a division, it would be impossible for him to do otherwise than vote for it.

The Earl of *Haddington* perfectly concurred with what had fallen from the noble and learned Lord who had just sat down. It was unquestionably a matter of discretion with the noble Earl whether he would bring forward the question or not, and he was not in the least surprised at his having brought it forward as he had done, for in so doing, he had performed what was not only beneficial to himself but useful to the privileges of their Lordships' House. What had fallen from the noble Lord on the Woolsack was however well worthy of their Lordships' consideration. The noble and learned Lord on the Woolsack had told the House that for many years he had been the object of the attacks of the public Press, and that he had thought it right to pass them over unresented and unnoticed. In the very pre-eminent situation in which he stood he no doubt had done wisely, and had exercised a sound discretion. If, however, the noble and learned Lord had brought forward the case of an attack on himself, which involved the privileges of that House (for many personal attacks did not affect the privileges of Parliament), it still would have been equally possible for him not to have taken up the subject, and in not bringing the offender forward, the noble and learned Lord would in all probability have acted judiciously and wisely. But it was obvious that a good deal of difference existed between the noble and learned Lord, who was always before the public, and a private person who in either House of Parliament might take a part in the debate, and afterwards find that a newspaper had made his speech and his opinions the subject of such scurrilous and infamous attacks. The noble Earl had been held up to public odium for having delivered opinions which were designated as detestable. The noble Earl was held up to public hate, not by name or title, but, nevertheless, he was so designated that it was impossible for any rational man to doubt to whom the language was meant to apply. This was a real and strong infringement of the liberties and privileges of their Lordships, and since the noble Earl had brought it forward, it was utterly impossible for their Lordships to pass the case over, unless they were content to abandon their established rights and most essential privileges of debate. The noble and learned Lord on the Woolsack had said, that there never had been any period of equal excitement, in which the daily Press was so pure, and so free from private slander and from private malevolence. This was the praise that the noble and learned Lord on the Woolsack had thought proper to bestow upon the public Press in its present condition. He would take the liberty of telling the noble and learned Lord, that the present being a period of great political excitement—a period when the passions of men were roused, and the strongest opinions were in violent collision—there were attacks made against individuals by the Press every day. It was notorious that the most virulent and vindictive attacks were daily made by the newspapers against those public characters that took a part against Reform, or who displeased the editors or writers of the Journals. It had become, in his opinion, necessary to show that there must be some limit, not to the liberty, but to the license of the Press. He had seen with the utmost indignation, —he would not say attacks, because they were so covered with artful language, which practised and experienced writers knew how to use, that they could not be called attacks, but he had seen insinuations by which there had been held up to public odium, the highest and most illustrious female in the country—a person whose sex whose indubitable virtues, and whose royal situation ought to have protected her from insinuations of such a nature. Perhaps he ought to apologise for having mentioned the subject, as it had no immediate or direct reference to the matter before the House. He trusted, that since his noble friend had brought the subject forward, he would persevere in his motion.

Lord *Rolle* declared, that the noble Earl's proceeding was most proper, and if he persevered in it he should have his most cordial support.

The *Lord Chancellor* would not protract a discussion that had already gone to such a length. All that he had done was to address his counsel to the noble Earl, but it must be in the recollection of every person who heard him, that at the same time that he had expressed his opinion, or had given his advice, he had added, that if the noble Earl thought proper, after what he (the Lord Chancellor) had said, to persist in his Motion, he (the Lord Chancellor) considered that in his situation he had no choice, and he should not think of opposing the noble Earl's Motion, or of dividing the House. He regretted that the Motion had been made, but now that it was made, he did trust that it would be carried without one single dissentient voice. He heartily wished that more prudence had been observed, and that the House had not been dragged into the case; but since the noble Earl had dragged the House into such a proceeding, all that was left to him (the Lord Chancellor) was, to hope that their Lordships would adopt a prudent moderate, and temperate course. The attacks on an illustrious female that had been alluded to gave him the most unfeigned pain. He was not aware of them, and had never heard of them before. He should feel that he was wanting in his duty, both to his Sovereign and to the public, if he refrained from expressing his censure of such attacks, knowing, as he did, that they were totally unworthy of credit.

Lord *Rolle* said, that no person in public or in private life could be of a more exalted character than the illustrious female who had been so calumniated by the public Press.

The Marquis of *Londonderry* said, that in the very Paper that had contained the attack now before their Lordships, had appeared an attack upon the illustrious person alluded to. The case, therefore, that had been brought before the House was a very aggravated one; and it was the more necessary to visit it with the displeasure of their Lordships. He thought if the noble and learned Lord on the Woolsack had done his duty he would have ordered the Attorney General to prosecute the Paper in question for the libel on the illustrious Lady. He should like to know why he had not. It was not only however on these occasions that such attacks had appeared in the Paper in question, for repeatedly upon former occasions there had been similar attacks, and four or five weeks ago he had observed libellous passages in that Newspaper; and since that, there had been a repetition of the course which the writer well knew must be offensive. He gave thanks to the noble Earl who had brought forward the Motion, and had called the attention of their Lordships to the publication. He was not of opinion that it would have been better to have avoided the subject. He could not agree with the noble Lord on the Woolsack, that the question should not have been mentioned. He thought quite otherwise. Noble Lords, in the libel before them, had been called "things," and he would put it to their Lordships to say whether it was pleasant for any Lord to be called a "thing," in a public Newspaper. This was not all, for not only had their Lordships been called "things," but they were designated as "things with human pretensions." No person could hesitate to say, that the calling of a Peer of that House "a thing," and "a thing with human pretensions," was a libel and a breach of privilege. What? because a noble Lord made a speech upon a public question of great interest, was he to be called "a thing with human pretensions?" This was an outrage from which the public would relieve the Parliament of this country. He would defy any man to read the paragraph and not to direct it to the noble Earl (Limerick.) When he heard the noble Lord on the Woolsack deliver himself on the case, he was so surprised at what he said, that he could hardly help thinking that the noble Lord was himself the writer of the article in *The Times.* He hoped in his conscience that such an apology would be exacted from the person to be brought to the Bar of the House, as would occasion the Press of the country to know that it was not to attack the sacred personages of the monarchy, and that the Parliament of England was not to be brought forward in such an indecent and abominable manner as to call a Peer a "thing with human pretensions."

The Earl of *Limerick* said, that he should not have troubled their Lordships further on this occasion, but for one word which the noble and learned Lord on the Woolsack had used in reference to the Motion which he (the Earl of Limerick) had felt it his duty now to bring forward. The noble and learned Lord had spoken of their Lordships having been "dragged into this proceeding." He wished to "drag" no one into this proceeding. He considered himself as the guardian of his own honour, he was determined to protect his honour, and he conceived it his duty to bring before the House that which he looked upon as an insult on their Lordships. The noble and learned Lord had referred to the first part of the paragraph as the worst; now he (the Earl of Limerick) as an Irishman, would refer to the concluding sentence of it, in which it was meant to be conveyed that he had hazarded in that House an opinion which he would be afraid to express elsewhere. He, as an Irishman, disdained ever to deny any thing that he had said, and he should be always ready to express in one place what he had said in another. He should, without any further observations on this occasion, press his Motion.

The *Lord Chancellor* said, that he had not used the word "drag" in reference to the conduct of the noble Earl on this occasion. What he meant was, that such was the nature of their Lordships' privileges, that when once the motion of the noble Lord was brought forward, the House must take it up as a matter of privilege; and he had instanced the reports of the proceedings in that House as a Breach of Privilege, to demonstrate the severe nature of them if they should be strictly acted upon. That was the sense, and in no other sense, in which he spoke, when he talked of their Lordships being necessarily dragged into a proceeding on this matter, when once it was brought under their notice. He should only add, in reference to what had fallen from the noble Marquis (Londonderry), that he never heard a more extraordinary charge than that which had been preferred against him by that noble Lord. The noble Marquis had asked him why he did not order the Attorney General to prosecute the libels which he stated had appeared in the public prints against an illustrious personage. The noble Lord's charge was a curious illustration of the *non sequitur* principle. He (the Lord Chancellor) having said, that he had never heard, up to that moment of such attacks, up started the noble Marquis, and asked him why he had not ordered the Attorney General to prosecute them? Now, he must repeat, that, having been out of town, he had never before heard of those attacks to which the noble Marquis appeared to allude.

The Marquis of *Londonderry* said, that if the noble and learned Lord had not heard of those attacks before, he had heard of them now, and he trusted that the noble Lord would act upon that information.

Lord *Teynham* said, that having been present at the discussion on Friday, to which the paragraph complained of had reference, he felt it but an act of justice to the noble Earl (Limerick) to say, that nothing which fell from him on that occasion at all justified the attack made upon him in that paragraph. Though he was opposed in opinion to the noble Lord on the subject to which the discussion of that evening related, and though he thought that some description of Poor-laws was necessary in Ireland, he could not refrain from stating, that the noble Lord said nothing then to call down such an attack upon him. He hoped that this matter would afford to their Lordships a solemn warning on the subject of newspaper attacks. It was an evidence of the direction in which the waters flowed. They had seen what had happened in France—they had seen what the newspaper press had done in France, and they should take warning from that. After what they had seen, and after what had been done in France, he thought his Majesty's Government were bound to prosecute the calumnious attacks which proceeded from the public Press in this country.

Lord *Rolle* said, that there were also other attacks proceeding from another quarter, which seriously deserved the attention of the Government. He wished to ask the noble Earl (Grey) whether representations had not been made to him of what had taken place at the Rotunda, and whether his attention had not been directed to publications proceeding from that place, containing the most scandalous attacks upon several of the most illustrious characters in the country, and whether he had not been called upon to put down the proceedings there by the intervention of a police force? Would the noble Earl state whether he had not received the papers containing the attacks to which he alluded?

Earl *Grey* said, that certainly the meetings at the Rotunda, and the accounts of the proceedings there, had been mentioned to him. He reprobated such proceedings quite as much as the noble Lord did. The matter had not escaped the consideration of his Majesty's Ministers, but whether any measures would be adopted on the subject, he did not think himself called upon to state.

Lord *Rolle* wished to know, whether, in the papers which had been laid before the noble Earl, there was one containing an attack upon the Archbishop of Canterbury? He meant to speak out; he never would flinch from his opinion, and he thought it his duty to call the attention, of his Majesty's Government to this subject.

Earl *Grey* said, that certainly such papers had been laid before him, and that certainly there was one of them in which there was a representation made of the character of the Archbishop of Canterbury quite different from the real character of that venerable and esteemed Prelate.

Lord *Rolle* wished to know, for he had a public duty to perform which he would discharge, whether these publications had been referred to his Majesty's Attorney General?

Earl *Grey* said, that the papers were transmitted to the Attorney General; and that having thus discharged his duty, he had nothing further to communicate on the subject.

The question, "That the Printer of *The Times* be ordered to attend at the Bar of this House to-morrow," was then put, and carried.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Monday, April 18, 1831.

Minutes.] The Gallery was this day opened at one o'clock, and in the course of a few minutes every seat was occupied with gentlemen anxious to hear the Debate on the House going into a Committee on the Reform Bill. The Members themselves seemed to participate in the general anxiety: every seat in the lower part of the House was speedily labelled with the name of the Member who claimed it for the evening, and even several of the Benches in the Galleries were appropriated in the same manner. At three o'clock, when the Speaker took the Chair, there were more than three hundred Members assembled.

Bills. Corporate Funds, read a third time.

Petitions presented. In favour of Reform, by Mr. Phillpotts, from Berkeley, Gloucestershire:—By Mr. Mac Namara, from Tulla (Clare), and from the County of Clare:—By Mr. O'Connell, from Monaghan, Macroom, Carrick on Suir, and Enniscorthy:—By Mr. Gisborne, from the Burgesses and Householders of Stafford:—By Mr. Lawley, from Warwick:—By Sir Matthew White Ridley, from Newcastle:—By Mr. D. Bouverie, from Downton:—By Mr. Spring Rice, from St. Paul's, Shadwell, and Hackney. Against being Disfranchised, by the Earl of Darlington, from Saltash. For an alteration in the Beer Bill, by Mr. Phillpotts, from Gloucester. By Lord Eastnor, from Hereford, for an alteration in the Savings Banks Acts:—By Mr. Mundy, from the Officers of the High Peak Savings Bank; and from the Hundred of Scarsdale, against the Registry of Deeds Bill. By Mr. Pringle, from the Bible Society of Edinburgh, against allowing the patent of King's Printer to infringe their privilege of printing Bibles. Against the Cotton Factories Bill, by Mr. John Wood, from owners of Mills at Wigan and Buglawton. By Mr. G. Moore, from the Coal Meters of Dublin, praying for compensation.

Sale of Beer Bill.] Mr. C. Dundas presented a Petition from Newbury, in Berkshire, in favour of Emigration; and a Petition from the Magistrates assembled at Newbury, praying an alteration of the Beer Bill.

Mr. *R. Palmer* supported the prayer of this latter petition, and said, there was a general opinion in the county of Berks, that the drinking of Beer should not be allowed in houses which were rated at less than 20*l.* a year. The Meeting from which the petition emanated, was called in consequence of a circular from the Secretary of State for the Home Department, and the petition expressed the unanimous opinion of all the Magistrates present. It had been said elsewhere, by a noble Lord, that he was favourable to a restrictive clause being introduced into the Bill; and he (Mr. Palmer) regretted much that the noble and learned Lord (the Lord Chancellor) had not proposed such a clause when he was a Member of the House.

Mr. *F. Palmer* said, that beer was now cheaper and better than it was before the bill of last Session passed, and he could not think that any mischief had arisen from the manner in which it was sold. He said this as a Magistrate, and he should be prepared to state the grounds on which he formed that opinion when the question came regularly before the House.

Petition to be printed.

Reform Petitions.] Mr. *John Smith* rose to present a Petition, which he considered to be one of the highest importance at the present moment. It was a petition signed by 9,690 persons—Merchants, Bankers, and Traders of the City of London; and he believed there were not twenty names appended to the petition, which did not come under one of these three denominations. This petition was agreed to at one of the most numerous and respectable meetings ever convened in the City of London; and those who attended it might be said to have been unanimous, for only two persons opposed the Resolutions, and only one held up his hand against them, for the other finding the meeting to be decidedly against him, quitted the room. He might say, therefore, with great truth that the petition expressed the sentiments of the great body of the merchants of the metropolis. It had been said, in the course of their discussions, that the Reform measure had a tendency to produce revolution. He hoped the House would allow him to remind them that those who signed the petition were men engaged in peaceable pursuits, who must be the first victims of revolution, and they, one and all, agreed with him that the Reform Bill which his Majesty's Ministers had introduced would, instead of producing revolution, be a means of protecting their property, and securing to them the fruits of their industry. They prayed, therefore, that it might pass into a law.

Mr. Alderman *Wood* supported the prayer of the petition, and bore testimony to the respectability of the meeting at which it was agreed to be presented to that House. He had never seen a more numerous and respectable meeting.

Petition to be printed.

Mr. Hodges presented similar Petitions from Hythe and Whitstable.

Mr. *Philip Howard* took that opportunity of expressing to the House, that the assurance given by the noble Lord, the Paymaster of the Forces, that the rights of those claiming their freedom by birth or by servitude, should be duly considered, had given great satisfaction to the electors of Carlisle, and the freemen in towns generally. It was on no light grounds that our forefathers held out the elective franchise as the reward of those who, by seven years of patient industry, had given to the State a pledge of their fitness steadily to exercise the duties of a freeman. By preserving the rights of apprenticeship, by making industry, in a limited sense, as well as property, the basis of Representation, all the advantages arising from a mixed Representation, from that "*Concordia discors*" in the elective body, on which the right hon. Baronet, the member for Tamworth, on a former night enlarged, will be retained; without making that further admission, so repugnant to the spirit of the Constitution, to the privileges and standing Resolutions of the House, that nomination is a necessary part of the system. It should be his business to support the noble Lord and the Administration in their efforts to remedy imperfect, and to do away with that "ideal" Representation, which had been so long the bane of this country.

Mr. Hodges presented a similar Petition from the Clergy, Gentry, and Freeholders of the county of Sussex.

Mr. Alderman *Winchester.*—As one of the freeholders of the county of Sussex, from whom the petition just now presented by the hon. member for the county of Kent purports to be, I am desirous of ascertaining to what parts of the noble Paymaster's Bill for the Reform in Parliament its prayer particularly alludes; for, if I understood the noble Lord rightly the other night, he declared his readiness to abandon a great part of the principle of the Bill now before the House [*No, no!*]. Some honourable Members say No, no; but I beg to state, that such is the fact, and I am not alone in that impression, both as regards the opinion in this House and out of doors. I shall now express my dissent from the prayer of the petition, for as it mentions freeholders generally, it might not, otherwise, be understood that I was not at all concerned in forwarding, or in promoting the petition.

Mr. *Curteis* said, that the petition was agreed to at a large meeting of the county. The freeholders of Sussex were most decidedly in favour of the measure his Majesty's Ministers had brought forward. He also approved of the Reform measure, and hoped that Ministers would stand firmly by the Bill, and dissolve Parliament immediately if they could not carry it. He did not mean to say, that the meeting was attended by all the freeholders of the county of Sussex, for, from the size of the county, it was difficult to procure a meeting of that description. This fact, however, he thought, afforded an additional argument for the Reform which the Government contemplated, and he again implored them to persevere.

Mr. *Shelley* was bound to say, that the meeting of the county of Sussex, at which the petition was agreed to, were nearly unanimous with respect to the Reform Bill; but he must take leave to say, that the meeting could not be very well said to express the opinions of the freeholders, for he did not think there were forty freeholders present. He mentioned this, without wishing to found any argument on it, but merely as a fact worthy of notice. With respect to the Bill itself, he would merely say, that he still continued to think it would be productive of the most disastrous consequences; and he repeated his opinion, that the freeholders of the county of Sussex were not favourable to it. A person at the meeting, in reply to some comments of his on the Ministerial Budget of Blunders, had used a couplet in their defence, which he was then happy to repeat for their benefit to the House—

"If to their share some fiscal errors fall,
Look at their Bill, and you'll forget them all."

Lord *George Lennox* was confident that the great majority of the people of Sussex were favourable to Reform; and as an instance of the unanimity of the opinions of the freeholders on the subject, he had seen upwards of 400 assembled in the room where the meeting was held.

Mr. *Cressett Pelham* also denied, that the freeholders of that county were unanimous in their approbation of the Reform measure. He was now a freeholder of that county; but if the Bill passed, he should become a dependant on the vile menials of the Government.

Petition to be printed.

Mr. *E. S. Cooper* presented a Petition from the inhabitants of Taunagh, county of Sligo, against the Reform Bill. The petitioners complained of the injury that had been already done to the Protestant Church of Ireland, by passing the measure of Catholic Emancipation, and they implored the Members of that House to stay their hands and search their hearts before they now passed that Bill falsely called the Reform Bill; for if they did so, it would produce the final ruin of the Protestants.

Mr. *O'Connell* said, that this petition was got up under the influence of one family, and was principally signed by Orangemen, and persons connected with them. He thought it a strange argument of the hon. Member and the petitioners, that the prosperity of the Protestant Church depended on corruption and the continuance of the rotten boroughs, for that was the plain construction of what they prayed. For his part, he knew that the inhabitants of the whole of the county of Sligo, particularly the Dissenters were favourable to Reform. The meeting at which the petition was agreed to was a packed and a private one, but if there was a public and an open meeting, and he challenged the hon. Member to call one, the result would be very different.

Sir *J. Yorke* did not think that the boroughmongering system was necessary to support Protestantism in Ireland—and the petitioners did not say so; but he thought that if sixty-two Members were taken from England, and five added to Ireland, the effect would, by lessening the proportions of the Members for England, compared with Ireland, have a tendency to make the Catholic interest predominate in the latter country.

Mr. *E. S. Cooper* said, that not being an Orangeman he did not know whether the petition was signed by Orangemen or not, but he knew it was most respectably and numerously signed, and he believed it expressed the opinions of the great majority of the inhabitants of the town it came from.

Mr. *George Dawson* would repeat the opinion he had before given, viz., that if the Bill passed into a law, it would completely overthrow the Protestant interests in Ireland. The hon. member for Waterford (Mr. O'Connell) might delude himself with the belief that the Protestants were not adverse to the measure, but they were now roused, and before a fortnight he would have an opportunity of seeing an expression of their sentiments. The hon. member for Waterford had spoken of Sligo as being a rotten borough, because it returned as its Member a person connected with a family in its neighbourhood. He (Mr. Dawson) thought that the county of Waterford, which sent to that House a person unconnected with it by any tie of birth or property—by any tie except that agitation of which he was the supporter, must be considered much more a rotten borough than the town of Sligo. If, then, comparative claims were considered, he thought that the hon. Member who sat for Sligo was much less open to the charge of being a boroughmonger than the member for Waterford. He would repeat, that the more he considered the Bill, the stronger were his objections to it, and he was determined to oppose it in every stage.

Mr. *Chapman*, as one of the Protestant Members who had voted in favour of the Bill, was satisfied that it would support, rather than injure, the Protestant Church. The objection to the present system was not that the family of the member for Sligo influenced the return of the Member for that borough, because there was no reason why his influence should not be as good after the Bill passed as it was now. What the Bill destroyed was, the power to nominate the Member, and to sell that nomination to the highest bidder.

Mr. *George Dawson* considered it disorderly in any hon. Member to speak of any borough as bought and sold.

Sir *J. Newport* was not of opinion, that the hon. member for Westmeath had been guilty of any disorder. It was but too notorious that many boroughs were bought and sold; and he could bring proof that this identical borough had been bought and sold. If his right hon. friend, the member for Harwich, thought the security of the Church rested on such grounds as those which he had stated, the security of that Church must be frail indeed.

Mr. *Cutlar Ferguson* observed, that unless boroughs were bought and sold, he should like to know what that House was lately debating upon for seven successive nights. It was on that occasion argued by the opponents of the Bill, that it would shut the monied interest, or, in other words, those who could purchase boroughs, out of the House.

Mr. *O'Connell*, in answer to the remarks of the right hon. member for Harwich, on the nature of his connection with the county of Waterford said, that he had that very day received a letter, signed by twenty-one Magistrates of the county of Waterford, expressive of their opinion that his services in Parliament entitled him to be again returned the Representative of that county.

Mr. *G. Dawson* observed, that with respect to the general assertion that boroughs were to be bought and sold, that was a fact of which he knew nothing. If, however, the hon. Baronet could prove that the borough of Sligo had been bought and sold, he had neglected his duty by not proving it at the bar of that House.

Mr. *Callaghan* said, that as the Protestant mind in Ireland had been so much referred to, he would take the opportunity of stating, that from what he knew of it, there were none of his Protestant constituents that did not agree in the propriety of Reform. None of them had any sympathy for the rottenness of the system of boroughs in England, which by the Reform Bill were to be disfranchised; nor were they against that part of the measure which the hon. and gallant Admiral (Sir J. Yorke) had referred to, by which the number of Members from Ireland was to bear a greater proportion than they had heretofore to the whole force of the House; but their objection to the measure was to that part of it affecting Ireland, which would, they thought, give a greater number of Catholic electors than now existed in towns and cities, by giving the franchise to householders of so low a scale as occupied 10*l.* houses. He was warranted in stating this, because the Protestants of Cork had a public meeting on the subject, and the House would see, when the hon. Baronet, the late Secretary of State, should have the opportunity of presenting their petition, that this was their feeling.

Petition to lie on the Table.

Mr. Pearse presented a Petition from the Corporation of Devizes, against the Parliamentary Reform Bill.

Mr. *Watson Taylor* supported the petition, and said, that although he was aware that he risked popularity by opposing the Bill, he had opposed it, and should continue to oppose it. There was not a more independent borough in England, and though he saw no reason to believe that he should not be returned for it under the proposed Bill that could not make him regard the Bill otherwise than as most mischievous.

Mr. *Long-Wellesley* expressed his conviction that the petition which he had presented from Devizes spoke the real sense of the Corporation. Whether the borough were independent or not; it appeared that the patronage of Lord Sidmouth was very successfully used in it.

Mr. *Watson Taylor* observed, that the petition which had been presented by his hon. colleague was unanimously agreed to. It was signed by every member of the Corporation.

Mr. *Long Wellesley* stated, that nine members of the Corporation had signed the former petition.

Mr. *Estcourt* denied that Devizes was under the patronage of any human being. It was true, that it had been formerly represented by Lord Sidmouth, whose virtues and merits would never be forgotten; but no undue influence of any description was exercised in the borough.

Mr. *Bayntun* had no intention of addressing the House upon the petition which had been presented from Devizes, had it not been observed by one of the hon. Members that the petition had been unanimously signed and agreed to. Now he felt himself in a particular position; he had the honour of belonging to that Corporation, and although he had received no intimation of the meeting — much more, had not attended it—he had heard, and heard with satisfaction, that many of that very corporate body were friendly to the Reform Bill brought forward by his Majesty's Government; and that in the very Corporation itself, he might be borne out in stating, that a very strong feeling existed in its favour. With reference to the town, he knew that the measure was hailed with the greatest satisfaction by all its inhabitants, and as a member of that corporate body, he should be very unwilling to withhold the elective franchise from his fellow-townsmen, many of whom were of the highest respectability, though unconnected with the Corporation. The petition, therefore, could not be considered as expressing the unanimous opinion of the Corporation.

Mr. *Hume* said, that it was very natural that a corporate body, having a monopoly of the election for their borough, should wish to keep it. It was not, however, on the petition which had just been presented that he rose to speak. But it having been stated, and generally circulated, that a large class of persons in Lancashire were opposed to the Parliamentary Reform Bill, he rose to say, that he was authorised to state, that so far from any opposition to that measure, there was a unanimous feeling throughout Lancashire in favour of the Bill, which was hailed as a great and important boon to the people. At every public dinner, even at those of which the hon. member for Preston partook, the health of his Majesty's Ministers, and success to the plan, were toasted. If there was a single individual present opposed to the measure, it was, perhaps, the hon. member for Preston. It was of the utmost consequence that that important body, the operatives of Lancashire and elsewhere, should not be supposed averse from the plan because they did not immediately participate in its provisions. They felt that their character was affected by the imputation; they were anxious that it should be known that such was their feeling, and if it were necessary to prove the fact, meetings would be held for that purpose from one end of Lancashire to the other. It was true, that attempts had been made to dissatisfy them with the measure. Questions had been asked—if the Bill contained all they wanted?—if they would not rather have Universal Suffrage? Why, let that question be put to him, and his answer would be, that he would rather have Universal Suffrage. But was he to set up his opinion on that point against the united opinions of that House and the country? That would indeed be dictation. But, although the Bill did not comprehend Universal Suffrage, it was so valuable and important a measure, that he should be most unworthy of his seat in that House if he did not support it. He believed it could be proved to demonstration, that the statement which had been made by the hon. member for Preston, and at which the right hon. and hon. Gentlemen under him were so rejoiced, of the disinclination of the working classes in Lancashire and elsewhere to the Bill, was exceedingly unfair towards them. It was his duty to state that, as far as he was informed, they had no feeling whatever of the kind.

Mr. *Littleton* said, that he also had been desired to give the flattest contradiction to the assertion that the working classes were not, to a man, favourable to the Reform Bill. He believed that on no occasion had a greater feeling of unanimity existed among them. It was impossible that what passed there (in the House of Commons) should not find its way out of doors. With reference to the statement which had been made in the House by the hon. member for Preston, of what had taken place at Durlaston, he had received a letter from a highly respectable Magistrate and Clergyman, parts of which he would take the liberty of reading to the House. The hon. Gentleman proceeded to read to the following effect:—"I saw yesterday, by appointment, several very respectable inhabitants of Durlaston, who heard what Mr. Hunt said there. They declared that they did not hear from any one any thing like opposition to the Bill, nor did they believe that one inhabitant of Durlaston objected to the Bill. On the contrary, they stated that the members of the Political Union at Durlaston (the hon. Gentleman said he regretted to use the expression) were disgusted with Mr. Hunt's proceedings. Mr. Hunt asked some of the inhabitants, 'Do you return any Members near here?' They answered, 'At Coventry and Tamworth.' 'How far are you from Coventry?'—'Thirty miles,' 'How far from Tamworth?'—'Twenty miles.' 'Go, then,' said Mr. Hunt, 'twenty thousand in a body, and do not let those places return the same Members that they returned at the last election, but make them return such as will second me in the House. Take hold of the Electors, and try to persuade them. If that will not do, squeeze them hard; if that will not do, apply the tourniquet to them, and see if that will have any effect'" [*"No, no!" from Mr. Hunt*]. He would not positively assert that the hon. member for

Preston said what he had just read, but he was authorised to declare that he had said it, and he should believe the statement until he heard it flatly contradicted. The letter proceeded to say, that the writer had been at Birmingham the day before, and that he had there received a similar contradiction of the statements of the hon. member for Preston with respect to that place. He (Mr. Littleton) had received three or four other letters, all to the same effect. The fact of the feeling of the Political Union at Durlaston being the reverse of what it had been alleged to be by the hon. member for Preston, was proved by the hand-bill preparatory to their dinner. It was to the following effect:—"Full, free, and fair Representation, the birth-right of Englishmen. The members of the Durlaston Political Union will dine together at the King's Head on Monday, April 4th, to celebrate the triumph of the glorious cause of Reform in the hands of our beloved Sovereign and of his enlightened Ministers."

Mr. *Hunt* said, that in the first place, as to what had fallen from the hon. member for Middlesex, he could, perhaps, in some measure confirm it. But as to what had been stated by the hon. member for Staffordshire, he had no hesitation in declaring that it was mainly unfounded. The manner in which he happened to be at the Durlaston meeting was this. Being at Birmingham, on his way to Preston, he was invited to go to the Meeting of the county at Warwick; but having no property in that county he declined the invitation, and determined to stay at Birmingham. Two of the members of the Political Union of that place—Mr. Weston, a highly-respectable individual, and another—told him that they were going to Durlaston, and that if he liked, they would take him thither in their carriage, and bring him back. Accordingly, he went; and in consequence of his presence, instead of fifty, the number for which the dinner was ordered, three hundred attended. This accession of numbers certainly occasioned rather short commons. He was invited to address the party, which, after there had been a discussion of about two hours in length, on the Bill, he did. He certainly put questions to the persons present; they being principally working men, and not persons having houses of 10*l.* a year, qualifying them to vote under the new measure. He admitted that he put leading questions to them; and he appealed to the hon. member for Staffordshire, whether it was not usual, even in Courts of Justice, to put leading questions for the purpose of eliciting the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth. He asked them if they were contented with the proposed system of Representation? A large proportion of them said, they were not. He asked them whether, as they were not to be allowed to choose their own Representatives, they were satisfied with delegating that power to individuals holding houses of 10*l.* a year? They said, certainly not. After dinner he was invited to address a great multitude, assembled partly to hear the members of the Political Union of Birmingham, and partly to hear him. He was told that they amounted to 10,000 persons. He had formerly stated to the House, that in the first instance the meetings of the people were unanimous in favour of the Bill. He had even said that they were running mad upon it. The hon. and learned member for Boroughbridge had called the Bill the Russell Purge. That might be the name for it as respected the boroughmongers, but it must have another name as it respected the people. The noble Lord had knocked off 120 Members for boroughs, had put them in an oven, and had converted them into powder, which he had administered to the people, and which should be called Boroughmongering and Love Powder. By that powder the people had been deluded. But now, as far as he had had an opportunity of ascertaining the opinions of the people of Lancashire, there were many parts of the Bill of which they did not approve. For himself, he approved of knocking off the boroughs; but he always contended for giving the right of Representation to the whole people; and he had given notice that, when the Bill went into the Committee, it was his intention to move that those who were excluded from the elective franchise should be exempted from paying taxes, and from serving in the militia. He had merely put the question to the people, if they gained any thing by the Bill? their answer was, No. On asking them what they expected to gain by it? they said, nothing whatever. It was the same at Manchester. The hon. member for Middlesex said, that wherever he (Mr. Hunt) had dined at public meetings in Lancashire, the health of his Majesty's Ministers was drunk. In no instance had he dined at any of the public meetings alluded to by the hon. Gentleman. He had been invited to an evening party, where there was nothing to eat, and there certainly the health of his Majesty's Ministers had been drunk. "Here, said he, is a petition signed by 4,000 out of the 7,000 electors of Preston in three days, and this confirms every part of my statement." He then stated that he had letters from all parts of the country, as well as the hon. member for Staffordshire, and all these letters denounced the measure. Of these he would read one, which came from Paisley, notwithstanding the assertion of the hon. member for Kircudbright, that all Scotland was in favour of the Bill. This letter came from the Chairman of a Reform Meeting held in Paisley, and stated that the feeling of the country might be appreciated from the fact of the proportion between the number of qualified and unqualified householders. Throughout Scotland the proportion of the qualified to the unqualified was as 1 to 10½ or 11; in Edinburgh it was as 1 to 3; in Glasgow as 1 to 4½; in Aberdeen as 1 to 7; in Paisley as 1 to 14; in Dundee as 1 to 6; and in Leith as 1 to 4½. Was this, he asked, the free and equal Representation which they were told the people was to have? For the hon. member for Middlesex he entertained a very great respect; but he did not consider him half so useful as he was formerly, since he had become a Ministerial Member. He was now content with recording his objection to a vote, whereas, formerly, he would have insisted upon a division. In fact, he was much better as an Opposition than as a Ministerial Member. Still, however, he thought the Ministry had gained a great deal in having so industrious, and laborious, and honest a supporter. There was a speech of his to which allusion had been made—he meant that which had given so much displeasure at one side of the House, and given such satisfaction on the other—that he understood the hon. Members on his side had had it printed. This speech, too, had been received with great disapprobation by the Press. He had got a great trouncing from the Press. And what he would call the politicians of London were very much displeased with him. It was, he was well informed, up to the last fortnight, the custom at all the public-houses, smoking-rooms, and other places of nightly meeting, frequently to drink his health; but since he made that speech, in every instance, and in every house, a vote of censure had been passed upon him. But though these votes had been recorded against him, and although the Press had attacked him, should he, as the Representative of a free people, be afraid to express his conscientious opinion?—No! As for the Press, he asserted there had been a conspiracy of the Papers in favour of the Bill. He hoped hon. Members and the Press would understand him. He said there was a conspiracy—not of the Papers with the Ministry—but of the Papers amongst themselves. Such was the popularity of the measure among the buyers of Newspapers, that they could not have been sold if they had not advocated Reform. Now he received cheers from the other side of the House. It was said, that he had sold himself—and this not to those who were in favour and place, but to those who had no longer any thing to give. He should be glad to know to whom it was said he did sell himself! And he could tell the House and all the hon. Members of it, there was but one price by which he could be bought—there was that one, and but that one way of gaining him—it was by giving Representation to the whole people. He hoped that more time would have been allowed for the presentation of petitions; as he had several to present, but as he could not present them, he begged leave to read a short extract from one in his possession. There was in this petition authority which would bear him out. He wished the House and the Press to understand, that when he spoke of the people he spoke of the whole people, and not of those merely who were to be represented; and he had no hesitation in declaring it to be his honest and decided opinion, that the unrepresented portion of the community were dissatisfied, and would be still more so when they had time for reflection. He would read an extract from *The Leeds Patriot*, which afforded an honourable exception to the conduct of the Press in general towards him. The hon. Member then reverted to Preston, and said, he was bound to admit that another petition had been got up in Preston, and was in the hands of his colleague; but the Meeting from which it emanated was held in a room that could not hold more than 600 persons, and not one-fifth of the electors were present. He added, that the Chairman refused to put a motion adverse to the Bill. He then read the extract from *The Leeds Patriot*, which stated, that the hon. member for Preston had done honour to himself and his constituents by expressing the genuine opinion of the working classes, now that they had had time to consider that the Bill was decidedly not popular amongst the producers of the country's wealth, and that it was evident the Press had combined to misrepresent or suppress the opinion of the hon. member for Preston, in the same manner as formerly complained of upon the part of Mr. O' Connell. For his part, he did not complain of the Press. Every thing could not be printed, and he had his fair share. But it was not the first time he had had the whole Press against him, even without one bare exception, because he advocated the same principles which he did then. In conclusion, he repeated his assertions respecting the unpopularity of the Bill with the working-classes, adding at the same time, that he had no doubt it would be carried.

Mr. Alderman *Waithman* said, that a deputation of the Spitalfields weavers had waited upon him, and they stated that they had read with astonishment the report of Mr. Hunt's speech in the House of Commons.

The *Speaker* called the hon. Member to order. It was irregular to refer to the report of any hon. Member's speech.

Mr. Alderman *Waithman* wished it to be understood by the House, that the Spitalfields weavers disclaimed with indignation the sentiments which had been attributed to them by the hon. member for Preston. The deputation stated, that the Spitalfields weavers, in common with the rest of the country, approved of the plan of Reform, and that they had prepared a petition, signed by 5,500 operative weavers, expressing their approval of the Bill. He had heard the hon. member for Preston called the worst enemy of Reform, but he considered the hon. Member its best friend. His manner of proceeding had opened the eyes of the public, and they were surprised to see united the advocate of Universal Suffrage and the defenders of the system under which Gatton was bought and sold. ["*No, no.*"] Hon. Members might cry out "No," but the fact was notorious.

Lord *Stanley* said, he rose to remark, that the hon. member for Preston had returned no answer to the question put by the hon. member for Staffordshire. He had himself asked the question in private to-day, whether Mr. Hunt had, at Manchester, used the language attributed to him respecting the Wigan election; and he was told that Mr. Hunt had not used exactly the words printed in the papers, but something very like them. The words attributed to the hon. Member, about the Wigan election, were as follows:—"The first day of the Wigan election, let every man in Manchester, between the ages of fifteen and forty-five, march over to Wigan, to accompany Mr. Potter, to the number of 20,000 or 30,000 men, and he would have them go and exercise what he called a constitutional influence over the electors of Wigan. 'If you meet a voter (said Mr. Hunt), say to some ten or twelve of you, take care of him, and see if you can't persuade him to vote for Potter. Use kind entreaties; and if these fail, I would advise you to take him by the arm, and give him a gentle squeeze, and let one take hold of his other arm (and I know you Lancashire men give something like a feeling squeeze when you like), and if he still refuses, I would not say I would pull his arms off, but I would very near do it. That is what you are called upon to do, and my opinion is, that if you don't do it, you will never get this Reform or any other.'"—He asked if this, or anything like it, was fit language to be used by a Member of that House? Again, about the expected election at Manchester, the hon. Member had been reported to say—"He had been asked, supposing the Reform Bill should pass, who were the people of Manchester going to send? [A voice from the crowd: 'Hugh Birley,' accompanied by groans and cries of 'No, no.'] He had been told of him before, but on his expressing a desire to know who he was, 'don't you know,' said some one, 'that's Captain Birley, who came up to the hustings in August, 1819.'—'What!' exclaimed Mr. Hunt, will the people of Manchester send a master butcher of Peterloo to represent them in Parliament [no, never]? Those who were not ten-pounders would, he thought, take care of that. If they could be guilty of such an atrocity, he would retire from public life, and never enter Lancashire again; and he would tell them that, were he a Manchester man, rather than submit to it, he would lay half Manchester in ruins. Instead of having fourteen lives lost, he would have half the blood in Manchester spilt before he would submit to such a degradation." He had asked the hon. Member if he had used this language, and he replied, that, generally speaking, it was much exaggerated; but, in answer to a particular question, respecting the portion of his speech which referred to Manchester, he acknowledged that he had said something very like it. He declared that if the hon. Member had said anything like it, he had disgraced himself and his country. He begged pardon for wasting the time of the House with reference to a speech delivered out of doors, but he felt it his duty to do so. The noble Lord then proceeded to allude to a Turnpike Bill, upon the conduct of which Mr. Hunt had commented in one of his speeches, and affirmed, that upon a small foundation of truth, the hon. Member had raised a huge structure of misrepresentation, which he could not attribute either to mistake or misunderstanding. He farther stated, that he was informed, that when a person asked in the crowd where was Wood, Mr. Hunt, shrugging his shoulders, replied, "Ay, indeed, where was Wood when he ought to be attending to your interests?" when the hon. Member well knew that Mr. Wood had attended on the Committee.

Mr. *Hunt* stated, that he had told the noble Lord the expressions in the paper from which he had quoted were much exaggerated, but that he might see something very like what he had said in *The Manchester Times.* He had omitted to answer the hon. member for Staffordshire's question. He had now to say, that the statement in the Clergyman's Letter was a gross exaggeration. He did ask the people if they would not go in great bodies and exercise a constitutional influence, by endeavouring to prevail on the electors to vote for the friend of the people, and he had spoken of a gentle squeeze, but all that about the tourniquet and taking off their arms, was gross exaggeration. He denied that he had ever spoken of Mr. Wood except in terms of the utmost respect.

Mr. *Littleton* affirmed, that he was authorized by the gentleman who wrote to him to state, that a number of respectable tradesmen were willing to verify the statement on oath.

Petition laid on the Table.

Parliamentary Reform Bill—Committee.] Mr. Speaker called on Lord John Russell—his Lordship rose; but

Mr. *W. Duncombe* presented himself, and claimed the attention of the House, stating that he had four petitions, which he had been particularly requested to present before the Bill proceeded further.

Mr. *Speaker* said, that the time for presenting petitions having passed by, unless the hon. Member was quite sure the course he was pursuing was perfectly consonant with the feeling of the House he was not in a situation to make a Motion.

The hon. Member gave way to

Lord *John Russell*, who said, that at that time of the evening he felt it impossible, if he consulted his duty, to accede to the request of the hon. Member. If, indeed, that hon. Member alone had been desirous of presenting petitions, he should certainly yield to the hon. Member's wishes; but he felt that if at that moment he gave way, and consented to the further presentation and discussion of petitions, considerable time would be employed, which had better be devoted to the discussion of the measure itself. Being then in possession of the House, and it being the desire of the House that he should proceed, he would go on to move the Order of the Day for the House to go into a Committee on the Reform Bill. The House was then ready to enter into the consideration, in Committee, of the Bill for the amendment of the Representation. As he had before stated, that there were certain alterations which the Government intended to propose, and as his announcement of that circumstance had led to much observation and remark, which he felt he could not pass by without answer, he thought it incumbent on him to explain these alterations, which he supposed would satisfy the House, both that the original principle on which the Government had acted, had been adopted fairly and impartially, and that in the proposition for making the alterations which they now offered to the consideration of the House, they did not abandon but carry into effect the principle on which the Bill was founded. Before he entered on this matter, however, he could not avoid comparing the situation in which he had stood in the former and on the present occasion. When he first announced the measure of Parliamentary Reform, he did it in the hope and the belief that it would be found adapted to the wants and wishes of the country. Whatever anxiety he might still feel upon the subject was mixed with pride and satisfaction, that the measure then proposed by his Majesty's Ministers had since been stamped and sealed by the approbation of the people, for whose advantage it was solely intended. As a proof that it was so, he might quote the somewhat curious statement of the hon. member for Preston, who had said that it was impossible but that the Press should advocate the Reform Bill, for if they did otherwise they would be left without readers. The approbation of the people had been further shown by the petitions sent up to that House in favour of the Bill from the Corporations, on which they were accused of committing robbery, and from the boroughs, towards which they were said to be guilty of spoliation. He would not say what the number of petitions on both sides was, but those in favour of it from Corporations and boroughs, which they were told were to be robbed, were more numerous than those against it. At the head of the Corporations in favour of the Bill were London, Canterbury, Portsmouth, Gloucester, Lincoln, Derby, and Bedford. They were well aware that they held their privileges by law, but they thought they would not be acting for the good of the country if they opposed the measure, and they were ready to give up an exclusive power when they saw it was for the advantage of their fellow-subjects. He should, as a still greater proof the popularity of the Bill, have recourse to of a calculation which, he confessed, he had made in imitation of the right hon. Baronet opposite (Sir R. Peel). The right hon. Baronet was very fond of quoting speeches which had been delivered on former occasions. He could not, therefore, complain if another followed the example which he had set when he brought forward the Catholic Relief bill. On that occasion the right hon. Baronet, when defending himself against the attacks made on him for introducing the Catholic measure as a Cabinet measure, pleaded the growing force of public opinion, and proved that plea by a reference to the opinions of the largest portion of the constituency of the country. Among other reasons then stated by the right hon. Baronet for supporting that question, he gave the following: He took, as a test of the public feeling upon it, seventeen counties and twenty-two towns. The right hon. Baronet, according to the speech sanctioned and corrected by himself, said that this was a practical and constitutional way of ascertaining the sense of the people. He was now going to adopt the same course, and he should go over the very same counties and towns referred to by the right hon. Baronet on the Catholic Question. To take, for instance, the Members for seventeen counties who voted on the second reading of this Bill, there were twenty-seven in favour of it, and only nine against it. This list of counties included Yorkshire, Middlesex, Devonshire, Kent, Lancashire, Surrey, Somerset, Norfolk, Dorset, Stafford, Essex, Hampshire, Lincolnshire, Suffolk, Gloucestershire, Wiltshire, and Warwickshire. In the list of the Members for the large towns he had the same reason to be satisfied with the result. He took the same twenty-two large towns as the right hon. Baronet, one of which (Colchester) had only one Member in the House at the time the votes were taken, and out of that list, containing forty-five Members, he found that thirty-nine had voted for the measure, and only six against it. Among these towns were London, three for, and one against the Bill; Westminster, two for, Southwark, two for, Liverpool, Bristol, Norwich, Nottingham, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, Leicester, Preston, Exeter, Hull, Coventry, York, Chester, and Colchester. Of eighty-one Members to whose opinion the right hon. Gentleman, with somewhat of a reforming eye, had looked for protection as expressing the sense of the people, sixty-six had voted in favour of the measure, and only fifteen against it. They had not been the supporters of Reform while Reform was only a vague word not explained and defined, but when a distinct plan of Reform had been proposed; and by that plan their real opinions were to be tried and decided. The principles on which that plan of Reform was produced were, to give Representatives to large manufacturing towns, to prevent the sale of seats, and to extend the elective franchise; and these principles had been supported by the Representatives for counties and large towns, in the manner he had before described. With respect to the borough Members, a majority had indeed voted against the measure; but as the measure was directly calculated to injure the personal interests of all the Members for such places, it was not to be wondered at that they were opposed to it, since in matters of interest it was universally admitted, that men who were personally affected were not of all others the most impartial judges. If, therefore, out of such a body of persons, one-third were in favour of the measure which seemed to threaten their personal interests, it was, indeed, a strong proof of what was the general feeling of the people, and of the impression which had been made on men of cultivated understanding and of great property and high station, by the arguments that powerful minds had, during past years, so strongly urged on the great principle of Parliamentary Reform. He would then advert to the manner in which the Bill had been considered by the King's Ministers during the Recess, and in doing so he should show that throughout they had kept in view, in their alterations, the basis on which this measure was originally founded. To that they had adhered. He had said, on bringing in the Bill, that in the present day, absolute nomination was no longer to continue. That was to be put an end to, by creating a more numerous constituency. Thus, in Bath and Cambridge, the present number of electors, but subject, at least to a certain extent,to a particular influence, would be merged in a still greater number of persons. With a view to the same principle, the elective franchise, where it could not be extended among a greater number of persons and where it was now corruptly exercised, was to be taken away. There were various means by which the Ministers might have obtained information necessary to enable them to frame the details of the measure; they might have called for the number of houses paying taxes to the amount of 10*l.* or the number of houses rated at 10*l.* and upwards, but upon this subject they found as every body knew, that the taxes were an uncertain criterion, because the houses were in many cases rated far below their value. That, therefore, would have been a test liable to error. If they had taken the houses rated at 10*l.* they would have had also to institute an examination into each borough, so as to ascertain the exact number of houses contained within its limits. In determining what boroughs should be disfranchised or retain their franchise by the criterion of the number of rented houses of the annual value of 10*l.*, they had felt also that if they took that part of the population of the boroughs only within the limits of these boroughs, they should subject themselves to many difficulties; that if persons were sent to examine into these limits, doubts would arise, and partialities might be exhibited, or, at least, the inquiries would be so extensive that they should be involved in innumerable petty details that might, for a year at least, prevent them from introducing any effective measures, and that, even after all this, they might find that they had not obtained a proper criterion by which they could be guided. In many cases it would happen that the borough might be small, at least so far as regarded its ascertained legal limits, while the town which really belonged to it might be very large. An instance of this he could give in the borough of Bridgewater, where the parish was divided into three parts, all of which were under the same jurisdiction—all of which formed but one parish—but only one of which, according to a decision of that House, founded probably on some party motive, and called exclusively the borough, had any influence in sending Members to Parliament. Under these circumstances, they had taken the population returns as documents not made up to favour any particular interest, and as likely to exhibit, in the most correct manner, the population of the different towns and boroughs throughout the kingdom. They had, therefore, taken the returns as given in the office of the Secretary of State for the Home Department, and they found, as they had anticipated, that, generally speaking, these returns were correctly made up. The statements they had since deemed it their duty to obtain were not so much corrections as explanations of these returns. The right hon. Baronet, the member for Tamworth, had called the attention of the House to the fact, that these subsequent statements differed from the population-returns, and had alluded to the case of Tamworth, to show that these returns were not correct. The fact was, that Tamworth, like Bridgewater, was composed of more than one locality, and it appeared that there, as in the cases of Calne and Tavistock, there were parishes attached to, and, in fact, forming part of, the borough itself. They had, with a view of ascertaining the fact, sent letters from the office of the Secretary of State for the Home Department to the Returning Officers of different places; among the rest, to the returning Officer of Agmondesham, who stated in reply, that the limits of the borough only comprehended a small part of that which was known by that name—the return of houses and inhabitants, however, made under the last census, covered the whole of the parish. The returns, therefore, were not inaccurate, as had been insinuated, but merely required explanation, and the papers which the Government had in January and February last laid upon the Table of the House, afforded those explanations, and gave collateral information on the subject of the returns, but did not correct them. The borough of Aldborough, in Yorkshire, was stated in the note to contain in its entire parish 735 inhabitants. That statement was not so given in the population returns; but with Boroughbridge, which was in its immediate neighbourhood, and with one or two other parishes, the number was altogether made up to 2,000. In considering the claims of these boroughs, he was not disposed to say, that because they now returned four Members—a number exceeding that to which they would be properly entitled—he would treat them as separate places, and in that manner prevent them from returning any Member at all; for that would be exercising a severe mode of justice. He would unite the population of all these places as in one, and would give them the right of returning one Member. He should therefore propose, that they should be placed in schedule B. He next came to the borough of Buckingham, the parish of which contained 2,485 inhabitants, and which for that reason he should propose to put also in the list of boroughs in schedule B. In the same manner Malmesbury, the population of which was 2,145, and Oakhampton, the population of which was only 1,807 within the borough, but which, by the union of the places immediately adjoining it, possessed a population of more than 2,000, were now proposed to be placed in schedule B. Reigate was one of those places which were in a somewhat doubtful situation. The borough itself contained only 1,328 inhabitants; but the foreigners, as the inhabitants without the limits of the borough were technically called, amounted to 1,603, making together 2,961. That number would entitle it to be placed in schedule B; but at the same time that he said this, it was but fair that he should read to the House what the returning-officer had said, and when he had done so, he thought he should have shown, that if they did grant a Member to Reigate, they must be considered to have done complete and ample justice to that borough. The returning-officer said, that the borough itself and the adjoining town were in all respects as distinct as two several parishes. These were the boroughs that he proposed to take from schedule A, and transfer to schedule B. There was a greater number which he proposed to strike out of schedule B, and to permit them to retain their present number of Members. The first of these was the borough of Leominster, which possessed a population of 4,646; the next was the borough of Morpeth, the population of which was 4,291; then followed the borough of Northallerton, with a population of 4,431; and the borough of Tamworth, having a population of nearly 7,000. That borough was like Reigate. The returning officer stated, that the parish of Tamworth was very extensive, consisting of towns and hamlets distinct from each other all maintaining their own poor separately, but all united in the assessment of the Church-rates. This separation, in particular points, had not been deemed sufficient ground for legislating upon, and therefore the borough was proposed to be permitted to retain its present number of Members. The borough of Truro, according to the population returns, possessed a large number of inhabitants. The town was larger than the borough. Looking at all the petitions and memorials that had been sent into that House, it clearly appeared that in 1821 the borough contained more than 6,000 inhabitants. It ought, consequently, to retain its present number of Members. The borough of Westbury contained a population of 2,846, and Chipping Wycombe had 2,559 inhabitants. These two amounted together to a population sufficiently large to justify the Ministers in taking those boroughs out of schedule B, and allowing them to return their present number of Members. In all cases of disfranchisement there must be a limit of some sort, and whatever might be the line adopted, there would be persons who would discover that there were places just on one side of the limit to which in literal strictness the rule might be applied, but which ought to be more favourably treated. The line which Ministers had adopted was one which they had determined on after mature consideration, and from that line they would not depart. With respect to boroughs, they had determined that where the township was part of the borough and depended on it, both ought to form but one place for the return of Representatives. Where, however, the nature of these relations between two places was in doubt, they could not be expected to depart from the population. In all such cases as these the question had been considered to be the same as where a house was partly in one county and partly in another. In cases where it was clear that the township, which might have raised its population to the amount required, consisted of and was a part of the borough, the whole of such population was to be taken as constituting the criterion by which its proportion of the franchise was to be allotted and regulated. In such a case as that of Clitheroe, however, which had a population of 3,000 persons, but which was in the parish of Waley, with a greater population, without, at the same time having any connection with that parish, he had not felt himself authorized to give the borough and that parish a connection which they really had not hitherto, so as to allow the borough a right on account of that connection which it would not otherwise possess. The case of Beeralston was one involved in some degree of doubt. It was not properly stated in the population returns. It had been said, that Beeralston ought to be taken with the parish of Beerferries, but they did not think that they could make that change, for Beerferries was a county parish, and did not contain more than one house let at a rent of 10*l.* a year. Than such places there were none, in his opinion, more deserving of being swept away from the list of represented boroughs. The right hon. Gentleman had, the other night, compared that place with the borough of Calne, with which it certainly had no one point of resemblance. Calne was composed of a borough and parish, but the parish comprised the town. The borough was small, but the parish was a town parish. As they had not adopted the rule of confining the borough always to its own limits, it would be most unjust to Calne to apply such a rule exclusively to it. There were many cases of a similar kind, such as Cirencester and Newport, in which the limits of the borough and the parish were not identical. It was easy to charge partiality against those who produced this measure, but the fact was, that they took the returns as they came. It was easy to say that Calne, Tavistock, and Knaresborough, ought to have their elective franchise taken away. If such a proceeding was just, nothing would be more satisfactory than for him to do so if he could even get five votes by such proceeding. The point to which they objected was, the power to nominate. That power would be taken away by this Bill, though the influence of property would remain, and in that way, of course, the influence of the Marquis of Lansdown and of the Dukes of Devonshire and Bedford would still continue. The Marquis of Lansdown had very little influence from direct property in the borough of Calne. Of the houses let at 10*l.* a year in that borough only three belonged to him. If the right of returning Members should be taken away from the borough and given to the county of Wilts, the noble Marquis would obtain more influence than he now possessed. The principle of that Bill was, to take away the power of nomination, not the influence of property, nor that of character; and if they totally disfranchised Calne, Lord Lansdown would have that influence which was properly due to a man enjoying nobility alike by his origin and talents, his high title, his vast possessions, and his great ability—an ability for public affairs united with a moderation of ambition rarely joined to such powers, and integrity, on which no spot had ever been cast—even in the utmost heat and bitterness of political contention. They might disfranchise Calne, but they could never deprive Lord Lansdown of the influence which his talents and character gave him. That was beyond their power. So long as he enjoyed his extensive possessions—his great ability, and his high character, it would be impossible for legislation to reach him, or for party malice to affect his interests; and this would, and must be so, as long as a virtuous aristocracy was held in respect in this country. Having mentioned the places which were to be transferred from one schedule to the other, or removed altogether from the operation of the Bill, he should proceed to mention those places to which Members were to be assigned as an equivalent for those that were taken off. It had been complained of by hon. Members opposite that the largest places, and that all the places containing more than 10,000 inhabitants, in conformity to the standard proposed by the Bill, had not received Members. It should be recollected that, although the Bill was founded, to a certain extent, upon the principle of population, yet they did not look to population alone as the test of capacity for voting. Where there was commercial enterprise and commercial capital, combined with population, or where the same interests were represented in other parts, the proposers of the measure had thought it better to make a selection than to adhere punctiliously to a specific number of persons giving a right to return Members to that House. At present there were many small boroughs to be saved from disfranchisement, and it was therefore not advisable to give all the towns with 10,000 inhabitants a Member. Although population in the inferior boroughs had been taken as the rule for disfranchisement, it was not that alone which had guided them in all cases in determining what towns should receive Representatives. They had also been governed with a view to particular interests. They proposed as a counterbalance to the pure principle of population, to give Representatives to large towns possessed of manufacturing capital and skill, such as Bury, in Lancashire, Oldham, and Rochdale, and in addition to the towns already endowed with the right of sending Members by the Bill, he therefore proposed that these towns should each send one Member. Salford, which, with Pendleton and Broughton, contained above 50,000 inhabitants, and had commercial interests distinct from Manchester, was also to send one. For that part of Staffordshire, known by the name of the Potteries, and situated at Stoke-upon-Trent, he proposed there should be one Member. For Wakefield, which, in the original schedule, was omitted by mistake, and for Whitby, there was also to be one Member each. Instead of the parish of Halifax, which contained much poor and wild land, he proposed that the right of voting should be confined to the township of Halifax, which should only return one Member. All these he proposed should be added to schedule B. Having thus added to the number of Members for the manufacturing towns, and met, he hoped, the objections of those Gentlemen who had complained that several of these towns were not included in the Bill, it was necessary to give some additional Members to the counties. It had been thought hard that some counties should have four Members, and others, not much inferior in extent and population, should only have two. To remedy this, he proposed, that such of them as possessed a population of above 100,000 should receive one additional Member. These counties were Berkshire, Buckinghamshire, Cambridgeshire, Dorsetshire, Hertfordshire, Herefordshire, Oxfordshire, and Glamorganshire. There were seven of these counties which would thus send three Members to Parliament, and Glamorganshire, which had hitherto had only one, would be thenceforward allowed two. What he had now said would correct a misapprehension that had prevailed on the provisions of the Bill as they related to counties. He had now gone through the intended alterations as they affected the schedules, and it would probably be convenient if he recapitulated them. It was proposed, then, that Aldborough, Buckingham, Malmesbury, Okehampton, and Reigate, should be transferred from schedule A, and put into schedule B; that Leominster, Morpeth, Northallerton, Tamworth, Truro, Westbury, and Chipping Wycombe, should be taken out of schedule B, that is, that they should be allowed to return the present number of their Representatives. Further, it was proposed that Bury, in Lancashire, Oldham, Rochdale, Salford, the Potteries of Staffordshire, Wakefield, Whitby, and Halifax, should be admitted to the right of returning one Member each; and that the counties of Berkshire, Buckinghamshire, Cambridgeshire, Dorsetshire, Hertfordshire, Herefordshire, Oxfordshire, and Glamorganshire, should each return an additional Member. The whole effect of the alterations proposed he had brought into one view in a paper which he had intended to read, but which he unluckily had mislaid. He could, however, state from memory, that suppose five new Members given to Ireland, and five to Scotland, the whole number of Representatives for the United Kingdom would be 627, making a diminution of the present number of thirty-one Members. There were twelve towns which were to send two Representatives, including parts of the metropolis; twenty-six towns which were to send one Member; and sixty-one additional Members for counties in England; and one for a borough and one for a county in Wales. In addition to these were five new

Members for Ireland and five for Scotland. The number thus given was to be subtracted from the total diminution, which, he thought, was 154 Members, and it would leave the diminution of the present number of the House thirty-one Members. This was certainly a less diminution than was originally contemplated. He would then proceed to notice some other and minor alterations in the Bill. In the first place, with regard to the right of voting for counties. Some complaints had been made—and he admitted, naturally—that while leaseholders of a certain annual value, and copyholders, were allowed the franchise, it was withheld from those who, perhaps, had a much longer term, and greater interest, for 99, or 999 years. It was therefore intended that persons having leases of the value of 10*l.* a year and upwards for any term exceeding sixty years should be entitled to vote for counties. There was another description of leaseholders whom it was also designed as an act of fairness to include: he meant those who had paid large fines upon leases where the rent was small, but where the interest in truth was greater than that of a tenant for twenty-one years at 50*l.* a year. With regard to the qualification for voting in towns occupation had, in general, been taken as the test of residence; but it was wished to give the franchise not only to the occupiers of houses, but to the occupiers of warehouses and counting-houses. But the arrangement, as it before stood, construed strictly, would exclude all the great merchants of Manchester, Liverpool, and other large commercial towns, who did not reside within the limits, although much of their property was deposited in the town. He was satisfied that this amendment, instead of being disapproved, would be cordially accepted. Another change carried a little farther the principle of keeping alive existing rights in the persons of those who now held them. It had been very strongly urged by persons connected with cities, where the right of voting was in the freemen, that admitting the principle of saving the rights of those who were now alive, it ought to include the inchoate rights of the sons of freemen, and of apprentices not yet out of their time. This change would not make any difference in the principle of the Bill, and it had, therefore, been agreed to admit to the right of voting the children and apprentices of freemen, who at present would be entitled to it, on coming of age, or on arriving at the expiration of their articles of apprenticeship. With another alteration he apprehended the hon. and learned member for Preston (Mr. J. Wood) would be well contented. It would conserve expressly the rights of all who at present voted by reason of inheritancy. This was merely carrying more completely into effect the original intentions of the framers of the measure, and he (Lord J. Russell) had in fact stated it on the former occasion, but the hon. and learned member for Preston having mentioned his apprehensions that a large body of his constituents would be disfranchised, the alteration he had just referred to, was especially meant to guard against that. As to the returning officers, an alteration had likewise been adopted, for it was found, that in some instances it would not be possible to insert in the Bill an exact description of the proper individual. It had been thought, therefore, that the better mode would be to adopt a general clause giving the Sheriff of the county the power, on the 1st of March of every year, to name the returning officer for places within his jurisdiction. Some improvement had also been made in registration: it was to be provided that the Christian and surname with the place of abode should be distinctly stated, so that the register should be a complete index of the voters enrolled in it; it was meant that this register should be kept in a book to which reference could be readily made, and as the Churchwardens might find it in some cases a burthen to make it out, it was provided that they might employ such clerks as were necessary to complete the lists, the expense to be paid by the parish to which they related. Some difficulty, it was thought, might arise out of extra parochial places, and they were therefore to be joined to the smallest parish by which they were bounded. Another amendment applied to polling: instead of the polling always taking place in cities and boroughs in one situation, it was thought that the chance of much tumult and confusion might be avoided, if power were given to the returning officer to direct that the voters should tender their suffrages at different places, according to his discretion. It was also provided, that persons residing near contributory boroughs in Wales should be able to vote at that contributory borough nearest to which they dwelt. To these alterations would be added a clause, declaring that any person guilty of false swearing at an election, should be liable to the penalties of perjury. A further clause would be similar to that found in some of the Acts brought in by the right hon. Gentleman opposite, providing for cases of misnomer, that the words should be taken and construed in their popular and intelligible sense. "I have now (continued Lord John Russell) gone through all the principal alterations we propose to make; the House will be able to see them more distinctly, and to understand them more completely to-morrow, as I have taken care that the bill should be accurately reprinted and speedily delivered. By the time we have gone through the two schedules, hon. Members will be prepared to enter into the discussion of the amended measure. We may then examine the Bill clause by clause, and those who object to particular provisions, will have a full opportunity of settling and stating their objections. If it be thought proper to raise again the question of the principle of this plan, I shall be quite ready to enter into it—to defend it—and to show that it is entitled to the most favourable consideration of the House. Whatever verbal changes and local improvements may be made in the Committee as to the mode in which this great arrangement is to be carried into effect, I am prepared to argue that this House will only properly represent the people, and consult the interests of the people, by passing the Bill with as little general alteration as possible. An hon. and gallant Member, whom I see in his place, is about to propose some Resolution, by which he means to bind the House to keep up a certain number of Members for particular parts of the empire. I will not now enter into a question which can be more properly debated when the motion is made; but I cannot help saying that the course seems to me most invidious, and likely to promote that jealousy which we ought to endeavour to allay. It is calculated to raise prejudices which I hoped were extinguished, by declaring on this occasion that there is one part, or that there are two parts of the United Kingdom which ought to have a particular number of Members, to the exclusion of the rest. As I have said, it is not my business now to enter into the discussion, as I cannot hope that my authority will prevail upon the hon. and gallant Member to relinquish his Motion. I may, however, take the liberty of reading to him a passage in one of Mr. Pitt's speeches on the Union, which seems to me to have been delivered in the true spirit of a Statesman, anxious to make that Union real and effectual. It was judged proper, looking at the population and taxes of Ireland, to allow her 100 Members; and upon the question whether that number should be more or less, Mr. Pitt spoke as follows:—"Upon a full consideration of the subject, the Parliament of Ireland are of opinion that the number of Representatives for Ireland in the House of Commons ought to be 100. Upon this subject, the first question to which I have to call the attention of Gentlemen (supposing that they adhere to the Resolutions of last Session) is, whether the number so mentioned by the Parliament of Ireland is so reasonable, and founded in such fair proportions, that we ought to agree to it? For my own part, Sir, I will fairly confess, that upon this part of the subject it does appear to me extremely difficult to find any precise ground upon which to form a correct calculation, or to entertain a positive preference for any one specific number of Members rather than another: but I am the less anxious about it, because I do not consider the consequences as very important. In my view of Representation, founded upon the experience of our Constitution, I think we are entitled to say, that, if a nation becomes united with us in interests and in affection, it is a matter of but small importance whether the number of Representatives from one part of the United Empire be greater or less." * That was the view taken of the subject by a great practical Statesman, and I leave it to the consideration of hon. Members, satisfied that they will not hastily throw by such an authority. It has been my business to explain the alterations it is proposed to make in the Committee in this bill for amending the Representation. The House will perceive that the alteration as to the number of Members is considerable: that number is increased more than thirty above the amount I stated when first I introduced the proposition; but, I think, if hon. Gentlemen will consider the reasons for this change—the fitness of taking certain places out of the two first schedules—they will be satisfied of the justice of that course, and that in no instance and in no manner is it a de-

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* Hansard's Parl. Hist. vol. xxxv. p. 42-3.

parture from the original principle of the Bill. It was brought forward, and was received, under circumstances which cannot but be gratifying to those who were concerned in its original formation. It was the result of great consideration, and this is the Bill—the very Bill brought forward by the Cabinet, which was allowed by his Majesty to take the whole subject under its view. It is the Bill which the House, after a length of debate unexampled in this country, sanctioned by its deliberate vote upon the second reading. It is the Bill which those who, the right hon. Gentleman contends, duly represent the feelings and interests of the inhabitants of the empire, approved by a majority. It is the Bill which the House notwithstanding the presence in it of 200 Members for boroughs, directly, or indirectly, affected by it, adopted, although I admit, by the very smallest majority. Be it remembered also, that this House was chosen under the auspices of a different Government, and that in it were marshalled in hostile array all those whom it was thought necessary to retain for the sake of keeping up the influence of the Crown, and who recently occupied official situations. I say, then, that the sanction of such a House is an extraordinary testimony in favour of the justice and equity of the measure. I am quite satisfied that this question ought to receive, before long, its final decision. This House will ill discharge its duty to its constituents, if it keep the topic of Reform in debate for the period of another year. Even were it to be continued for three or four months, I should say that the consequent agitation would be highly injurious. For that reason I desire to see the House, in its present shape, and with its present Constitution, sanction the principle of this Bill. I see two great authorities in opposition to each other upon this vast question—Earl Grey on the one side, and the Duke of Wellington on the other. The noble Earl at the head of the Government is of opinion that a measure of this kind ought to be conceded to the wishes of the people. The noble Duke, who, on so many accounts, is entitled to the gratitude and reverence of his country, thinks that there should be no alteration whatever in the Constitution of Parliament. If that were a possible course, it might perhaps be a wise one; but I think that the Members of this House have made up their minds that even if the course were wise, it is no longer possible. I ask hon. Gentlemen, then, to consider whether, from particular views, and for private reasons, they will endeavour to alter and fritter away this great substantial measure? We who proposed it are bound by its principles, and by its principles we will abide—yes, I repeat it, by its principles we will abide. Whatever may be the course which the noble Lord at the head of the Government with the other members of the Cabinet may think it their duty to take on other subjects—whatever opinions they may deliver in Parliament, and whatever advice they may give their Sovereign—be assured of this, they are united firmly for the purpose of carrying this Bill. Having been brought forward in Parliament, and announced to the people; by Parliament it has been sanctioned, and by the people it has been universally approved. If you are now to alter, to break in upon, or to fritter it away, you will only be preparing a vexatious and a useless contest, at a time when you might not have to deal with the people in their present temper and spirit of moderation; then, too, you might be called upon to discuss Reform in a state of much less comparative prosperity than the nation now enjoys. I am ready to allow, that those who bring forward and press forward this Bill, have some claim to the reputation of boldness. But I, for one, confess that I am not so bold but that I should look with great apprehension to the consequences of a continued resistance by those who have property in boroughs, with the chance, that, in the course of that resistance, new distresses or new feelings of agitation, may manifest themselves among the people. If the Bill be now passed, it will be passed in perfect tranquillity—without interrupting the union and harmony of all classes; but if you will not listen to this advice, which I very humbly offer—if you do not think it worthy of being followed—I beg you to remember that those who shall undertake the conduct of a majority of the House of Commons against this measure will have difficulties to encounter with which no Minister in the country has yet been able successfully to contend. If there ever was a Prime Minister, powerful from his authority—from the services he had rendered his country—it was the Duke of Wellington—

> "Exuvias veteres populi, sacrataque gestans
> Dona ducum:"

He was on every account entitled to power —from the victories he had won both in peace and in war, for

"Peace has her victories as well as war;"

but he found it impossible to resist the majority of this House. Armed with almost unlimited power, granted by one Sovereign and confirmed by another, his authority was broken and shivered by the storm to which he would not bend. If a man like the Duke of Wellington, with strength of character to sustain, and talents to unite, all parties, could not oppose the pronounced decision of this House, and the general, indisputable, and enthusiastic, voice of the people, who shall hope to resist it. I beg leave to move the Order of the Day "that the House resolve itself into a Committee to consider the provisions of the Bill for the Amendment of the Representation of England and Wales."

General *Gascoyne* observed, that the Bill then before the House differed essentially from that first proposed by Ministers,—the Bill, by which they had pledged themselves to "stand or fall :—the Bill, the whole Bill, and nothing but the Bill." That measure and the present differed as perfectly as any two possibly could; and from what had fallen from the noble Lord, he expected still further changes. The noble Lord ought to withdraw the Bill for the present, so as to afford sufficient time for its consideration, if not withdraw it altogether, as indeed would be his best course, for it was so new in its provisions, that it could not be expected that they should be then able to discuss it. If the noble Lord should thus postpone the Bill, he would also postpone his motion, pledging himself, however, to bring it forward whenever the noble Lord again brought his measure under their notice. Though he was willing to act thus, if the sense of the House was in favour of delay, he himself saw no reason why he should not at once submit his Motion, and therefore,—[The hon. Member became inaudible in consequence of the noise of hon. Members on the floor.] He could not but regret this interruption, and wished hon. Members would go to dinner at once, and not thus interrupt the public business. His Motion was directed against the proposed reduction of the Members of that House, and was not founded on any superstitious attachment to a particular number, but to the principle of such a reduction. He repeated his wish that the Bill should be withdrawn; for it was so altered from its original character, that no person could recognize any similarity. The Session was not so advanced but that sufficient time might be afforded for bringing in a more matured measure. If, then, Ministers would persist, he had no alternative but to press his Motion—not, he wished it to be understood, in a spirit of hostility to the Irish Representation, but from an anxiety to prevent the aggrandizement of the Irish and Scotch, at the expense of the English Representation. He contended that the spoliation of the English Representation was indefensible on any principle of justice or expediency. It could not be defended on the ground of the population of Ireland having increased so much as to warrant such an increase of the relative number of its Representatives in that House; for if population, concerning which, by the way, they had very exaggerated statements, were taken as the basis of the Irish Representation, it ought also to be taken as the basis of the Irish taxation. That it was not so was plain, and this circumstance had been urged as an argument in favour of the Legislative Union with Ireland by Mr. Pitt. At that time the population of Ireland amounted to 4,200,000 persons—the taxation was 4,600,000*l.*; while the population of England was 10,700,000, and the taxation 27,700,000*l.* At present Ireland did not contribute more than one-tenth of taxes in proportion to its population as compared with this country; so that if population were taken as the ground for adding to the Representatives of that country, it ought also to be made the basis of a more equal taxation. It was proposed at the time of the Union, by the present head of the Government, to reduce the number of the Members of that House, on the ground that a great inconvenience would ensue from the influx of 100 Irish Members. Now, admitting the correctness of this objection, he would ask, was it not an odd panacea of an evil to increase its cause, as would be the case by the present Bill with respect to the Irish Representation? He had no objection, he begged it to be understood, to the people of Ireland and of Scotland receiving a due share of Representation, but he must protest against their number of Representatives being increased at the expense of the Representation of this country. Ireland might obtain her five additional Members, and Scotland hers; but let it not be at the expense of the people of England. What would be the feelings of the people of those countries if the Bill proposed to add to the English Representation at the expense of the Representation of Ireland and Scotland? Would they ever hear the end of the charges of unfairness, and injustice, and violation of the Articles of Union? And was England to be stripped of her relative share without remonstrance? Were they blind to the unanimity with which the Representatives of Scotland and Ireland resisted every plan, emanate from where it might, which tended to equalize the burthens of the State in all parts of the United Kingdom? In the divisions on the property-tax, on the assessed taxes, on the spirit-duties—in fact, on every new impost whatever, the Irish and Scotch Members always voted so as to throw the weight of the taxes off their own shoulders on the people of England; and yet the noble Lord came forward with a proposition which took from the English Representation, and added to that of Scotland and Ireland. Did they forget that Ministers were compelled to exempt Scotland and Ireland from the operation of the Small-note Prohibition bill, in consequence of the opposition of the Members of those countries?—that eighty-three out of 100 Irish Members came to a resolution to oppose Ministers altogether if they persisted in depriving Ireland of its small-note currency, and that they succeeded in their object? Look how the Irish Members contrived to throw the burthen of supporting their own poor on this country, as indeed they would every other burthen, if the relative superiority of the Representation of this country were destroyed according to the Bill. On the other hand, let them consider the dangerous influence which the Irish Representation placed in the hands of any Ministers who chose to court it at the expense of this country. By conciliating it they might carry any measure they pleased, no matter how it might affect the interests of the people of England, and such a conciliation was the boon held out to Ireland by the present Bill. It was on this ground, therefore, that he proposed that the number of English Members should not be reduced. Ireland might, if the House so pleased, receive an increase of Members, but let them not therefore diminish the number of English Members. If the Bill were altered so as to transfer the franchise of the boroughs in the schedule A, to places in England, he should not object to it; but if it were retained in its present form, he would offer it every opposition in his power. The hon. Member concluded by moving the following Resolution as an amendment—"That it is the opinion of this House, that the total number of Knights, Citizens, and Burgesses, returned to Parliament for that part of the United Kingdom called England and Wales, ought not to be diminished."

Mr. *Sadler* rose and said:—In seconding the Motion of my gallant friend, the member for Liverpool, I feel it quite unnecessary to advance any additional argument in its favour. What he has said on proposing it is perfectly unanswerable; and has proved beyond controversy the necessity of its adoption. But had the Resolution submitted by him been introduced without the recommendation of a single argument, that necessity would have been sufficiently apparent. The proposition of the Reform Bill, as it is called, which goes to deprive of a considerable portion of its Representation this part of the United Kingdom, which is of such transcendant importance, whether in reference to its wealth, its population, or its position—which is the seat of its principal manufactures, and the centre not only of its domestic empire, but of those vast and populous colonial possessions which extend round the world, and connect this country with all others—is, as an abstract proposition, one of the most impolitic and indefensible ever submitted to the House. But when it is recollected that questions of vital importance to the integrity and existence of the empire, different sides of which are warmly espoused in different divisions of the United Kingdom, questions which the noble Lord opposite contemplates may not have to be decided by the House merely, but by an appeal to the sword; when it is recollected, that questions of the utmost importance likely to be so decided are to come before us: to diminish the number of the Representatives for one part of the empire, at the same time that those in another are proposed to be increased, is to give great legislative advantages to that portion of the community which the noble Lord thus anticipates the possibility of resisting, and would be a species of infatuation of the most fatal kind in my opinion. The noble member for Tavistock has indeed read a passage from Mr. Pitt's speech, from which he meant to show, that the numerical proportion awarded to different divisions of the empire, in the Representative branch of the Legislature, is a consideration of little importance—a doctrine which I think is hardly consistent with his notions on the subject, founded as that doctrine was on the principle of virtual Representation, a principle which it is the purpose of his Bill to repudiate from the Constitution. But in the circumstances under which the country is now placed, I repeat, nothing can be more absurd, nothing more dangerous, than the proposed diminution. I can, however, confidently leave this proposition to the determination of the House and will therefore address myself to the general measure of which this forms only a part, though an important one. And in so doing I shall but follow the example of the noble Lord, who has not only argued the general question, but endeavoured by anticipation to answer my gallant friend before he had even moved his Resolution. Nor shall I make any apology for pursuing this course. Having on a preceding occasion, when I gave my vote against the Bill, been prevented from addressing the House by the eagerness of many other hon. Members to obtain its attention, I shall now justify my opposition to that measure by stating those arguments which have determined my judgment. But I feel the difficulty of my attempt increased by the alterations which have been just made in the measure by the noble Lord, who has dealt with this political budget of the Ministry, as the noble Chancellor of the Exchequer has done with his financial one, of which I am not aware that there is any thing left but steam; in like manner the new Constitution, if it is to be thus altered from to time, it is quite as certain will at length end in fume and smoke. But I shall attempt to adapt my observations to this second and amended edition of the new Constitution; the alterations proposed this evening, have indeed deprived me of some of the examples of the ignorance and injustice of the measure which I should have pointed out, had I found the opportunity I sought for, on a preceding occasion, but the objections to its main principle remain unabated, or rather, indeed, as it will be seen, are on the whole, aggravated. In proceeding to show the unconstitutional and dangerous nature of the entire scheme, and how widely different it is from any thing that could have been some time ago contemplated by his Majesty's Ministers, I shall take leave to quote the recorded declaration of two of them—one made in this House, by a distinguished Member of it, now at the head of the law; and the other by the noble Earl at the head of the Government. These declarations will show, I think, how widely different are the spirit and objects of the present measure compared with that which they originally contemplated; and will warn us, I hope, from acceding to their present propositions, as utterly inconsistent with their late professions. Early in November last, Mr. (now Lord) Brougham gave notice of his intention, in a speech in this House, of which the following is an extract:—"It has been said, that I am a friend to a radical, sweeping, and innovating, and I may add—for I conscientiously believe that it would prove so—revolutionary Reform. This imputation I wish most distinctly to deny. I stand on the ancient way of the Constitution; and without entering into details, which would be now extremely irregular as well as inconvenient, I beg leave to state, that whatever plan of Reform I may propose will have for its object, in the first place, to conciliate the opinions and support of all the friends of Reform.—Such, Sir, will be the object of the great measure of change, which I intend to submit to the House. I shall only add, that my motion will be founded on a principle which I trust will ever be held sacred in this House. My object in bringing forward the measure is not revolution, but restoration,—to repair the Constitution, and not to pull it down."* Precisely similar in import, and not very different in terms, were the expressions of the noble Lord at the head of the Government, a short time afterwards, in reference to the contemplated measure. "I wish," said he, "to stand as much as I can upon the fixed and settled institutions of the country." The Reform he intended was, he added, "to be guarded and limited, by a prudent care not to disturb too violently, by any extreme changes, the established principles and practices of the Constitution." These declarations, Sir, will not only authorise me in appealing to the original principle of the Constitution, but they seem, indeed, to demand that it should be tried by that test. Let us then shortly refer to that ancient model, in order to determine how far they have kept their word of promise; and we shall find, Sir, that they have not only deserted the practice; they have poured contempt upon the main principles of our venerated Constitution. The Constitution of England, especially the representative branch of it, now sought to be mutilated or destroyed, is, like the eventful history of the people who have achieved it, of ancient and obscure original. Like them, also, it has attained to its present state of unrivalled efficiency by slow and irregular advances, and by the incorporation of many seemingly discordant accessions, which time has at length amalgamated into one general mass of union, consistency, and strength, to which, had it been constituted of any one single element, it could never have attained. Virtual Representation, however founded upon property, much as it may be the fashion for ignorance to deny its antiquity, is doubtless the original basis of that Constitution. To this was at length added a more direct form, something like that of delegation; and yet later, distinct communities and separate interests were admitted, though still with little observance of any numerical proportion. The original Constitution thus successively adopted its several modifications as necessity dictated, and experience sanctioned them, which have rendered it a mixed, indeed, though not a complicated system; while those reciprocal influences now sought to be destroyed have cemented its several parts, and conferred on the whole that without which the happiest form of Government ever projected would be utterly worthless—perpetuity. Even the differences, or, as many regard them, imperfections, in this system, have had the practical effect, whether contemplated or not, of securing a more complete representation of this diversified community than any more uniform method, however theoretically perfect, could have produced. It has on the one hand admitted among the represented part of the community, bodies of the people which must otherwise have been totally excluded, and which the projected measure, indeed, coolly proposes, finally, and for ever, to disfranchise; on the other, it has called to this House a class of persons who have been the glory of the country and the benefactors of mankind; but which the present scheme would have necessarily excluded. As to its general effects, these may be best read in the perfect freedom, unrivalled greatness, and continued prosperity of this mighty empire. I have said that our Constitution originally recognised virtual Representation only, and it seems necessary to repeat this obvious fact when so many attempts are made to represent that principle as one of those corruptions which have crept in among us in later times. Alfred, whom this country is proud to claim as the father of its monarchy, and the founder of its liberties, founded his Wittenagemote on that principle only: which he also engrafted on that institution, which is of infinitely more importance to the mass of the community than the form of its Legislature—the administration of justice; hence the British subject, whose property, character, or life, is at stake, is still tried by his country, which country his Jury constitutionally represents, not indeed by election or delegation, but virtually. I hardly need observe, that during the Norman period of our history, down at least to nearly the close of the reign of Henry 3rd, nothing but virtual Representation is to be found in the *Magnum Concilium Regni* of those days. And, even in the latter period, when the rudiments of our present representative system were sketched, till that of the Revolution, when our ancestors deemed it perfect, virtual, rather than geographical or numerical Representation, remained the groundwork of the Constitution. A single moment's reflection sufficiently decides this point. Those who are not too much disposed to respect the intelligence of our forefathers, will nevertheless hardly doubt but that they knew Yorkshire, for instance, to be forty times as large as Rutlandshire; and again, that the ancient capital of that great province was at least ten times as populous, and far more than so many times as opulent as some of the parliamentary boroughs in its neighbourhood (a fact which I have taken some time and pains to ascertain), and yet they gave alike two representatives in every such instance. But a nearer view of the borough Representation, as originally established, will serve to convince us, that it was not only virtual with regard to these vast differences in population, but that it was equally so with respect to those various interests, and especially to the influence of large masses of property which it always retained. And as this last point is the one principally in dispute, it may be proper to observe, that if there be the least truth and reality in the idea of a balance of power in the three co-ordinate and independent branches of the Legislature (and it is difficult to conceive that they could so long exist without it), then it follows, that as the Commons became more powerful, which they did, (especially when, among other causes, the Knights of the shires were added to their body, whereas, at first, they were representatives of the tenants *in capite*, and belonged to the higher order, their whole constituency not exceeding in number 3,000); I say, then, it became necessary, (and necessity is the mother of political as well as mechanical invention) that the Crown, as well as some of its more powerful subjects, should also extend, or rather preserve their influence, by the creation of additional boroughs, which I find some of the great Barons were permitted to do, obtaining for them the privilege of Representation. Thus was it that the larger masses of property preserved an influence in the representative branch of the Legislature, essential, I conceive, to its preservation, and thus have they retained it. The necessity of this inequality of influence, where there is an inequality of property, is held, I think, by all the great authorities, both of ancient and modern times. Aristotle maintains the principle as that of distributive justice, and I need not say, that it was fully recognized by the ancient constitution of Rome. Grotius also contends that it is highly consistent with natural equity; and says, that the number of votes in any community should be so regulated;—that is, *mensoriâ proportione.* But, not to appeal to foreign or ancient jurists; as profound a Judge of the original Constitution of this country, as enthusiastic an assertor of its liberties, and as daring a reformer as ever lived in it—I mean Horne Tooke—fully establishes this principle. "All men," says he, "have an equal right to representation, but all men have not a right to be equally represented." But, Sir, I shall lastly avail myself of an authority on this occasion still more decisive—I mean that of the noble member for Tavistock himself. He speaks of borough nomination as effectuating the object to which I have been alluding. "Theoretically, indeed," says he, "it would be better if the Members sent by single persons were elected by a body of rich constituents;" but he proceeds to show that the present mode is practically preferable; and for reasons which I think are unanswerable. And, Sir, it cannot be denied but that any scheme which should invest with distinct privileges, or award a plurality of votes to any particular class of electors, would be a far more unconstitutional, and certainly a more galling distinction, than the ancient and less offensive practice which the noble Lord now terms nomination. It suffices, however, for me to have shown that, with every other profound writer on the subject, he clearly acknowledges the necessity of that which the present measure wholly repudiates. Take away the influence thus possessed by the great masses of property (I make no distinction as to that property being held by Commoners or Peers—it were ridiculous so to do), and, looked upon, as such accumulations always have been and still are, with envious eyes by many, which rest for their security on ancient gifts and transfers; upon "inky blots and rotten parchment bonds;" take away that influence and you will tear the seals off their title deeds, as you propose to do by those of the corporation charters. The consequences are then certain, and they are at hand. Prepare, in some form or other, for those Agrarian struggles which long disturbed and at length destroyed Rome: for similar spoliations to those which have recently been witnessed in a neighbouring country, where property, bereft of its political influence, lost its rights, and only served to mark out its possessors to certain destruction. But the maligners of our existing Constitution, who thus err in supposing that the influence of the aristocracy in Parliament is a corruption of the ancient system of Representation, are equally in error in imputing the same charge to those parliamentary cities and boroughs which are under no such influence, but whose constituency is restricted to a select body of the people. Now no one fact is more clear and certain to the political antiquary than that which Hume asserts, namely, that the election of the Members for such places was made, not by "the residents, as such, of whatever rank, but by the Aldermen and Common Council." Proofs of this fact might be readily adduced which it would be impossible to withstand; it will be, however, unnecessary to advance one of them. This part of the subject has been already under the grasp of one of the most vigorous intellects of the age, and who, if he can be suspected of any bias when in the search of truth, it would certainly be on the side of what is called liberality.—In a number of the *Edinburgh Review*, of no old date, usually, and I believe correctly attributed to the pen of the noble Lord now at the head of the law, the real question regarding the original law of election in these parliamentary corporations, is thus decided:—"There is reason to believe that originally the right of election in boroughs was vested in the governing portion of the burgesses, and that in the progress of the House of Commons to power and importance, the tendency has been in general to render the elections more popular." It follows, then, if there be truth in history, as understood by the ablest among us, that the terms corrupt and rotten, now applied to many parliamentary boroughs, are used either in utter ignorance, or thorough disregard, of the truth. According to the doctrines of those who hold such language, all such boroughs were decayed from their very origin, and intentionally rotten. The motive of this strange misrepresentation of historical facts is but too obvious. Machiavelli earnestly recommends those who seek to subvert the institutions of their country, to disguise their design as much as possible by these references to ancient privileges; and "if," says he, "they would change the power, the number, or duration, of Magistrates (Parliaments he would have written in this country), it would be convenient to continue the name." The projectors and supporters of this "sweeping measure," as they justly call it, follow his political morality. Respecting the borough Representation, under the hollow pretence of lopping-off decay, they propose utter destruction; and, as to what is to remain, they talk indeed of restoration—but, by altering and equalizing the entire constituency, they mean revolution. I shall not now touch upon the entire system thus sought to be changed, the very discrepancies in which, according to such authorities as Paley, and Burke, and Fox, including the noble member for Tavistock himself, have had the effect of giving to this House, the country, and the world, many of the brightest names which have adorned the page of history; the destruction of which system would henceforth close these doors against that intellectual superiority which, without accidental advantages, is long in making itself widely known; and which, were it to put forth its pretensions, would be rejected in favour of those declaiming demagogues, or lofty patricians, whose admission it alone secures; while it would expel from these seats any one, however elevated by talent or distinguished by virtue, who should not bow down his conscience and surrender his judgment to the popular opinion of the day,—a plan, in short, which would deprive henceforth the country of its ablest advocates, and posterity of its best guides. But I shall not touch upon these topics, important as they are; they have been the subject of exultation with our most enlightened patriots ever since freedom has been established among us; nor have they been forgotten by those who have preceded me in this debate. I will, however, venture to advert shortly to the practical effects of that part of our Constitution now sought to be destroyed, and they have been of such a nature as to demand our notice, and excite, I think, our warmest gratitude. Leaving, then, the proofs of the superiority of the new scheme in its future operation, to our political quacks and soothsayers, let us examine by the lights of experience what the effect has been of retaining the close and rotten parts of our system, as they are called, now threatened with destruction. Take, then, two or three of the most striking events which have recently occurred in our constitutional history, either as indicative of the national will, or productive of the most important results. And first, after some examination, I will venture to assert that the Revolution would never have been achieved, at least as it now remains, had it not been for the direct effect of this part of the representative system, of which more anon. Twice the guarantee of that great event was resisted, and the succession of the House of Brunswick opposed; on each of which occasions that security of the liberty of the country was obtained by a majority of one vote only. The division on the first occasion I have not met with; that on the second is in my possession, and by accurately examining it, I find that of the county Members more than two for one voted against the House of Brunswick; the Representatives of the open towns and boroughs were more nearly equal. But it was the close boroughs, and those which this Bill regards as decayed and rotten, and which were at least as much decayed and rotten then as at the present day—I say it was these that decided that momentous national event. Sixty-five of these against forty-nine, stood between a misguided populace and tyranny, and gave to this country the illustrious House which still happily rules over us, and sways the destinies of half the world. But it is not even patriotism, however disinterested, that is alone sufficient to promote the interests and secure the institutions of a great people. Talents also are required. And how stands this matter in reference to these condemned boroughs? With regard to the influence under consideration, while it can hardly be conceived that it would be otherwise exercised, intentionally at least, than in the selection of those who appeared best calculated to promote the public good; so it is quite obvious that after certain other considerations should have been regarded, it would be also exerted in returning those whose talents would best enable them to realize that design. So reason dictates; but what says experience? Who were selected to draw up the Bill of Rights? The choice of this House fell by a great majority on those Members who would not have had an existence in it, had the new and improved system been adopted; namely, upon the Members of the close boroughs which you propose to us to open, and of the rotten and decayed ones as you call them, which you wish us to sacrifice. Again, who were the managers appointed to conduct the free conference with the Lords, which demanded, either in reference to the importance of the subject, or the known state of the public mind, the greatest talents and learning, as well as the most unsullied patriotism? Of the twenty-three selected by the House of Commons, two were Members for counties, three for open boroughs, and eighteen for those places you propose to disfranchise. Look at the list, and see the names which this wretched scheme would have excluded; and with them the Constitution which they perfected. It is idle to say that they would have been returned under the new system; the facts I refer to, demonstrate the contrary. Once more: on an occasion, concerning which I differ, I am aware, with many, in deeming it to have been, at the time, of the deepest import; namely, at the trial of that personification of bigotry and tyranny, Sacheverell, when, had the Houses acted and judged differently, the freedom so recently achieved would, I am convinced, have been long suspended, if not finally destroyed—whom did the House again choose at that period of public infatuation as the champion of the civil and religious liberty of this country, then its only asylum? A Committee of Management, consisting of fifteen of its most able and distinguished Members. Of these, two sat for counties, two for open boroughs, and eleven for those which we are asked to deprive of their right of sending such men to this Assembly, including, however, three which it is proposed to open—open so as to stuff with a new constituency. I might continue these historical illustrations of the practical necessity of that part of the system now gravely proposed to be destroyed. In particular, I might show, in a similar manner, that not only has it produced the most distinguished patriots, the greatest orators, but the most efficient servants of the Crown and of the public in the most important offices of State, during a long period of time past; and that it is hardly possible to see how any Ministry could be formed or preserved, or the business of the country efficiently conducted, without retaining it, at least, consistently with the established principles of the Constitution. Nor is it the least important objection to this new Constitution, that it would of necessity leave the immense colonial possessions of this extensive empire, with the scores of millions of our fellow-subjects which they contain, wholly unrepresented. Direct Representation is out of the question, and this sweeping measure would destroy that virtual one which has till now existed, except after having poured the utmost contempt upon the very idea of virtual Representation, we are all at once, and in this particular case, to sanction and apply the principle in a wider sense than the firmest friends of the existing Constitution have ever dreamt of doing. To these topics, however, I shall not further advert; it has been sufficient for me to show that those parts of the Representative system which you propose to mutilate or destroy, are precisely those to which the nation is the most indebted. In a word, had schedule A and schedule B of this Bill been dealt with at the period of the Revolution as now proposed, the Bill of Rights would not have been in the schedule of our chartered privileges, nor the illustrious House of Brunswick in the schedule of British Monarchs. Hitherto I have been attempting to defend and show the necessity of what may perhaps be deemed the uncomely parts of our system—for such there are in this as well as in all other human performances, at least, as far as we are acquainted with them. Nor need I enter upon the other and more inviting parts of the subject: the excellencies of our happy Constitution have been pourtrayed in terms which will live as long as the language itself, and will, I trust, be echoed down to the remotest posterity with increasing exultation and gratitude. One thing, however, I may notice in its favour to those who are perhaps more bent upon improvement than preservation, namely, that the British Constitution, beyond every other, possesses an inherent power of rectifying its own abuses, and consequently of perpetuating its existence, and improving its character. And this power has been in constant exercise for a series of ages; hence, contrary to the assertions of those who are constantly making disparaging and irritating appeals to some past period of our history, as that of superior purity and freedom, directly the reverse of what they assert or assume is the undoubted fact. The Constitution of this country, and especially the representative branch of it, instead of having gradually decayed and become rotten, has acquired greater purity and strength; and more faithfully represents at this moment the real voice of the people, than it ever did at any preceding period of its history. That system has, by the operation of time, and the force of circumstances—by the diffusion of knowledge and the increase of wealth—by the multiplication of freeholders in counties in consequence of the minuter divisions of property; and of voters in large represented towns by the growth of population; together with the transfer of the franchises of really corrupt and convicted boroughs to larger masses of the people—by these, I say, and similar means still in constant operation, this House has kept continually reforming without being revolutionised. A contrary opinion regarding the advance of popular privileges in this House is sometimes held, but I might appeal to the deliberate opinion of no mean authority, and one who has been already referred to during the agitation of this important question, Swift,—who asserts the growing power and popularity of this House, and warns the friends of liberty and the Constitution against its further encroachments, as threatening the destruction of the entire system. But I shall not fatigue the House by reading the passages from him, which I hold in my hand, decisive as they are on this most important point. Thus, Sir, among the other excellencies of our Constitution, is that principle of improvement, and consequently of perpetuity, which it obviously embodies, and which has been in constant operation. Hence, Sir, at the present moment, that Constitution is more popular and efficient than it ever was, at any previous period of its history.—What a moment, then, has been chosen for this work of demolition! Is it now that this Constitution, the admiration of surrounding nations, the model of all the free institutions in the world, the just pride of all true Britons, is to be destroyed? Not at a time when it has yielded to decay, and sunk into corruption, but at the period of its greatest purity and vigour! Is it to fall, not when it has become weak and rotten, but when, like its native oak, it has braved unshaken the tempest which has swept and desolated all around, and stands the monarch of surrounding nature? That there are striking anomalies in our Constitution has not been denied; but they are of such a nature as to have been as clearly apparent at the period of the Revolution as they can be at present; and when, therefore, incomparably the most favourable moment occurred for remedying them, had that been deemed a safe or desirable course. But the difficulty of extensive changes has ever appeared the greatest to the strongest and most elevated minds. These projects were entertained (says an author to whom I have previously referred with the highest satisfaction, the noble member for Tavistock); but by whom? By the most violent. They wished to remodel the House of Commons, compared with whom he describes as "more reasonable those who desired to abolish the monarchy and constitute a republic." But the great authors of the Revolution, says the same authority, "unambitious of the fame of founding a new form of government, obtained for the nation the full benefit of those rights and liberties for which their ancestors and themselves had toiled and suffered." Even Locke, whose principles are sometimes thought to have run into extremes, especially on the subject of liberty, and when a voluntary exile, just previous to the Revolution, and when, therefore, his feelings were doubtless much excited against the Government of his country, nevertheless, thus expresses himself as to the difficulty, which he puts in a single case, and in the strongest possible point of view. "It often comes to pass, that in Governments where part of the legislative consists of Representatives chosen by the people, in track of time this Representation becomes very unequal and disproportionate to the reasons it was first established upon. To what gross absurdity the following of custom, when reason has left it, may lead, we may be satisfied, when we see the bare name of a town, of which there remains not so much as the ruins, when scarce so much housing as a sheep-cote is to be found, or inhabitants than a shepherd, sends as many Representatives to the grand assembly of law-makers, as a whole county numerous in people and powerful in riches. This strangers stand amazed at, and every one must confess needs a remedy, though most think it hard to find one; because the constitution of the legislative being the original and supreme act of the society, antecedent to all positive laws in it, and depending wholly on the people, no inferior power can alter it. And therefore the people, when the Legislature is once constituted, having, in such a Government as we have been speaking of, no power to act as long as the Government stands, this inconvenience is thought incapable of remedy." Such were the difficulties which presented themselves as to the remedying a single, and that the most glaring, inequality that could be selected, to this powerful mind, as little influenced, perhaps, by prejudice, or shackled by forms, as any that ever existed. Others, however, feel not the least hesitation in disposing at once of many scores of cases, against which no such objections lie, concerning which no decay can be proved, no corruption alleged; and the disfranchisement of which involves at once the greatest possible personal injury, and the utmost degree of public danger; thus it is that

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* Hansard's Debates, vol. i. 3rd Series p. 54.

"Fools rush in where angels fear to tread;"

or, if this language appear too strong, let me still express myself as to this rash and unprincipled demolition, in the language of the noble Lord so often quoted, but somewhat differently applied; "it is thus that, when the statues of the gods and heroes are thrown down, snakes and reptiles are obtruded into light." In neither instance do I apply these quotations personally, nor even to the party I oppose, in their literal signification, though the noble Lord has set me the example of so doing. In thus expressing myself, let it not be supposed that I am arguing against remedying any real abuses, or reforming any known corruptions, or supplying any obvious defects of the present system—quite the contrary. I am averse to no real amendments of which it may be thought susceptible, consistently with its original form and structure. But in attempting these matters, I would obey the injunctions of a great authority often quoted here, and especially by a noble successor of his now on the Woolsack, I mean Bacon. It is true he does say, as is constantly cited from him, that "Time is the great innovator;" but he adds likewise, what is always suppressed, "It were good that men in their innovations would follow the example of time itself, which indeed innovateth greatly, but quietly, and by degrees scarcely to be perceived." This, I conceive, is consistent with the soundest principles of good sense, as well as of political philosophy. If, then, any part of our system is really found to be corrupt and decayed, restore it to its first state of purity and efficiency, but do it so as to harmonize with, and not disfigure, the whole structure. Act as you have recently done regarding the sacred fabric close at hand, which contains the venerated ashes of many of those patriots who perfected, and heroes who have bled for, the Constitution you are now called upon to destroy. You found that the touch of time was here and there upon it, effacing its ancient beauties; did you therefore demolish the whole structure, and "break down the carved work thereof, with axes and with hammers," in order that a knot of combined architects might exibit their crude ideas of beauty and proportion on its majestic ruins? No, Sir, you disturbed, you destroyed nothing; while the pealing organ and the daily hymn were heard within, stone by stone you repaired the sacred edifice, and it stands majestic and beautiful, as it did in days of yore, a monument of the genius of your ancestors, and shaming the trumpery attempts by which, in these days of the march of intellect, it is surrounded. But what is it that our political projectors propose? Why, to raze much, and remodel the whole of the Constitution; and they excite the people to the work of demolition, as though it were another Bastile—a dungeon of slavery instead of the temple of freedom. But let us coolly examine the plan which our State architects ask leave to execute, in order to see whether, as might be hoped, that will be gained in justness and conveniency of proportion, which will be lost in grandeur and antiquity. Let us, then, wipe off, with rude and unrelenting hand, as dust and defilement, the hoar of antiquity which has gathered upon our venerated institutions for a succession of ages, in order coolly to compare its several parts with the Cabinet model which these united artificers have produced. A very little examination will suffice to convince us, that the new Constitution is founded upon no principles which will bear the light, and that its whole structure involves a series of the grossest errors and disproportions. Like the unhappy French constitution-mongers, the dupes and victims of their own delusive systems, the present projectors seem to have rejected the idea of virtual Representation, and to have established their new system on the tri-form basis of geography, population, and finance. But they have so jumbled these principles, that by no happy chance is any one single part of the whole reconcileable with the remainder. Now, in projecting a new representative Constitution, the first thing that a wise and patriotic statesman, who should find himself in the position of a lawgiver, would do would be, to determine concerning the nature of the constituency which he would select. And in casting his eyes on any community, he would find it presented in two grand divisions, namely, the town and country population. The former, from their close association, union of feelings and interests, and from their facility of acting at once and in a mass, exercise, in proportion to their numbers, a degree of political influence and power which the scattered inhabitants of the country can never possess. If, therefore, the legislator did not govern himself by numerical proportions merely, he would attempt, perhaps, to counterbalance, in some way or other, the political disadvantages under which the latter are necessarily placed. This, I apprehend, he could do, without reference to any moral differences which he might suppose to exist between them. If he attended much to the latter, and concurred, for instance, with the publicly expressed opinions of the noble Lord who has brought forward this measure, namely, that "the worst of all hands in which the Government can be placed are those of the population of great cities," then, perhaps, he would still further lean to the giving of a certain preponderancy to the rural Representation. But, Sir, in proceeding to consider the Constitution now presented to us, all observations of this nature, however important in themselves, are wholly unnecessary. The measure propounded regards none of them: it seems indeed to proceed upon an utter disregard of every principle of political justice and equity, by whomsoever expounded. In overturning our present system, it reverses the very basis on which it professes itself to be founded; exhibiting, I will venture to assert, a greater mass of absurdities, a more naked and disgusting violation of all arithmetic, as well as reason and justice, than any previous proposition submitted to this House since its foundation. Now, Sir, let us fairly examine this notable Constitution on the noble Lord's own principles, I do not mean those principles which he expounded when he was wandering in the mazes of fancy, but since, to continue his distich, he has recently "stooped to truth, and moralized his song;" and we shall speedily find that we must have a new code of truth and morality before we can reconcile ourselves to this new Constitution. The noble Lord, as far as I can understand his prospectus, professes to base his national Representation on property, with reference also to population. We shall submit his scheme to both tests, in regard to the two great and essentially distinct masses of society among us, the town and country inhabitants; attending first to that criterion to which he and others have appealed with such visible complacency — property. Having done away with all that influence which he has deemed corrupt, and established a more direct system of Representation, what is the nature of the proportions he seeks to establish? Adverting to the last parliamentary returns which give the particular items of the Property-tax of England, which were those of 1810, I find the rental of the houses, warehouses, factories, &c., in both town and country, given at 13,010,546*l*. Now it is quite obvious that no inconsiderable part of this sum belongs to the country, many, and among these the most valuable houses in the kingdom, being certainly in the country districts. But to let that pass. What was the rental of the lands and other profits appertaining to them at that period, exclusive of the tenants' tax? 32,589,303*l.* It is clear, then, that were the value of the houses and warehouses situate in the country parts deducted from the former sum, and added to the latter, that the property of the country districts would appear, as it certainly is, more than thrice in amount that of the towns. Then as to population. In the cities and towns given separately in the census of 1820, the inhabitants amounted to 2,920,095; those in the remaining or country districts, to 8,341,342, very nearly three times the number. I am aware that there are in large towns and places not separately given in the abstracts, a population to the amount perhaps, of an additional 500,000; but a rectification of a contrary nature will render any calculations on that ground wholly unnecessary: the unrepresented towns having precisely the same share in the county Representation as the rest of the freeholders, and being proportionably more numerous. Now, then, let us see how the noble Lord, in his new scheme, proposes to represent these two great classes of the community. Why, to less than one-third of the wealth—to about one-third of the numbers—he actually proposes to give within three of double the number of Representatives! In round numbers to 30,000,000*l.* of rental, and to 9,000,000 of people, he allots, including the addition of this evening, 149 Members of Parliament; while, to about 10,000,000*l.* of rental, and 3,000,000 of people—being a sort of constituency also of which he professes his dislike—he allots 295 Members; giving, as I calculate, individually, six times as much influence to him that happens to live in a town as to him that lives in the country. Nor, Sir, is this all. The distinction this Bill attempts to establish between the nature and amount of the qualification demanded from an elector in the country, compared with one that lives in the town, is, if possible, still more objectionable. The former regulation might possibly be construed into negligence,—this amounts to positive insult. Not to allude to the grievous mistake into which the noble Lord has fallen in taking the rated value of the houses in towns as their actual rental, a mistake which will silence all his boastings as to the middle classes, in which he professes to have placed the franchise—let us inquire why, while the townsman renting a house of 10*l.* by the year, has his vote given to him, a countryman who rents ten times or a hundred times that amount for the same term, is to have none? Sir, if we are to debate about new Constitutions, regulations like these would be better laughed at than argued against, only they are of too insulting a nature to be made matter of mirth, and too unjust to be endured. Sir, the noble Lord who has expressed himself so strongly as to city constituency, and who drew, not long ago, a somewhat exulting comparison between the farmer of Norfolk and the elector of Devizes, will find it difficult, I think, to convince the former that he is very sincere in his preference when he gives the latter a vote and allows the former none, though he may have ten times over the amount of the qualification required from the townsman. I regret that the noble Lord has been prevailed upon to be the instrument of propounding a scheme so utterly irreconcileable with his better principles, which he had so well expressed; in so doing, I fear his distich may be reversed,—he seems to me to have "stooped from truth and demoralized his song." When it is considered how little the inventors of this new Constitution have been restrained by any of those considerations which have been more or less respected by all previous Reformers, with one exception alone; and hence that they have converted rights of property into mere trusts, and again have seized upon these trusts when it suited them, without any alleged breach whatsoever on the part of their ancient possessors—I say it is difficult to imagine how a system so utterly irreconcileable with sense or justice could have been projected. I have alluded to one exception among Reformers as little swayed by scruples of the kind adverted to, as these have been, and one who was the other evening eulogized in no very measured strains by his Majesty's Attorney-General,—I mean, Oliver Cromwell. Now I ask that learned eulogist of Cromwell, whether he will stand forth and defend the Constitution now proposed, by the one that great individual put forth? I tell him that he cannot. Cromwell really did in that act what these Constitution-mongers have professed to do; he conformed to the basis of property and population, which he evidently laid down for his guide. On a rather close examination of his plan, and comparing it with other documents, especially those which give, in a very few years after, the relative values of the respective counties, I have been surprised how nearly he conformed to that rule. These have, notwithstanding their boasts on the subject, actually reversed it. He gave 237 Members to the counties of England, and 143 to the towns. These give, as I have before observed, 149 Members to the counties, and 295 to the towns. The masculine mind of the Protector could not produce anything so false and incoherent as this attempt; nor, tyrant as he was, stoop to anything so partial and selfish as I shall speedily prove this to be. It may, however, be, and is argued, that the aristocracy will obtain that influence under the projected Constitution which they possess in the present one, by representing the towns and boroughs in their respective neighbourhoods, when thus opened; and that, consequently the agricultural interest will still have, though indirectly, its fair share of influence. Those who thus argue must know little of the constituency which they are creating. The qualification of a 10*l.* rental is demanded from a town voter; and I can tell you what the qualification will be that a town-voter will, in a great majority of instances, demand of his Representative; it will not be that which will exactly comport with the views and interests of the latter. But, Sir, if the neighbouring gentlemen will not promise largely enough, or bid sufficiently high at the auction of popularity, those will speedily be found who will. And the idea of the fair balance of influence between the town and country interest, destroyed by this Bill, being thus restored, would turn out to be, like the rest of its provisions, a mere delusion. If we examine the two grand divisions of this scheme, that relating to the counties, and that relating to the towns, separately, and without the slightest reference to each other, we shall still find our astonishment, not to say indignation, increased. I shall add nothing to what was so admirably advanced by the hon. and learned member for Weymouth, as to the monstrous and unconstitutional power claimed for the Crown, and consequently for Ministers, in empowering certain Privy Councillors itinerant, to go forth as political engineers and draftsmen, to cut up and parcel out the ancient divisions of the empire, as settled since the time of Alfred. This departmental scheme also is, like most other of the provisions of this Bill, borrowed from the revolutionary movements of France; but, waiving this consideration, let us consider its effect. I know enough of several of these counties myself, to be certain, that in many cases this partitioning will, in point of fact, either constitute much of what is meant to be county Representation, to all intents and purposes town Representation—the town freeholds in populous districts preponderating so greatly—or otherwise it will render the Representation what is now called close, placing it under the complete control of some great proprietor of the distinct section. I am aware, that the latter observation may be turned against my general argument by the advocates of this Bill, who in the same breath satisfy the people that it will deliver them from the influence of the aristocracy, and the aristocracy that it will deliver the people into their power; who try to convince the country population that it will gain upon the town, and the town again that it will gain upon the country, by this new system of borough representation, and this distribution of these demi-semi-county Members. The fact is, new influences would be created throughout, inconsistent with each other, and ruinous in their conflicting effects to the interests of the entire community. But a closer inspection of the new arrangement will show us more clearly its gross injustice, not to say its disgusting partiality. It is proposed, I think, to afford, on the average, one county Member to about every 60,000 of the country population, excluding the inhabitants of those towns which are to be directly represented. I include in this calculation those small counties, such as Rutland, which it is not proposed to touch. But then this average is made up by the most glaring violations of every recognised rule, whether of property or numbers. It is difficult to guess on what principle the united Cabinet can have proceeded, in framing the measure and settling its details; perhaps some of them can explain. For instance, the Lord Privy Seal perhaps can tell us the reason why the county whose name he bears, the population of which being only about one-sixth as large as that of the bordering county of York, is to have five additional Members; the latter, on the balance, only two, I think, according to the new version of this evening. Not on any very just principle, I fear; for while four Members are to be allotted to the county constituency of Durham, two to each prospective division, still two only are to be given in the whole to the West Riding; that is, about one Representative to every 34,000 of the former constituency; one in 303,000 only to the latter! If the noble Lord has any reason not personal to himself, and which may therefore be given to the public, it seems necessary to advance it, as well as for a similar liberality in regard to the town Representation of his favoured district, to which I shall shortly advert by-and-by. What can be the reason for this course in Durham applies equally, as it appears, to Northumberland; and the noble Lord at the head of his Majesty's Government can doubtless clearly explain why that county also should be carved up, and two additional Members given to its rural population, while those of the North Riding of the province of York, should have two only among them, exceeding as they do the former in number by 30,000 souls, or, giving a Representative to Whitby (which it is marvellous could have been previously neglected by those who were so occupied) larger by about 15,000. As good a reason, doubtless, may be advanced by the First Lord of the Admiralty, why the same united Cabinet have unanimously determined that it was proper for Cumberland to have two additional county Members, and Lancashire no more; the county constituency in the latter being, when compared with that in the former, six times as large, if calculated even on mere numbers; twenty times more numerous if property, so much boasted of, be made the basis. A similar necessity must have been also seen, and doubtless one as capable of explanation, why Northamptonshire should be equally favoured. The Chancellor of the Exchequer, whose office demands that he should be clear and accurate at calculations, can make good this division and multiplication regarding that particular county, while the unity of several of the neighbouring counties has not been invaded. Some line has in these cases been doubtless drawn as fine as that which decides that Malton shall have two Members and Bedwin none. The broad fact, however, is the same as noticed in the preceding instances. The Representation of Northamptonshire has been amended, as the Bill expresses it, so that one Member is given to every 36,000 of its country population, while the next county, that of Buckingham (to instance no other at present), is left, or at least was till this evening, with one only for every 61,000. This was a fortunate affair, as the house of Buckingham might, at some future period, interfere — that of Spencer never. It is, however, it must be confessed, a happy chapter of accidents which thus plays into the hands of a particular party in the country, not only as to those whose franchises have to be annihilated, but those which have to be created by this famous Bill. Accidents? Can that be supposed accident, which could thus propose to portion out even the county Representation in almost a two-fold measure to those particular districts with which its framers are connected? Turn we then to the Attorney General's favourite hero once more; let us see what Cromwell did in this case. Already have I shown the proportion of Representatives he awarded to the town and county Representation; let us now examine how he regulated the latter. Did he jumble in either instance as the framers of this measure have done? His character stands absolved from such folly and inconsistency at all events. Take the two bases which they have professed to adopt, but which they have so miserably violated, and let us see how Cromwell respected them. Within four years from the date of his ordinance which regulates his Representative system, the values of the counties were estimated, in order to apportion their respective quotas to a monthly assessment of 120,000*l.*, authorised by Government. In the year 1690 the number of hearths assessed, or otherwise, was also ascertained, which enables us to arrive at the ratio of population in the different counties at the preceding date, nearly enough for our present purpose. Now Cromwell's respect to the principles of distributive justice was as manifest in his Constitution, as the contempt of that, or indeed any regular principle, is obvious in that of our present legislators. As to the basis of property, his scheme, when accurately examined, runs thus: those counties which contributed less than 1,000*l.* monthly, had on the average three Members in the whole; those which contributed from 1,000*l.* to 2,000*l.* monthly, seven; from 2,000*l.* to 3,000*l.*, eleven; from 3,000*l.* to 4,000*l.*, fourteen; from 4,000*l.* to 5,000*l.*, sixteen; from 5,000*l.* and upwards (the last class), twenty-one. But, Sir, his plan, as a new Constitution, was popular as well as just. Thus he gave to those counties, in which it subsequently appeared there were 20,000 hearths and under, three Representatives in the whole; to those in which there were from 20,000 to 40,000, six; in those which contained 40,000 to 60,000, nine; 60,000 to 80,000, eleven; 80,000 to 100,000, fourteen; 100,000 to 120,000, seventeen; 120,000 to 140,000, twenty; from 140,000 and upwards, twenty-two Members each. So much for the Protector's Constitution. Now, Sir, I have in my hand a similar calculation regarding the present measure, but I shall not trouble the House by reading it; suffice it to say, that so great a mass of absurdities and contradictions has rarely been exhibited by any schemers on any subject as it presents. Thus, those counties the population of which is from 200,000 to 250,000, will have just as many Members as those where the population is double, and the values nearly in the same excess. Durham, for example, with about 200,000 inhabitants, is to have ten Members; Surrey, with 400,000, nine; the income, in 1810, in the former having amounted to less than 1,500,000*l.*, in the latter to above double that sum. I shall forbear continuing to exhibit these anomalies, of which the new scheme is full: I cannot, however, but observe, that amidst all its irreconcileable confusion and contradictions, there is a dexterity apparent, which however is, as I take it, any thing rather than a redeeming point. Much more might be advanced against the scheme of county Representation now proposed to us, but I fear I should trespass too long upon the time of the House were I to pursue this part of the subject any farther. I shall, therefore, proceed to make some observations upon the plan of town Representation developed in this Bill, which is still more partial and incongruous than the other parts of the measure. "God made the country, and man made the town," says one of our best poets, after Bacon; but as the noble Lord, notwithstanding his written opinions to the contrary, has lavished his principal attentions on municipal or town Representation, let us follow his proposition into this part of its details. And if in the constituency of the county districts, and the towns, comparatively considered, the most opposite principles have been adopted, respecting the latter, none whatever seem to have been regarded. The claims founded on ancient right; on amount of population; on important avocations and pursuits; seem alternately to be respected and insulted: while the most arbitrary and yet ridiculous rules have been adopted, which have received the previous condemnation of the advocates of this measure, and which it is impossible to justify upon any known and recognised principles of justice or equity. The noble Lord who has previously written on the difficulty of disfranchisement, now proposes to disfranchise wholly, and at once, sixty parliamentary boroughs; and to deprive of half their ancient privileges forty or fifty others. Of the 159 seats thus obtained, not indeed by surrender, but by legislative force, he proposes to give eight additional to the metropolis, twenty-six to thirteen large towns and parishes, and eighteen to as many other places. At least this was his scheme, till somewhat altered this evening. I need not pursue the detail further than to say, that England was to be deprived of seventy-one Representatives, Wales is to have one or two, Scotland five, and Ireland three additional Members; the House being thinned by the total extinction of sixty-two seats, and that wholly at the expense of England. Some alteration has, it is true, been now proposed, but not so as to rectify the general principle. And first, Sir, one word as to this addition to the Members for the metropolis. Without again calling in aid of the argument the opinion of the noble Lord, as to the quality of the constituency of large cities, I shall mention one objection, which I think, admits of little dispute. The circumstance of the Parliament of this country being in later times, constantly holden in the metropolis, gives an advantage to its population infinitely exceeding that possessed by any other portion of the community, even supposing that it were totally unrepresented. In these days more especially, when public opinion is so much urged on the one hand, and yielded to on the other, the facility and effect with which this opinion is made to act on the Legislature, individually and collectively, give, I repeat, the population of the city which happens to be the seat of legislation an advantage which it is not easy to over-rate. If you add to this advantage a corresponding share of direct influence, you run the risk of rendering it overwhelming. When you draw around the seat of legislation a circumvallation, if I may so speak, of a constituency thus accumulated, directed as in all probability it must be, the consequence is easily predicted. London will become the Paris of England; than which a greater curse could never befall the peace, liberty, and property, of the country. But to attend to the other features of this notable scheme. I have already remarked, what I defy any one to disprove, that the original foundation of the right proposed to be destroyed in so many cases, was not placed upon mere numbers. To determine therefore regarding that right, upon any such principle, is unconstitutional as well as unjust; but if such were made the test of its validity, it would in almost every case be found as strong as at the first;—stronger indeed; the population of most of the boroughs now selected for extinction being more populous now, both positively and relatively, than they were at their creation. But to determine concerning the ancient rights of Corporations and boroughs by an arbitrary scale of population, and to attempt to disfranchise a freeman or his children, because he has not a given number of neighbours, is quite as unjust, and not a whit less absurd, than were you to determine any other of his legal claims by the same evidence. Besides, the rule proposed for our adoption is most objectionable in another point of view—in attempting to establish, for the first time, as a scale of Representation, mere numbers; a standard, which is in its very nature constantly and necessarily changeable. Nor will I leave out of the case the gross and palpable injustice, never previously contemplated by our greatest and most enlightened reformers (at least of the monarchical school), of depriving property of its ancient influence, which I have already attempted to show is held as beneficially, as regards the public interest, as it is in reference to those of the individual possessors. You may talk of this privilege being a trust, so is all property, so is the Crown, as the noble member for Tavistock writes; and still further to quote him—"We ought to have as good, and as strong, and as cogent reasons for disfranchising Old Sarum, as we had for expelling James 2nd." Every thing possessed, if traced to its abstract title, is in the nature of a trust, for which its possessors are, doubtless, accountable to God and man. But to spoliate this property, to destroy these trusts, for no other reason but because we think proper to produce a new system, and to plead our power to do so, is the most fatal impolicy, as well as the grossest injustice. This is to admit a principle of a most dangerous character, and one which can never rest with such an act. If you scrutinise the pedigree of property thus, and determine that the ancient rights of the owner of Callington, for instance, are spurious, I will answer for it that those of Tavistock will be as certainly investigated. And, as to the latter, it is not the sanctity of their well-remembered origin, or their having been once devoted to the cause of piety and charity, or the circumstance of their having been since secularised, I will not say by what means, or for what purpose, which will long protect them. How, then, are we to begin the work of reformation? asks the same author I have quoted so frequently. "It is," he answers, "extremely difficult, if not impossible, to cut off some boroughs on account of their size, without drawing an arbitrary line. If a borough with 500 votes is to be disfranchised, what is to save the borough with 560? Any Reform of this kind leads to the general reconstruction of the whole building, the plan we wish to avoid." This very plan has, however, been voluntarily and exultingly adopted; the same honourable individual who scrupled about the rights of Old Sarum, now proposes to annihilate every borough in England, however ancient or incorrupt, the inhabitants of which are under 2,000. The number of these is or was sixty; forty or fifty others are to be half disfranchised, the population of which happens to be below 4,000. But when all this is done, will the system exhibit any degree of proportion or regularity? On the contrary. Previously to this night's emendation, there were towns of 2,000 inhabitants with one Member each; towns of 20,000, with none; towns of 4,000 with two; of 40,000, with one, or none, as it happened. Many similar differences will still remain. To talk of throwing antiquity into the scale, as a sort of political make-weight, when determining on those rights which you retain, when it has been held as nothing regarding those which you destroy, is only adding insult to injury. In a word your new scheme manifests all the confusion and irregularity which has ever been charged upon the ancient one, without any of its apologies or justifications, founded on utility and right. Have, then, our constitution-mongers been led into these irregularities, by giving a preference to those places which are the principal seats of some of the important manufactures of the country, which is one of the professed objects of their whole scheme? No, they could not have been guided by this principle either; though they might have occasionally stumbled upon it. For instance, they have allowed Malton, with its 4005 inhabitants (oh, happy five !)—a neat little town, I confess, but not particularly noted, excepting for the learned persons it sends here—two Members; but to a neighbouring town, now one of the first places for naval architecture in the kingdom, at least long unrivalled in that pursuit, and distinguished for its respectability and opulence, Whitby, which with its strand, contained in 1821, 14,916 inhabitants, they have given none. Peterborough, belonging to the same noble Peer as the former place (Malton), had, at the same same period, 4,598 inhabitants, and Peterborough, therefore, is to retain two Members in a reformed Parliament; but the Potteries, as the continued townships of the parish of Stoke, in Staffordshire, are appropriately called, containing (even exclusive of Burslem, which has about 10,000 inhabitants) above 30,000 people, and being the seat of one of the most extensive and profitable manufactures of the country, was to have no Representation. Calne keeps two Members still, for, either by a fortunate chance, or a happy management, it has, including its parish, and also Bow-wood, above the privileged number; but the parish of Oldham, the principal seat of the hat manufacture of England, with 52,490 inhabitants, was to have none. Tavistock puts forth a bolder claim: it had in 1821 actually 5,483 inhabitants, for whose future political purity and independence a noble Marquis has stood sponsor in this House; I say Tavistock, which I never heard was famed for any particular pursuit of national industry, is to retain two; but Rochdale, the centre of the flannel manufacture of the country, with its 47,109 inhabitants, was to have none. Bedford, according to the new scale, will be still entitled to two; but Barnsley, with the parish to which it belongs, having about 14,000 souls, and being the place where the British linen manufacture has grown up, and where it now flourishes, is to have no direct voice. It is true, that some of these glaring violations of their own rules have been this night partially rectified by Ministers, but how came they originally into the Bill? With the Pandect of the Population Abstracts before them, and with many weeks of consideration in which to concoct and perfect their scheme, how was it that such gross errors could have been made? Sir, it is my opinion that they have been shamed into these rectifications. It would have appeared too monstrously unjust and disgustingly partial to have retained the Representations of Malton and Peterborough, Tavistock and Calne, with their handful of inhabitants, and to have left unrepresented, in a system which scouts the idea of virtual Representation, towns comprising so vast a mass of population. Some places, it is true, have been from the first far more fortunate. For instance, not only has Newcastle-upon-Tyne its two Members, but, including its suburb, Gateshead, it is to have three. Gateshead being fortunately situated on the Durham side of the water, and close to the Lord Privy Seal's abode, is therefore selected to have one also, though the Ministers half disfranchised Weymouth and Melcombe Regis, simply on account of their contiguity. But, Sir, half-a-score other places in the next county (York, which I cannot but think our constitution-makers have much slighted in their arrangements) are left unrepresented. The same patron of Durham, whoever he may be, has also stuck into the lists South Shields and a place called Westoe, which he also wishes should have a Member, in contempt of the claims of at least another half-score places in the next county, Lancashire—all of which have a greater, some twice and thrice as great, a population as those united places. But I will particularize no further. It would indeed be an endless task to exhibit the strange and irreconcileable elements this Bill attempts to incorporate; the glaring inconsistencies from which, as a paper constitution, one would have thought it might have been free. I shall no longer dwell upon the unfairness with which it has overlooked some great interests, and the injustice with which it has destroyed others. Among the last, I cannot refrain from noticing the prospective and total annihilation of the political privileges long exercised by many of the humbler classes of society—a regret which I put not on as a garnish to my present argument; on the contrary, it has been always a matter of exultation with me, that the Constitution of England, while securing the rights of the Crown and the interests of the higher orders, made room also in its Representative system for the humblest rank above that of paupers; for those who, to use the metaphor of the learned Lord Advocate, are beneath the firmament of a ten-pound rent, which he deems to be in a state of Stygian corruption and darkness. A better insight into the structure of society would, I think, have convinced him that in that despised and repudiated class, for such it now seems to be by many of our modern liberals, there is often as much patriotism, and always as much purity, as in any above his "firmament," even though he mounted to it as high as the stars and garters of society. Deeply should I regret the hour which should deprive those honest and industrious artizans, who contribute to the comfort and support of every other class, and who furnish their full quota to the service of the State, of all political existence, and leave them as totally without a voice in the councils of the country as the slaves in our colonies. Sir, I regard these new and revolutionary schemes with more apprehension and dislike the more I consider them, and turn to the ancient Constitution of my country with increasing attachment. But, when I contemplate that Constitution, the object of my early reverence, and which all I have since read and observed in my passage through life has still more endeared to me, I confess I am hurried away with feelings not perhaps quite consistent with calm deliberation; but when I "awake my senses that I may the better judge," I find that reason itself heightens my enthusiasm; while all those unrivalled names that have arisen among us, formed to correct the past and influence the future opinions of their country and of mankind, have given immutability to those views on this most important subject, which I shall ever be proud to cherish, let who will be their impugners. Still more do I feel assured when I find the greatest authorities of other countries, wholly unbiassed, therefore, by national partialities, loud and unanimous in their admiration of our venerated form of government. Above all, when I consider, that experience, far above all other authority, and whose voice is truth itself, has long confirmed the superiority of our Constitution however compared; I say, when I consult my own understanding, or am recumbent upon that of infinitely more powerful minds, or open my eyes to simple facts, I feel resolved to cherish and defend to the utmost of my power, and to the last, our happy Constitution, and to resist every attempt of those who would destroy it to place in its stead a scheme and invention of their own, though it were, far unlike this, theoretically just and perfect. Sir, a comparison of the very names of those whose wisdom and patriotism formed and perfected our Constitution—of those who have eulogised and defended it—with those of the united Cabinet who now seek to revolutionize and destroy it, would, I think, shame the attempt, and expose to just derision the self-sufficiency and temerity of their designs. In patriotism are they superior? That is impossible. In genius, in wisdom, in knowledge, are they equal? The keenest sarcasm which could be launched at them would be so to compare, or rather contrast them, one by one. It would then be found of each of them that he was not

> ——twentieth part the tithe
> Of his precedent lord.

The former, indeed, established their lasting fame by erecting upon its ancient foundation, and by careful and slow degrees perfecting, the fabric of the Constitution; these place their hopes upon mutilating and destroying it. I am not aware that they have any other claims upon the recollection of posterity but what rest upon the present attempt. If, however, they succeed in destroying this wonder of the world, they will be as certain of immortality as those who founded it. The memory of Erostratus is as secure as that of Ctesiphon. But, Sir, much as I venerate the founders and assertors of the British Constitution, I cannot dare to attribute to human wisdom or human power merely what I believe to be of still higher original. It may seem, indeed, that what man calls accident did much, that necessity prompted and experience adopted those several provisions, and formed those various adaptations which constitute the system, which wisdom and patriotism at length perfected. But if ever there was an occasion in which we are justified in appealing to a higher power as overruling those events which produced that system which has been the blessing of this country and of the civilized world, it was that of the establishment of the free institutions of England. May not we exclaim with far greater emphasis than could the Roman orator, "*Non est humano consilio, ne mediocri quidem, judices, deorum immortalium curâ, res illa perfecta?*" The very origin of Englishmen was favourable to the institution of freedom; and every event in our changeful history contributed ultimately to its slow, indeed, but hardy growth. The gradual, but constant increase of knowledge had been for centuries ameliorating the condition of the people, and remedying successively the grosser defects in our institutions, when the Press poured forth a torrent of divine and humanising truth, and the Reformation broke the chains of despotism, civil as well as religious, and genius and eloquence went forth unmanacled to their great task of elevating the intellect and purifying the feelings of the people. The almost unbounded property of the ecclesiastic establishments, though infamously seized and disgustingly appropriated, became beneficially divided. Commerce multiplied the wealth of the nation, and mingled society into a more undistinguishable mass, infusing through the whole a portion of its own spirit of enterprise and independence. Then was it, that the dreadful struggle between arbitrary monarchy and unbridled democracy commenced, and was pursued with varying success, but with unabated fury, till military despotism, as it ever does, became the arbiter, and settled itself upon the subjugation of both; thus inflicting upon the wearied and desolated nation, the bitter experience of tyranny in every different form, till its liberties were established, and I hope perpetuated, at the glorious Revolution—a Revolution so little like any other the world had previously seen, or has since witnessed; undesecrated by human blood; uninfluenced by lawless force; when the wisest and the greatest of our countrymen in the brightest age of England, utterly rejecting those theoretical changes, which were as obviously suggested to them as to our more rash and ignorant innovators, established and completed that form of government which had no archetype in the history of the nations, and which had existed but indistinctly in the theories of former philosophers and politicians—which, embracing the wants and wishes of preceding times, provided for the freedom and happiness of future ones. And thus, while its founders have been the means of elevating this country to its unrivalled pinnacle of greatness, they have, by furnishing the model of the noblest system of government ever witnessed, laid all other countries and every succeeding generation under an eternal debt of gratitude and admiration. Something, perhaps, I might have added, regarding the character of the Representative branch of this Constitution which it is now the fashion with many to decry. But it is unnecessary, nor is this the proper place, to do so. Its eloquence will excite the admiration, as its acts will demand the gratitude, of posterity. It has been the nurse of freedom; the champion of the rights of nature; and, above all, the protector of the friendless and the poor. It is identified with whatever is great or patriotic in the annals of the country. In a word, it is a fit personification of the great and noblest community upon earth. But if it should be objected that these observations on the excellency of our present Constitution, which our reformers stigmatize as so corrupt and rotten, are mere declamation—a short and ready way of evading what is often unanswerable,—let us no longer advert to opinions and authorities, of what order, but turn our eyes to undeniable facts. "The tree is known by its fruits," is a maxim as true in politics as in religion. What, then, are the fruits this system has produced? And in this case the fruits must be of too general a character to be overlooked, and too plain to be mistaken. In adverting to them, I am not about to contend that the Constitution we enjoy is theoretically perfect, or that practically it has been always administered in the best possible manner; still I think experience decides that the proud boast of successive generations of our patriots—that England possesses the most free, happy, and efficient form of Government existing on the face of the earth, is just; and that it has been productive of the happiest effects, is fully substantiated. Can we forbear, on an occasion like this, casting our eyes on the present condition of the empire, and tracing that measure of prosperity which we have, under Divine Providence, long enjoyed, to its true source? A territory placed almost at the northern extremity of the civilized world; so confined in extent as to justify the language of one of its poets—

> ——— "a spot
> Not quickly found, if negligently sought;"

with no peculiar advantages of soil or climate; with no wealth but what its people have created; where, under the encouragement and guarantee of her free institutions, industry, directed by intellect, and supplied by capital, has made the mightiest and most triumphant efforts ever witnessed in the history of man; a country which, while accumulating its internal resources, has spread its dominion like a zone round the habitable world, and gathered under its sway a greater mass of human beings than ever bowed to the sceptre of any of its ancient and vaunted universal monarchies; a country where, for ages past, no hostile foot has dared to tread; no slave has breathed; where impartial justice has constantly presided; and which religion and humanity have made their own. The nurse of heroism and valour, the school of genius and science, and the seat of that moral empire which her literature has established throughout the world, she seems still destined to nobler tasks than those she has yet achieved, and to be visibly selected by Providence as the great instrument of benefitting and blessing the universal family of mankind. But I will not indulge in these topics of exultation and gratitude, however justly they may suggest themselves to my mind. Let me only ask whether all these great and glorious results, which fill our past history, which crowd the present era, and which extend to the remotest verge of the earth, comport with the idea of a weak, corrupt, and decayed Constitution—rotten at its very heart! The idea is preposterous. So long as political philosophy shall acknowledge that effects so great and stupendous as these are produced alone by adequate causes, so long will the vituperations against our present institutions be as inconsistent with possibility and truth, as they are insulting to the country. Nor is the excellency of our Constitution to be estimated alone by the blessings it has conferred upon us, but also by the calamities from which it has been equally the means of protecting us. It has preserved this country in security and internal peace, amidst the ruin of empires and the fall of thrones—in freedom, amidst surrounding tyranny. Can such a system justify the illustration applied to it, more than once, during this discussion, that of a rotten and sinking vessel? No! its soundness and strength have been too recently tried. When the foundations of the social system of Europe were broken up, and the lawless floods of democracy rose and overwhelmed the proudest elevations of society under one wide and stormy abyss; when all seemed darkness above and tempestuousness around, then was the British Constitution seen like a sacred ark, mounting triumphant in the storm, and preserving for a world restored to peace and order the elements of loyalty, liberty, and law. Again, Sir, the same portents seem returning; the cloud appears gathering and darkening in the distance, and the roar of the desolating floods is heard from afar! And this is the very moment that we are urged to quit the ark of our safety, and trust ourselves for preservation to the shapeless raft which an inexperienced crew have suddenly provided for us. Such, then, is the Constitution which we are exhorted to desert and deliver over to destruction, in order that another system may be erected on its ruins. But what an experiment! If it succeed, it would be difficult to suppose that the country could become greater, and grow more prosperous than it has under the Constitution bequeathed to us by our ancestors; if it fail, dreadful indeed must be the consequences. The history of the world presents but few and doubtful instances of free communities surrendering their institutions in hope of an undefined advantage to their liberty and happiness by some great and sudden change; but it is crowded with cases where such a course has led to their degradation, slavery, and ruin. At all times such attempts have been found dangerous; at the present moment, when almost every government of Europe seems shaken to its very base, and many have already tottered to their fall, the present attempt appears presumptuous in a tenfold degree. It might have been hoped that the events of the last fifty years would have instructed us as to the value of our settled institutions, and united us all, hand and heart, in their preservation. The scenes of confusion, confiscation, and blood, had, we hoped, closed. Is the same fearful drama to be again enacted—the character and catastrophe the same—the scene only changed, and changed, alas! to our own country? May God forbid! I regard, it may be perceived, the condition proposed to us by the present Bill, as only one of transition; it is impossible to view it otherwise. A proposition which is, on the part of its promulgators, one of compromise, and, on that of its most zealous supporters, accepted only as a first and large step to their ultimate designs, can only be the precursor of further and indefinite changes—

Through what variety of untried being, [pass,
Through what new scenes and changes it must

I shall not attempt to prognosticate; but as to its final result, should it be adopted, few rational men can entertain much doubt. The catalogue of compliances which must be made, and of changes which must ensue, should this measure pass, are, I should think, sufficiently apparent in the minds of those who hear me. The steps by which we must descend to the catastrophe may not be precisely seen, but the termination is certain, nor can it be remote. Had we no examples, too recent to be forgotten, and too similar in their nature to these meditated changes, to be overlooked, it would be most easy, from their very nature, to divine their issue. The representative part of our system—already, if we must confess the fact, so powerful as to leave the other branches of the Legislature barely independent, were the influence which the aristocracy exercises in this House, and the connexion of this House with the aristocracy dissolved—would, literally speaking, become omnipotent. If there be any the least utility in the other branches of the Legislature, the royal and aristocratic power of the State, the present constitution of this House can alone preserve it. I will not attempt to prove by laboured arguments what must be abundantly clear without any; but if any doubt remain on the mind of any one who hears me, I will resolve that doubt by an authority, second in point of information to none now among us, and the more to be attended to, inasmuch as he composes one of the members of his Majesty's present Government. The author of that admired work, the *Vindiciæ Gallicæ*, when advocating Parliamentary Reform upon the direct, in contradistinction to the virtual, principle of Representation, thus delivers himself upon this momentous point:—"The powers of the King and Lords (says Sir J. Mackintosh) have never been formidable in England, but from discords between the House of Commons and its pretended constituents. Were the House really to become the vehicle of the popular voice, the privileges of the other bodies, in opposition to the sense of the people and their representatives, would become as dust in the balance." If, then, in this new system, not only the Lords Temporal, with all their power and privileges, and the hierarchy of the Church, representing as they do their own order, but the Sovereign himself, would become as dust in the balance when weighed against this reformed House of Commons, can we suppose that such unwieldy and expensive parts of the system would be retained, their functions having become totally superseded, and their very existence useless? That the monarchy itself, expensive as it must necessarily be, would in these days of rigid frugality and retrenchment be retained, its power being as dust in the balance, and its office therefore useless, it were folly and infatuation to suppose. No, Sir, with a House of Commons thus "reformed," on the authority of the hon. member of his Majesty's Government I have just quoted, the fate of the peerage and of the monarch would be sealed. The next sweeping Reform, and it could not be far distant, would wipe away this expensive dust, and give to the Government of the country, not the essence merely, that it would have the moment this Bill should pass—but the very name of democracy. Let, then, his Majesty's present advisers, supposing (which God forbid) this measure should pass, approach their Sovereign with this Bill, and practising on his generous and unsuspecting nature, obtain his assent—at the moment his royal hand shall inscribe the fatal act, it will require no peculiar strength of mental vision to perceive the image of another hand, shadowy indeed, but darkening into reality, and inscribing in portentous characters upon the tablets of the history of this ancient monarchy, Mene—"Thy kingdom is departed from thee!" Sir, I must have exhausted the patience of the House, and cannot but be grateful for its continued attention, on which I will no longer trespass, though some parts of the subject, to which I fully meant to have addressed myself, and those not the least important, I shall leave untouched. Should it be imputed to me, in order to weaken the arguments I have used, that I have engaged in the defence of certain parts of our representative system, merely because I am more or less connected with them, I will deny that imputation. I entertained the views which I have now advanced before I entered Parliament, and had acted the part of an humble indeed, but public defender of the character of this House, long before I anticipated sharing in the honour it confers. My opinions are those of sincere conviction; and if, in these days of change and tergiversation, I may assert so much, they have been consistent throughout. They are such as I think are conducive to the general good, and the liberty and happiness of my fellow-subjects. But this revolutionary scheme, I cannot but believe, is fraught with present danger, and future destruction to the country. The unanimity with which it is said to be received, when the various objects of its promoters are considered, is of itself portentous, and is like the boding calm which is the precursor of elemental warfare. The consequences of adopting this measure will be soon apparent. When you shall have seized upon the rights and franchises you purpose to destroy, other interests than those which you thus unsparingly attack will next await their fate. The ecclesiastical establishment will probably be the first of the ensuing victims. Other spoliations will follow, and of quite as justifiable a character. When vested rights shall no longer be favourably regarded, will vested wrongs be respected? No. I would ask the noble Lord whether the immense spoliations of the funds of piety and charity, which have been perpetrated at a much later period than that of the origin of the rights which he thus unceremoniously treats, and all of which are as accurately known at this moment as they were when the act was perpetrated, will these be much longer respected? It is not the franchises alone which will be seized, it is the property with which they are connected, which some hardly more daring, certainly not more unjust, reformers will treat also as a trust, unjustly acquired and injuriously retained. For myself, though in an humble rank, I have ever been and shall always remain, to the utmost of my power, a defender of the rights of property, as well as I trust those of poverty; both of which I think are threatened by this measure. But acts like these endanger the whole social system. The noble Lord has urged us in a threatening tone to proceed with this Bill; I conjure him as earnestly himself to desist. He appeals to the momentary excitement which has been suddenly and intentionally raised, and which is as rapidly subsiding. The people of England like not sweeping changes nor dangerous experiments; their sober judgment is in favour of their ancient and happy institutions, which they may indeed wish to have improved and perpetuated, but which they will never consent to see mutilated and destroyed. The projectors of this sweeping and revolutionary change assure us they will stand or fall by their Constitution. Let them! For myself, I will stand or fall by the Constitution of England. I second the Motion of the gallant General.

On the Amendment being put by the Speaker—

Lord *Althorp* said, he could assure the House that in rising to address them he had no intention of following the hon. Gentleman who had just sat down through the very discursive speech with which he had favoured the House. He was quite sure that the object of the Amendment which had been proposed was to destroy the Bill; and, considering that such was the object of it, he need not say, that the speech of the hon. Gentleman who had just sat down, was irrelevant to the matter immediately before them. The proposition now made was not merely that the numbers of the House should be kept as they were, but that the Members of the House should either be increased, or that Ireland and Scotland should be deprived of a part of their Representatives. The hon. Gentleman who had proposed this Amendment, had very wrongly and unjustly accused the Government of having made such changes in the Bill as rendered the Bill an entirely new one. With that accusation he would presently deal; but he must observe at once, that the changes would be extraordinary changes indeed, if, when they proposed to decrease the numbers of the House, they were to accede to a motion for increasing them. It was impossible to misunderstand the nature of this Amendment. It was the first of that series of motions by which it was intended to interfere with the progress of the Committee; and which, if agreed to, would be fatal to the Bill, or, at least, so detrimental to it, as to render it impossible that it should be proceeded with. Yet the hon. mover of this Amendment had told the House, that he could not believe the Ministers would seriously oppose his proposition. Now he begged to assure that hon. Member, that he never was more serious in his life than he was now in his opposition to this Amendment. They had heard a good deal about the injustice of spoliating England for the sake of Scotland and Ireland; but the hon. Member who had introduced that topic might as well have talked about the injustice of spoliating Cornwall for the sake of the United Kingdom. Next, the hon. Member had made an appeal to the feelings of the English Representatives, and had endeavoured to persuade them that their interests, and the interests of their constituents, would be endangered by the proposed arrangement. But what was the fact? Why, the Members for Great Britain would be as five to one to the Members for Ireland, and yet this was the proportion which the hon. Gentleman pretended would endanger Great Britain. They had all along stated the mode in which they had proceeded. Finding it desirable to disfranchise a certain number of the smaller boroughs, the next point they had looked to was, to find out places on which they should confer the franchises thus acquired. It was in the first instance proposed that these franchises should be given to a certain number of large towns, and by the amendments which they intended to bring forward in the Committee, this number of large towns would be increased; so that he believed it would be seen that no place of proper magnitude would require farther Representation. With regard to the proposed additions to the Representation of Ireland and Scotland, they had added Representatives to flourishing places in both. This was the principle which had guided them,—this was the only principle on which they had acted—and they had applied it in the same way to both countries. But the hon. Member had accused them of having made such alterations in the Bill, that the Bill was, in fact, an entirely new one. This was a strange accusation, when it was considered that the hon. Gentleman had admitted the principle to be the same: and to put this forward as an objection was still more extraordinary when the hon. Gentleman at the same time admitted that the Bill had been much improved by the changes. Yet, in the very same speech, the hon. Gentleman had told them that very little of the original Bill remained. Now he should have thought the arrangements, with regard to the boroughs in schedule A, and schedule B, were amongst the most important parts of the Bill. Certainly the Gentlemen opposite had appeared to think so. And what alterations had been made in those schedules? Why, fifty-five boroughs out of the sixty in the first, and forty-one out of the forty-seven in the second, still remained in them. Now he contended, that the alterations which it was proposed to make in the Bill were only such as were constantly made in measures of importance: the principle, and all the great features of the measure, remained untouched, and the cheers with which the statement of his noble friend had been hailed, proved to him that the alterations were considered in that light by the friends of the Bill. The manner, too, in which that statement had been received by the Gentlemen opposite, proved that they also did not consider, that the principle of the Bill had been departed from. Let them depend upon it, that the time had now arrived, at which no system of Representation could stand which was not defensible by reason. Let them depend upon it, that they could no longer go on with a system of Representation which was defensible only by prescription; and that if they were desirous of preserving the institutions of the country, and of securing the attachment of the people, they must make such changes in the system of Representation as would prove to the people that they were really, and not merely virtually, represented. But the hon. Gentleman had said, that he (Lord Althorp) had admitted that this measure was a compromise. His opinions, God knew, were sufficiently notorious upon one point of Reform—that point to which the hon. Gentleman had alluded; but he begged to remind the hon. Gentleman, that he had never made that a *sine qua non;* and although he had supported a mode of voting which had appeared to him the preferable mode, still he had never pretended that no Reform would be effectual which did not include the Vote by Ballot. He thought that the plan now proposed would be satisfactory to the people. Indeed, that was no longer a matter of opinion; for the voice of the people had already been raised in favour of the plan, and it had been hailed, too, as satisfactory by much warmer advocates of the Ballot than he had ever been. The hon. Gentleman had talked of the indirect influence of property being exercised by means of these boroughs; but it was not the indirect influence, but the direct power of property, which was exercised by means of these boroughs, and that was his objection to them. He admitted, that the indirect influence of property was a good thing, but he contended that the direct power of property, as exercised in returning Members to Parliament, was the worst possible thing for this country. The one made a man cultivate popularity and respect by his virtues and his good conduct, and this was most beneficial; whereas the other—the direct power of property—was actual compulsion, independent of, and distinct from, all considerations of good conduct. The hon. Gentleman who spoke last, and whose elaborate speech did great credit to his industry, had referred back to parts of the history of this country, in order to show that if the people's voice had always been predominant, we should never have acquired many of the greatest blessings which we now enjoyed. He was not there to say, that the aristocracy had not been the supporters of the liberties of the country; they had been so on many occasions, and he hoped they would always be so. Did it follow, however, from that fact, that when commerce and wealth had spread throughout the country, and when education and intelligence had become so generally diffused—did it follow, he said, that such a new state of things was not to be considered, or that measures which in former times, and under different circumstances, might not have been suited to the country, were now to be withheld, when the people were prepared and anxious for the reception of them? Mr. Locke had been quoted, and he must confess, that he was surprised that Mr. Locke should have been quoted upon this question, because Mr. Locke had declared, that the existence of boroughs was a great evil; he doubted, indeed, whether it could be cured. But Ministers hoped that the present measure would cure it, and therefore they called upon the House to adopt the remedy. A great part of the speech of the hon. Gentleman, and a great part of the speeches of other hon. Members, had turned upon former speeches of those who supported the Bill; the *argumentum ad hominem* was almost always resorted to. This course might be satisfactory to some, but he could not say, that because a man some years ago had expressed a certain opinion, it was to be contended that his present opinion was wrong. Then some hon. Gentlemen complained of the gross iniquity, as they called it, of the Bill, because, in the distribution of Members, more favour had been shown to towns; whereas, the number of Members for them was decreased, whilst the number of Representatives for counties was augmented. Then the danger of revolution was again brought forward. Now, he could not understand the grounds of this danger of a revolution. If the class of persons who were to return Members under the Bill were revolutionists, we should have a revolution without the Bill. If the larger class in the country were discontented with the existing institutions of the country, make what law you will, they would be discontented still. But this Bill would make them more contented. If they were discontented, it would afford them reason for contentment. So far from creating the danger of a revolution, the measure would have a directly contrary effect; it would tend to preserve us from revolution. The hon. Gentleman had attacked him (Lord Althorp) because there was to be an addition to the representatives of Northamptonshire. If the hon. Member knew as much of Northamptonshire as he did, the hon. Member would hardly conceive that any alteration should not diminish his influence there. But really, when Gentlemen brought forward suspicions of this kind they did not give to Ministers the ordinary credit for a sense of honour in their conduct of a measure which would have such most important consequences. "Thinking as we do," said the noble Lord, "that this measure is one of such great importance, and so highly beneficial to the country, that we might rest our hopes of present fame and of reputation with posterity upon it, is it to be supposed, that any private motives of personal interest would make us swerve from the just line of impartiality? The hon. Member, I hope, said it in the heat of debate; I cannot conceive that he could intend to impute to us such motives; if he does, I can only say, I do not envy him his mind." He begged all those who were friendly to the measure not to be deceived as to the consequences of the proposition now submitted to the House, nor to think it of small importance to the great object. If it were carried, it would effect such damage to the Bill, it would be such a blow to it, that it must be fatal to the success of the measure. He appealed, therefore, to all who were friendly to the Bill to join in opposing the proposition of the hon. Member.

Viscount *Stormont* designated the Bill introduced by his Majesty's Ministers as a tissue of errors and absurdities. The noble Lord who introduced the Bill confessed, that he had discovered numerous errors in it; but yet he contended that it was not a new Bill—the alterations were merely *addenda*. The new Bill was printed, and it had increased from thirteen pages to twenty-five—nearly double—and yet they were told that it was the same Bill. Were they to believe it was now the whole Bill, and nothing but the Bill? or was it not, rather, a different Bill? The noble Lord (the member for Tavistock) contended that it was the same Bill, and that the principle was still the same. That assertion reminded him (Lord Stormont) of an anecdote to be found in that well-known compiler Mr. Joseph Miller. A person passing through a turnpike said to the man at the gate, "Have you seen a short, thick-set fellow, with broad shoulders and a red face, riding through this gate?"—"No," replied the turnpike man, "but I saw a long, thin man, with narrow shoulders and a pale face, riding through." "Oh," rejoined the querist "it is all the same; that must be my friend." The noble Lord had proceeded on a similar principle. He altered the measure in every respect, and then talked of its being the same measure. The noble Lord talked of direct and indirect Representation; but his observations on that point had been well met by the hon. member for Newark (Mr. Sadler), who observed, that men would endeavour to get into Parliament by courting popularity, and however high a man might bid for popularity, he would find ten others to out-bid him. It was seeking for popularity, and men's fearing to act on their own opinion, that had decided the fate of the Bill. If that influence had not operated, the House would never have been called upon to consider the Bill in Committee. Men who courted popularity might rest on it as long as they truckled for it; but it would not subsist longer. He believed that many of the ancestors of those he addressed would not have supported such a course. They would have said, "This Bill is in its principle vicious, and we will not entertain it." There were many, however, who had said, that, though they should vote for the second reading of the Bill, they could not support its details; and the measure had now arrived at the stage when those persons were bound to act. He acknowledged that there were discrepancies of opinion as to what part of the Bill ought to be supported, and what part opposed. The hon. and gallant General had done him (Lord Stormont) the honour to consult him as to the expediency of bringing forward a motion, which was to the effect that it was desirable to retain the relative proportions in the Representation of England, Scotland, and Ireland; but it was thought, on mature consideration, that such a proposition might be deemed invidious. The hon. and gallant General, however, was strongly of opinion that, as so many Roman Catholics had entered the House, the number of English Members ought not to be diminished; and he was also one of those who thought that large constituencies should return Representatives. The present Motion was framed with these views; and he might add, that it was not brought forward to throw out the Bill. He admitted, that the Motion was not brought forward with friendly motives, but he denied that it was brought forward as a trial of strength. The Motion did not affect the principle of the Bill. He denied, that the number of Members now belonging to the House was found inconvenient on ordinary occasions, and many who were not unfavourable to the Bill generally would be glad to get rid of so much of it as reduced the total number of Members in that House. He called upon those who voted for the Bill, as well as those who voted against it, therefore, to support the proposition of the hon. and gallant General. Ireland was in a dreadful state: and if this measure was carried, what power would it not give the hon. member for Waterford (Mr. O'Connell) in pursuing his favourite measure—the dissolution of the Union. If this measure was carried, they would have in that House persons not possessing the same reverence or love for the Constitution, nor the same station and character in the country, as those he had now the honour to address. He was sure, if the Bill was carried, the hon. member for Waterford would return thirty Members from Ireland, all of whom would be at his beck, and ready to support every proposition made by him, however detrimental it might be to the general interest of the country. As the hon and gallant General meant to take the sense of the House on his Motion, he hoped the House would support him, and he trusted, the noble Lord would distinctly inform the House what time he meant to go into Committee on the Bill, for the House should have some time to consider the new propositions now submitted to them.

General *Duff* said, he should certainly support the proposition of the hon. and gallant member for Liverpool. He was by no means an enemy to Reform; but the Reform he was friendly to, was one that would be wholesome and salutary, and consistent with the feelings of the country.

Mr. *Cutlar Ferguson* said, that this question was of vital importance to his country. It was to be determined that night whether any addition was to be made to the Representation of Scotland? If there was one Representative of Scotland in that House who thought the large towns of Scotland should be represented, that individual would fail in his duty if he did not vote against the gallant General's Motion. The Representation of Scotland and Ireland could be increased only either by transferring the elective franchise from some of those by whom it was at present enjoyed, or by increasing the number of the Members of that House—not by ten, but at least by sixty. If they adopted the latter, they must give to England a proportion of four times more than to Ireland and Scotland. Instead of 658 Members, the House must be made to consist of 720. Now, there was not a Member of that House who would consent to that. There were no means, therefore, by which the Representation of Scotland could be improved unless the gallant General's Motion were negatived. The gallant General seemed to object to the addition of any Irish Members, not so much on the score of religious considerations, as on the ground of the obstruction to public business which the frequent addresses of the Irish Members occasioned. Now it appeared to him that there was not one of the hon. Members for Ireland who addressed the House so frequently as the gallant General did. But if the Irish Members spoke much, the Scotch did not speak at all. If the gallant General thought, that the Presbyterians of Scotland would join the Catholics of Ireland, he was mistaken. On the contrary, he might consider the former as a set-off against the latter; and look to them as his allies against any attack of the Catholics, come when it might. It was said that the Church was in danger. Was it ever in danger from Scotch Members? When the Test and Corporation Act was repealed, the Scotch Members divided thirteen to seven against the repeal. It ought to be recollected, that, at the time of the Union with Scotland, when forty-five Members were allowed to that country, the revenue of Scotland was only 120,000*l.* It was now 4,000,000*l.* The present population of Scotland, as compared with the population of England, was as one to four; the revenue as one to eight. And yet the effect of adopting the gallant General's Motion would be, that not a single additional Member could be given to Scotland. On that ground he should oppose the gallant General's Motion, if on no other. The friends of Scotland must reject the Motion. No Scotch Member who voted for the Motion would dare to go back to his constituents and hope to find favour with them. If he thought that what he asked for Scotland, or the Irish Members for Ireland, were contrary to the principles of sound Representation, he would not advocate it; but what was asked would only do away with the rotten part of the Representation. They were told that Glasgow, having 148,000 inhabitants, was to have two Members, the number which Gatton at present had. In the Bill his Majesty's Ministers had dealt severely with Scotland. Forty-seven boroughs were still to have one Member each; yet the whole population of those forty-seven boroughs did not amount to within 10,000 of the population of Glasgow alone. He would not detain the House on the general question. There was one view which he took of it which he had not yet seen touched upon. For fifty years the popular complaint had been, of the influence of the Crown in that House. That influence was now dead and gone. The last finishing to it was given by the Duke of Wellington; not with the view of reducing the influence of the Crown, but with the view to retrenchment. By that retrenchment the influence of the Crown in that House had been annihilated. There existed, however, an influence much more base and degrading—the influence of the owners of boroughs; an influence base and degrading, and frequently turned against the Crown. He had seen Administrations formed—not on the ground of the confidence which the country or the Crown had in its members, but from the reply to the question, whether the Members of it could gain the assistance of this Duke, or that Marquis, who had Representatives in the House of Commons. Even the possession of the Treasury boroughs was now of no use; for, on a change of Ministry, their possessors immediately went into Opposition. Among the other objections which had been urged to the Bill, it was stated, that it would prevent lawyers from getting into the House. He should like to see the popular assembly into which lawyers would not get. There never had been any Parliament in which there were not many lawyers, except that of Henry 4th, to which the Sheriffs were instructed not to return any lawyers; a circumstance of which Lord Coke spoke with great indignation —calling that Parliament, *Parliamentum indoctum.* He believed, that the proposed Reform would effect the greatest possible change in the Representation. He believed, and he hoped and wished, that that change would be greatly beneficial. It had been said to those who talked of restoring the Constitution—show us what the Constitution was which you wish to restore. That Constitution declared, that Parliament should be composed of the Earls, Barons, Burgesses, and Freemen of the Realm. A commission, composed of the most learned men, in the reign of James 1st, declared that the ancient Constitution, established by the law of the land, was, that the elective franchise was vested in every man paying scot and lot. The present measure did not go so far as that declaration, but it was an approximation to it. He hoped that no attempt would go beyond it; for it was sufficiently sweeping. It was a vital measure as considered with reference to the Representation of the country to which he had the honour to belong; and as such he should cordially support it.

Lord *Loughborough* said, that if he thought it possible that the Motion of the gallant General could be in any way injurious to Scotland, he should, as one of the Representatives of that country, pause before he gave it his support. But, being of opinion that the House, as at present constituted, was not too numerous to attend to the various questions and important interests upon which it had to determine, he should certainly vote for the gallant General's Motion. With respect to the noble Lord's Bill, it appeared to him to alter, not only the constituency of that House, but the Constitution of the country. If population were to be the criterion of Representation, why make such a distinction between England and Scotland? Why adopt one principle on one side of the Tweed, and another principle on the other side? Why give twelve Scotch counties, with a population of 1,521,000, only one Member each, and give twelve English counties, with a population of 1,175,000, three Members each? It was in vain, after that fact, to talk of the principle of the Bill. In truth, there was no principle in it but the principle of Revolution [*hear, hear!*]. He was aware of the meaning of that ironical cheer; and that the word Revolution was considered an objectionable one. The member for Preston, and other Members, voted for the Bill, because it would lead to Annual Parliaments, Vote by Ballot, and Universal Suffrage. He therefore would resist the measure. He would not only do his duty as an individual, but his duty to his country as a Member of Parliament. He meant to vote for the recommendation of the hon. member for Liverpool, and he would do so because a change would be a violation of the Union. It would infringe the eighteenth Article of the Union. It would increase the Representation of one part of the empire without increasing that of the other. He would oppose all the changes, unless they were made on the basis of the present proportion of the Representatives of the different parts of the empire.

On the hon. Member taking his seat, there was a cry of "Adjourn," but after some time,

Colonel *Wood* obtained possession of the House, and went on to say, that as he voted for the second reading of the Bill, he was anxious to explain the reason of the vote he meant to give. He felt it his duty to vote for the Motion of the gallant General, but in doing so he did not give that vote for the purpose of destroying the

Bill. The time was arrived when some Reform was necessary, and the Bill, with certain amendments might effect that Reform; but if it were to pass into a law, it must be with many amendments. The instruction moved by the gallant General, related, in his opinion, to a point which was open to discussion; and if it was not, it was of no use for them to go into the Committee. As he understood the gallant General's proposition, it said nothing of the proportion of Members for the different parts of the empire. The gallant General said, indeed, and so he (Colonel Wood) thought, that the relative proportion of Members for the different parts of the empire was a point of great importance, and it had been solemnly settled at the Union of Scotland, and the Union of Ireland, and ought not to be disturbed. He wished to say nothing unpleasant to his Irish friends; but when it was said, that they were not sufficient to protect Irish interests, he was bound to say, that, at least, he heard as great a number of eloquent appeals from Members of that part of the empire as from any other. The Bill, as it was at first drawn, went to extinguish seventy of the Members for England; and now it would extinguish forty-one [*some voice called out "forty."*] As that was the case, when he found Irish and Scotch Members standing up for their countries, he thought it his duty, as an English Member, to stand up for the proper proportion of Representatives for England. He should, at a future opportunity, explain what amendments he thought necessary in the Bill.

On the hon. Member resuming his seat, there was a mingled call to "adjourn" and "go on." After the calls had continued some time,

Mr. *Lytton Bulwer* moved the adjournment of the Debate, as there were yet several Members who desired to speak.

Lord *Althorp* said, as it was evident that the Debate must be adjourned, he did not see any use in continuing it any longer.

Debate adjourned.

London Coal Trade Bill.] Mr. *Frankland Lewis* moved the second reading of this Bill. The right hon. Gentleman observed, that there was no objection whatever to the principle of the measure. He had communicated with several coal merchants of London on the subject, and none of them had any objections to make to the principle of the Bill; the objections to its details might be discussed in the Committee. He hoped, therefore, that nobody would object to the second reading.

Bill read a second time.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Tuesday, April 19, 1831.

Minutes.] Bills. Brought up from the Commons. Dean Forest Boundaries, Post Office Sale, Corporate Funds, Elections (Ireland), and Sea Apprentices Settlement.

Petitions presented. In favour of Reform, by the Duke of Richmond, from the Western Division of Sussex. Against Slavery, by Lord Somers, from Hereford:—By Lord Suffield and Lord Bexley, from various Congregations of Dissenters. For the Repeal of the Beer Bill, by Lord Somers, from Hereford; and from the Corporation of that City, for the Protection of its Rights and Privileges.

Reform — Petition From Northamptonshire.] Earl *Spencer* said, he had to present a Petition from the county of Northampton, which had been agreed to at a public meeting convened by the High Sheriff. The petition was in favour of the measure of Reform now before the other House, and the petitioners prayed, that their Lordships would pass that measure when it came up to them. The petition was signed only by the High Sheriff; but the meeting was numerously attended, and the petition spoke the sense of a majority of the county. The noble Earl presented a similar petition from Towcester, Northamptonshire.

The Earl of *Westmorland* (who came into the House shortly after this petition was presented) said, he felt himself in a very disagreeable situation, from his not having been present when the petition from the county of Northampton was presented. He knew very well that the course he was now pursuing was somewhat irregular, but he would attempt to bring himself into order by moving that the petition be taken into consideration at a future day. In the first place, he wished to tell their Lordships that he did not concur in that petition; and, secondly, he wished to rescue the gentry of the county of Northampton, generally, from the discredit of having supported a petition in favour of a tyrannical and arbitrary measure [" *hear, hear !*"]. Yes, he intended to be heard; noble Lords might take his word for that. The objections to that measure were of so grave a character and so numerous, that he could not deal with them properly, except in a speech too long for an incidental discussion of this kind. He, therefore, would only say, that he did not concur in the measure, and endeavour to rescue the gentry of the county from having concurred in it. He thought the measure was both a revolution and revolutionary. He held, that there were two principles which could not be violated without departing from the Constitution. The first was, that no man could be divested of a legal right except a known crime had been proved against him; the second was, that the poorest man in the land, however low he might be, was quite as much entitled to the protection of the laws as the highest person in the country. These were principles in which he had been brought up, and he would ever stand up in defence of them. And yet this measure was one which went to the disfranchisement of all the people of England who happened not to be freeholders, or not to come within the favoured and arbitrary limits of the measure. The measure, therefore, was contrary to the British Constitution. The whole of the lower orders of England were stamped with the mark of degradation by this Bill. He trusted, that when the people were properly informed upon this subject—when they knew that they were to be made Helots in their own land,—they would rise up against this extraordinary measure. As to the disfranchisement of the close boroughs, that, consistently with the British Constitution, could not be done. "*Non meus hic sermo*," said the noble Lord; "it is the argument of Junius, and let those who find fault with it, find fault with Junius, not with me." Junius argued the question of the close boroughs very fairly and very well. First, Junius put the objection, and dealt with the anomaly; but then, on t'other side, he said, "Now I don't know, perhaps I should like to disfranchise them; but then, if I were to allow that, how do I know that you or I will not be disfranchised next?—if I allow the principle, I cannot tell how far it may be carried." He contended, that the Parliament deserved gratitude, not degradation in the eyes of the people. It had removed 25,000,000*l.* of taxes; it had repealed every law against the liberty of the subject; and had abolished every sort of division and distinction amongst all classes of his Majesty's subjects. This was what the Parliament had done, and he believed that the people were grateful for it. He thought, that this was a sufficient excuse for his not having joined in that petition which the noble Earl had thought proper to present in his absence. It was a mistake to say, that the petition was signed by the High Sheriff; it was signed by the High Sheriff's deputy, and the High Sheriff himself was not present at the meeting. This meeting was called by certain persons in the Great Hall, which was a place larger than that House; there were a great number of persons present; and a great disturbance ensued. The Sheriff adjourned the meeting into the open air, and then, in consequence of ill health being unable to attend, left his Under Sheriff to perform the business. One party got up this petition; another party met at one of the inns, and signed a declaration, in which they expressed their alarm at this measure, and protested against it. Now, what he must take the liberty of saying was this—namely, that in the Hall the voice of the meeting was against the petition, and that, with the exception of about thirty, all the gentlemen of the county of Northampton who were present went and signed the protest. As many as fifty of the gentry and clergy, and about 400 other persons signed the protest. He said, therefore, that the petition did not express the sense of the county.

Earl *Spencer* said, that he should not have presented the petition in the absence of the noble Earl, if he had known that the noble Earl wished to be present at the presentation of it. He came down at the usual hour, and presented the petition in the regular way; and as the noble Earl had not favoured the meeting with his company, and still less with the expression of those opinions to which he had to-day given utterance, it was not unnatural that he should not have supposed the noble Earl to be very much interested in the petition. The petition had been sent to him from the Under Sheriff with a letter, in which it was said, that the High Sheriff requested he would present it to their Lordships. Whatever might have been the prayer of a petition so forwarded to him, he should, if it were respectfully worded, have felt it his duty to present it. With regard to the meeting, it had certainly been held in the Town Hall at first; but any one who had seen the Town Hall would know that it was nothing like so large as that House, and, on this occasion, it had somehow or other been filled, before the doors were opened, with persons whose conduct plainly showed that they were there for the purpose of exciting a disturbance. An adjournment to the Market-place was resolved on; and then a party absented themselves from the meeting, and drew up a declaration, which he was informed, had been carried round the town and signed by the lowest persons. To that he did not object—for he agreed that the lowest had just as good a right as the highest had to the expression of their opinions; but he contended that those who had remained with the meeting that was presided over by the regular authority, ought to be considered as the county meeting, and that the petition which had proceeded from them ought to be considered as the petition of a meeting of the county regularly advertised, and convened with the usual formalities.

The Earl of *Winchilsea* said, that he did not rise to occupy their Lordships with his opinions about Parliamentary Reform, or about the Bill on that subject before the other House of Parliament; but connected as he was with the highly respectable county of Northampton, and with the highly respectable gentlemen who signed the requisition, he did feel himself called upon to vindicate those gentlemen from that unjust aspersion which the noble Earl had cast upon them, in accusing them of having lent their support to a tyrannical and revolutionary measure. He deprecated violent language alike on both sides, upon a measure in which the country was so deeply interested; and he was extremely sorry that the noble Earl should have characterized such a measure as tyrannical and revolutionary. Still more did he regret that the noble Earl should have aspersed honourable men, by saying that they were tyrants and revolutionists, which was the plain consequence of the accusation that they had supported a tyrannical and revolutionary measure; for, whatever might be the warmth of the noble Earl's attachment to the Constitution, the noble Earl's character was not, and could not be, higher than the character of many of those upon whom he had cast this aspersion. For his own part, he gave to every man who differed from him on constitutional questions the fullest credit for being actuated by no other motive than the welfare of his country. He should always do so, and he hoped that others would do the same. He would not trouble their Lordships then with any observations upon the Bill; nor should he have addressed their Lordships then at all, but that he felt himself called upon to relieve a respectable body of men from an aspersion, which he trusted that the noble Earl himself would, upon reflection, regret that he had cast upon them.

BREACH OF PRIVILEGE — CASE OF "THE TIMES."] The Earl of *Limerick* said —Presuming, my Lords, upon the very kind indulgence which I received at the hands of your Lordships yesterday, when I brought before your Lordships what I conceived to be a breach of the privileges of your Lordships' House, I am induced to entreat your Lordships to indulge me now for one or two minutes, and I promise not to detain your Lordships longer. Having already stated to your Lordships, fully and unreservedly, my opinion upon the subject in question, it would be at once bad taste and bad sense, if I were to travel into the matter again; and I rise now, to assure your Lordships that I have no personal feeling whatever with regard to the transaction. True it is, my Lords, that I considered that it was through me that the dignity of your Lordships' House was attacked,—but it was in consequence of the attack upon that dignity, and not in consequence of what was said of me personally, that I brought the matter under the notice of your Lordships. These were the grounds upon which I acted, and if I had it to do again, I would do precisely as I have done. My Lords, I have endeavoured to save your Lordships some time and trouble by looking into the precedents which have been followed upon similar occasions, or to which similar occasions have given rise; and I find that, in early days, very severe penalties have been inflicted upon persons who have been guilty of such an offence as that which I conceive has been committed in the present instance. However, my Lords, I am no advocate for violent measures, or for severe penalties in any case.

The *Lord Chancellor* here interrupted the noble Earl, and said—I am sure, my Lords, that the noble Earl means nothing but what is quite right in the course which he is now pursuing; but allow me to suggest to your Lordships, that that course is not consistent with the order of your Lordships' proceedings. Your Lordships yesterday agreed to an order,—namely, " That the printer of *The Times* newspaper do attend this House to-morrow at four o'clock." Now that order is peremptory; and I take it, that in the first instance your Lordships must be informed whether that order has been complied with, and whether the person is in attendance. With this, I apprehend, your Lordships must commence your proceedings in this matter, unless the noble Earl intends to move, that that order be discharged, and that I do not understand to be the noble Earl's intention.

The Earl of *Limerick.*—Certainly, my Lords, I have no such intention, any more than I have the intention of pursuing any course which is inconsistent with the order of your Lordships' proceedings. I will therefore very shortly bring my observations upon the subject to a conclusion. My Lords, I have no personal feeling in the matter. I took it up solely for the sake of the House, and with the House I now leave it.

Mr. Pulman, the Yeoman Usher, here appeared at the Bar, and said—" My Lords, the printer of *The Times* newspaper is in attendance."

The *Lord Chancellor.*—Let him be brought to the Bar.

The Printer of *The Times* was accordingly placed at the Bar.

The *Lord Chancellor.*—What is your name?

Answer.—John Joseph Lawson.

The *Lord Chancellor.*—Are you the printer of *The Times* newspaper?

Mr. Lawson.—I am, my Lord.

The *Lord Chancellor.*—Look at the paper which will be handed to you, at the paragraph which will be pointed out to you. [Here Mr. Courtenay, the Clerk of the Parliament, showed Mr. Lawson *The Times* newspaper which contained the paragraph complained of.] Are you the printer of the paper in which that paragraph is inserted?

Mr. Lawson.—I am, my Lord.

The *Lord Chancellor.*—You may withdraw.

Mr. Lawson having withdrawn from the Bar, one of the Clerks of the Table read the following paragraph:—

" Yet mean, cruel, and atrocious as every civilized mind must consider the doctrine, that Ireland has no need of Poor-laws, or some equivalent for them—hateful and abominable as is such a screen for inhumanity—there are men, or things with human pretensions, nay with lofty privileges, who do not blush to treat the mere proposal of establishing a fund for the relief of the diseased or helpless Irish with brutal ridicule and almost impious scorn. Will any man credit, that an Irish absentee Lord could say what he is reported to have uttered in the House of Peers last night, when Lord Rosebery presented a Petition, praying that a compulsory tax on land might be introduced into Ireland, towards alleviating her poor? We shall not name him,—because the House of Lords is armed with a thing called a 'Bar,' and other disagreeable appendages. But there are members of that House who surprise nobody by declaring their indifference to ' popular odium,'—especially when they are at such a distance from Ireland as to ensure the safety of their persons."

After the reading of the above paragraph there was a short pause, and then

Lord *Wynford* rose and said, " My Lords, I, for one, beg leave to express my obligation to the noble Earl near me, for having brought this matter under the consideration of your Lordships, and "—

Here a call was made to clear the Bar, which was accordingly done. All the strangers below the Bar, not excepting the Reporters, were put out of the House. The Members of the House of Commons, who were standing at the foot of the Throne, were allowed to remain. The following proceedings, it is understood, then took place.

Their Lordships determined that the paragraph was a false and scandalous libel. Mr. Lawson was then again called in.

The *Lord Chancellor* informed him, on his being placed at the Bar, that the House had determined that the paragraph, which had appeared in the paper of which he was the printer, was a false and scandalous libel, and that their Lordships were then ready to hear any thing which he might have to urge in his defence.

Mr. Lawson expressed his regret, that there should have appeared in *The Times* newspaper, of which he was the printer, any paragraph calculated to give offence either to their Lordships in general, or to any noble Earl in particular. Their Lordships must be aware, that owing to the rapidity with which a journal like *The Times* must be printed, and the multiplicity of articles which necessarily found their way into it, it was almost impossible for him, using every diligence in his power, to peruse every separate paragraph which appeared in the paper. The paragraph of which their Lordships complained, had found its way inadvertently into the paper, and he had only to repeat his deep regret that it had done so.

Mr. Lawson was ordered to withdraw, but shortly afterwards was recalled to the Bar, when several questions were put to him by several of their Lordships, through the Lord Chancellor. He was asked, whether he had the supreme control of the paper of which he was the printer?—He replied that he had not. He was then asked, if he knew who had?—He replied, that he considered himself to be holding a confidential situation in *The Times* office, and that he therefore could not answer that question without a breach of trust to his employers, and a loss of character to himself.

The *Lord Chancellor* informed Mr. Lawson that he was not bound to answer any questions unless he pleased. It would be enough for him to state to their Lordships that he declined answering any question to which he had an objection. At the same time, he must inform him, that their Lordships would form their own opinions as to his reasons for not answering such questions as might be put to him. Was he to understand that Mr. Lawson declined to answer the last question?

Mr. Lawson.—Certainly.

A noble Lord then asked, whether a gentleman, whose name he mentioned, was not the editor of *The Times* newspaper.

Mr. Lawson replied, that this was only another mode of putting to him the last question; and therefore, with all respect to their Lordships, he must decline giving any answer to it.

Mr. Lawson was then asked, whether he was the person whose name was entered as the printer at the Stamp-office.—He replied, yes. Certain questions were then put to him respecting the proprietors of the paper, whose names were entered at the Stamp-office; but his reply was, that he did not know who they were. He was then ordered to withdraw.

Lord *Wynford* moved, "That John Joseph Lawson, having admitted himself to be the printer of a false and scandalous libel, which had appeared in *The Times* newspaper of the 16th instant, be fined 100*l.* and committed to Newgate till the fine be paid."

The Motion was resisted by the Lord Chancellor, the Duke of Wellington, the Marquis of Lansdown, and Earl Grey. The House was about to divide on the Motion, when, on the amendment of a noble Lord, it was carried, that Mr. Lawson should be committed to the custody of the Usher of the Black Rod, and that he do attend their Lordships to-morrow morning at ten of the clock. Ordered accordingly.

Civil List.] Earl *Grey* rose, to move that their Lordships should go into a Committee on the Civil List Bill. Their Lordships were, no doubt, aware, the noble Earl said, that hitherto it had been customary to vote, under the head of the Civil List, not only all the personal expenses of the Monarch, but also many of the civil expenses of Government. It had been the custom, not only in the reign of George 3rd, but also in that of George 4th; and the total amount of the sums voted for the Civil List of the late Monarch, including the personal expenses of the King, and the civil expenses of his Government, amounted to 1,056,000*l.* In the Civil List proposed by the late Government, it was intended to make some alteration, and to separate from the personal expenditure of the King part of the expense of the Civil Government. It was intended to transfer part of the expenses which had been previously charged on the Civil List to the consolidated fund, and to vote them in future annually with the Estimates. It had been proposed to separate from the Civil List, the salaries of the Judges, of the Lord Chancellor of Ireland, of the Speaker of the House of Commons, and of some other offices which were to cease with the lives of their present holders. The amount of the salaries of these offices in England and Ireland together, was 63,389*l.* This sum was to be separated from the Civil List, and was to be transferred to the consolidated fund, and voted along with the ordinary estimates of the year. Besides, there were to be taken from the Civil List 30,000*l.*, which was paid for our Consular establishments; 13,040*l.* paid for expenses in Scotland, for prosecutions, &c. &c.; and 7,513*l.* paid to Dissenting Ministers in England—amounting together to 50,553*l.* Now, this sum, added to the former sum of

63,389*l.* which he had before mentioned, gave a total in round numbers of 114,000*l.* which was, in future, according to that proposition, to be separated from the Civil List. It was then proposed by the late Government, to vote for the Civil List of his Majesty, comprising the personal expenses of the Sovereign, and part of the expenses of his Civil Government, a sum of 970,000*l.*, which, added to the 114,000*l.* already mentioned, made all the expenses of the Civil List proposed by the late Government 1,084,000*l.*, which was 100,000*l.* less than the Civil List voted to his late Majesty. It had been proposed by the present Government to carry still further the principle of separating the expenses of the Government from the expenses necessary to enable the King to live in that comfort and splendor to which no King had a better title than the gracious Sovereign at present on the throne. For this purpose it was proposed in the Bill which he now moved to have referred to a Committee, that there should be nothing contained except what related to the personal expenses of his Majesty. The reasons for making this separation he would state at a subsequent period. At present it would be most convenient to show how the Civil List proposed by the present Government would operate in comparison with that proposed by the late Government. It had been proposed, in the first place, to transfer to the consolidated fund a considerable part of the pensions which now existed, and were hereafter to be reduced. Secondly, it was proposed to transfer to the same fund the salaries of the Judges, the diplomatic salaries, and the salary of the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, amounting in all to 382,249*l.* It was also proposed to vote in the Committee of Supply the sum of 30,000*l.* proposed by the former Government, for the salaries and expenses connected with the Board of Works. It was also proposed that the salaries of Ambassadors, of the Lord Privy Seal, &c. amounting to 171,000*l.* should be voted in Supply. The amount of the Civil List, as proposed, was 510,000*l.* which, added to the sum he had mentioned, made the whole sum 1,063,418*l.*, so that the real difference of expense between the Civil, List proposed, by the present and the late Government, was not more than 21,000*l.*, a saving which arose from the reduction of some offices, and the calling in of some pensions. He could not state that there was in this respect any great saving at present, but there would eventually be a large saving. With respect to the reductions which the present Ministry intended to make in the Pension List, he had to observe, that the late Government had intended to reduce it from 150,000*l.* to 140,000*l.* The present Government intended to reduce it, not to 140,000*l.* but to 75,000*l.*; so that there would eventually be a saving in the Pension List of 65,000*l.* At the same time there would be a great diminution in the amount of pensions which Government would have the power to grant. According to calculations which he had made, the average amount of pensions falling in upon the English List was 2,600*l.* per annum, on the Scotch List, 1,200*l.*, on the Irish, 2,400*l.*, making in the whole 6,200*l.* By the restrictions, however, above alluded to, as intended by the late Government until the whole amount of pensions was reduced to 140,000*l.*, the sum of 1,200*l.* only on the Irish, and 800*l.* on the Scotch List could be granted; which sums, added to 2,600*l.*, the average amount of pensions falling in on the English List, made 4,600*l.* the annual amount of pensions which the late Government retained the power of granting. According to the present proposal, the manner in which the reduction was to be made was this. The whole of the pensions on all the three Lists were to be arranged in alphabetical order, and one-half, or rather less than one-half, was to be placed on the Civil List: and as these fell in, Government would have the power of granting pensions to that amount. He had stated to their Lordships that the average amount of pensions which at present fell in annually was 6,200*l.*; it was, therefore, something less than the half of this sum, that was, about 3,000*l.*, which the Government would possess the power of granting, making a sum of about 1,500*l.* per annum, annually saved to the public. This was the general arrangement made by his Majesty's Ministers with respect to pensions. It remained for him to state what the different articles were which formed the 510,000*l.* now placed on the Civil List. That List was to be divided into five classes. The first class contained the Privy Purse for the King, and the allowance for the establishment of the Queen. The sum fixed for the privy purse was 60,000*l.*, a sum which he was sure that their Lordships would not think too large, when they heard that it was the same amount as that which had been appropriated to this purpose ever since the year 1779. The allowance for the Queen's establishment was 50,000*l.* He was sure that it would not be necessary for him to vindicate the amount of that sum: on the contrary, he felt that he had rather occasion to lament that it was not larger, when he recollected, that at the time the late Queen Charlotte first came to this country her allowance was fixed at the same amount, and that in the year 1786 it had been raised to 58,000*l.* He would take that opportunity of stating the indignation which he felt on hearing last night of the shameful manner in which her illustrious name had been made the subject of attack. He felt the greater indignation, because he knew that there was not the slightest shadow of foundation for the malevolent imputations which had been insinuated against her. He felt that he ought to regret that this sum was too little, rather than apologize to their Lordships for its being too much. Here also he must say, that the means which had been granted to all former Queens had not been granted to her present Majesty, to provide for the expenses incident to her exalted station. He lamented, that the usual sum had not been granted to her Majesty for an outfit, as she had many things to provide for her exalted position in the country, and as she could not provide for them at all without anticipating much of her ordinary revenue. The present Government, then, proposed to grant 60,000*l.* for the privy purse, and 50,000*l.* for the Queen's allowance, making 110,000*l.* in all. The second class comprised the salaries of the great officers of the Household, amounting to 130,100*l.* Here he must observe, that the Committee to which the Estimates of the Civil List had been referred, after examining into the subject, had proposed that this grant be reduced 119,000*l.* [A noble Lord expressed his surprise at this statement.] He begged pardon, he meant that it be reduced to 119,000*l.* Now this would have reduced the general estimate of the Civil List to 498,000*l.* But when it came to be considered in the other House of Parliament, the House would not accede to the recommendation of the Committee, but left the Civil List at the amount of 510,000*l.* as originally proposed by the Government. The third class comprised the expenditure in the departments of the Lord Steward, of the Lord Chamberlain, of the Master of the Horse, &c., and for that expenditure the sum of 180,000*l.* was allowed. He was happy to say, that upon an examination into this subject by the Committee, it appeared that there could be no reduction made in the amount of expenses incurred on account of his Majesty's personal comfort, beyond that which had been made before this Government entered into office. The next class comprised the Royal bounties and charities, for which 23,000*l.* was provided; and the fifth and last class included the pensions, in which there had been a reduction made, which brought the sum provided for them down from 140,000*l.* to 75,000*l.* The comparison, then, between the Estimates of the two Governments on these five classes stood thus:—For the first class both Governments had set aside a sum of 110,000*l.*; for the second class the late Government had set aside 140,546*l.*; and the present Government 130,000*l.* Now the difference on this point did not arise from any saving which had been made to the public, but from the transfer of several items to the consolidated fund. For the third class, which consisted of the Bills for the departments of the Lord Steward, the Lord Chamberlain, the Master of the Horse, &c., the late Government proposed 210,500*l.*, and the present Government proposed 180,000*l.* But this difference was not occasioned by any saving made to the public. For the fourth class the same charge was made in both. For the fifth class, which contained the pensions, the late Government had made a provision of 140,000*l.*: the present Government had reduced it to 75,000*l.*; so that, adding up the amount of each separate vote, the late Government made a provision of 624,000*l.* for the Civil List, and the present Government a provision of 510,000*l.*, leaving a difference of 114,000*l.* between the two. This was not all made up of savings: the great advantage of it consisted in the reduction of the pensions, which he had already described, and which would only be a saving eventually. This was the general statement which he had to make of the provisions for the King under the present Civil List Bill. He wished then to point out the advantages which he conceived would arise from separating the personal expenses of the Monarch from the civil expenses of the Government. The separation would remove all doubt from the public mind as to the portion of the Civil List which was actually required for the expenses of royal state. There would be a great advantage in this; for the country would then know what portion of expense was furnished for the support, for the comfort, and the splendor, of the Monarch, and thus a stop would be put to the cruel misrepresentations which had so long been circulated on that subject. He thought that when the amount of the pensions was taken into consideration, and it was considered that 510,000*l.* was all the sum set aside to pay them, and to support the Royal dignity, no one would think it too much, as compared either with the provision made for former sovereigns of England, or with that made for the other sovereigns of Europe. Besides, in separating the civil expenses of the Government from the Civil List, there was this further advantage, that you brought them under the control of Parliament, and enabled Parliament annually to deal with them as circumstances might require. The result of the new arrangement proposed by the present Government would be, that there would be of that portion of public money formerly voted to the Civil List no less than 553,000*l.* withdrawn from it, and placed under the control of Parliament: whereas, under the system of the late Government, only 114,000*l.* of that sum would have been rendered subject to the same control. There was only one other point to which he wished to call the attention of their Lordships, and that was, that the reduction on the Pension List was only eventual, and not immediate. He knew that it had been made a reproach to the present Government that the amount of that List had not been reduced at once from 150,000*l.* to 75,000*l.* His answer to that reproach should be very brief. He did not mean to deny that, technically speaking, the Pension List, having been granted during the late King's life only, ceased with him, and might be discarded instantly. But he thought that it would be a harsh, and, though not an illegal, an inequitable mode of proceeding so to deal with it. He was not bound to defend the manner in which the pensions on that List had been granted. He had no interest in any of them. Whether they had been granted improperly or not, he could not tell; he only knew that there were circumstances attending some of them which excited great distrust in the public mind. He thought, however, that it would be invidious to go into a minute inquiry into the circumstances which had attended the granting of each pension. Though they were not legally pensions for life, the understanding that they were granted for life was so general, that it would be injustice, or something like injustice, to take from individuals that provision which they had been accustomed to think themselves entitled to as long as they lived. He therefore thought it better that the public should suffer the payment of these pensions for a time, than that it should be guilty of any conduct which bore the appearance of injustice, and which would have the effect of placing his Majesty in such a situation as would compel him to take away such pensions as his father and his brother had granted, under an expectation that they would be continued for the lives of the present holders. That was the reason why the Ministers had thought that it ought not to reduce the Pension List at once to the amount at which they had determined to fix it eventually. The noble Earl concluded by moving, that this Bill be now committed.

The Duke of *Wellington* said, that it was far from his intention to offer any opposition to the Civil List to be granted to his Majesty. He thought, however, that a sum should be granted to his Majesty to defray the expenses of the Civil Government of the country, as well as of his Household. It was the custom, down to the time of George 2nd, to grant to the King taxes upon certain articles, for the purpose of enabling him to defray the expenses of the Civil Government. The principle on which he had drawn up his plan of the Civil List, was, to enable the Sovereign, so far as was practicable, to defray all the expenses necessary to be incurred in supporting the dignity and splendor of the Crown, without having them mixed up with the expenses of his Civil Government. Certainly the Crown had enjoyed great advantage in supporting its dignity and its efficiency, so long as the system of supporting itself on its hereditary revenues remained in practice. That system was departed from at the commencement of the reign of George 3rd, and a further departure from it had been made since, into which, he would, with their Lordships' permission examine presently. From the accounts he had seen of the hereditary revenues enjoyed by George 2nd, he had reason to believe, that if they were now enjoyed by the Sovereign, and employed in defraying the Civil expenses of the Government, and the dignity and splendor of the Crown, they would amount to a sum larger than would be necessary to meet those expenses, notwithstanding the increase which had been made in them by the increased salaries of the Judges, the increased number of the public offices, and the vast increase of the Royal Family. He believed that the hereditary revenues of the Crown, independent of its droits, and its West-India duties, amounted to not less than 850,000*l.* a-year. He made this statement, because it was important that their Lordships should recollect it, and that the public should know, that notwithstanding the expenses of the Sovereign were great, the Sovereign had as much right to the sum which he had mentioned, as any of their Lordships had to their estates. The system of giving the Sovereign the amount of certain taxes for the support of his Civil Government was first departed from in the reign of George 3rd, when a fixed sum was appointed instead of it for his support. In process of time the expense of the Civil Government increased, and the Civil List became in debt. The consequence was, that in 1815 an inquiry was made into the circumstances which had caused that increase of charges. What was the course then adopted by Parliament? It was to bring certain charges — as, for instance, the charges for Ambassadors—under the annual vote of Parliament, and the object was, to avoid thereby the fixing of any fresh debt, for which no estimate could be previously made, upon the Civil List. In 1820 it was determined that nothing should be brought before Parliament in connexion with the Civil List that was not a casual expense, and for which a regular vote could not be submitted. The late Government in presenting their Civil List, made a still further departure from the old plan, and upon this principle—wherever part of a salary was to be paid out of the Civil List, and part out of the Consolidated Fund, it was resolved to pay all out of the Consolidated Fund. This course was adopted with regard to the salaries of the Lord Chancellor, the Judges, the Speaker of the House of Commons, and also of various other officers, some of which had been since then abolished. He must complain of the part of the present Bill which subjected the salaries of the Great Officers of State to the annual vote of the House of Commons. He was of opinion that some measure should be adopted to place them, at least, upon the Consolidated Fund, in order to prevent the possibility of the country being left without a proper and efficient administration of public affairs. He would not leave the Government to the chance of being impeded by a small majority in a Committee of the House of Commons, which, according to the proposed plan, might diminish the salaries of public officers at pleasure. At the period of the Revolution there were long discussions on the subject of the hereditary revenues of the Crown, and the provision for the Sovereign, but no one had ever dreamt of separating the Crown from the Civil Government, in making a provision for Royalty. The plan of separation was one of modern invention: he objected to it altogether, because by possibility it might place the Crown in a situation such as it ought not to be placed in, by depriving it of the assistance of a public officer, whose salary might be lost by a single vote in a Committee of Supply. Further, he was of opinion that the repairs, alterations, and other expenses of the royal residences, limited as they were to a certain sum, ought to be placed under the control of the Treasury, and should not be left to an annual vote of the House of Commons. The noble Earl was mistaken in supposing that the saving upon Scotch and Irish pensions would amount to 4,000*l.* a-year. He (the Duke of Wellington) could only make the amount of saving 2,000*l.* [Earl *Grey* intimated that he had stated it at the latter sum.] He entirely agreed with the noble Lord in the propriety of abstaining from disturbing pensions, many of which had been well deserved, although a few might have been granted on insufficient grounds. Two pensions had been, unsolicited by him, granted by his late Majesty to two near relations of his own—one after the battle of Salamanca—the other after that of Vittoria; and he must say, that he felt deservedly proud of this favour graciously vouchsafed by his Sovereign. Parliament might take away such marks of approbation, but he never would consent to his relations resigning them. He must repeat his expression of the pain which he felt at seeing the expenses of the Sovereign detached entirely from those of the Civil Government, and the latter left, in point of fact, entirely at the mercy of the chance of a single vote in a division of the House of Commons. One word with respect to the discontinuance of the office of Auditor of the Civil List; he assured the noble Lord that unless he had some person in the Treasury to perform the duties of that office, the Civil List must get into debt. He must object also to the proposed reduction in the salaries of the great officers of the Government, and observe that at the existing rate of salaries, unless a first Lord of the Treasury (and the remark would apply to other officers) possessed a large private fortune, he must be ruined in consequence of the heavy expenses entailed on him by his situation, and the inadequacy of the sum allowed to meet those expenses. In proof of this, he might instance the cases of three Prime Ministers, Mr. Pitt, Mr. Perceval, and Mr. Canning, all of whom had been ruined by being in office. He himself had proposed a provision for the family of Mr. Canning in consequence. So much he thought it right to say on the subject of the higher offices in the Government. With respect to some of the smaller offices held by Members of the House of Commons, there were few in which, on Gentlemen accepting them, it did not take the whole of the first year's salary to defray the expenses of re-elections, patents, &c. How could it be pretended, when such was the case both with respect to the higher and lower offices of Government, that the salaries of public men ought to be reduced? The parliamentary business of the Government in the House of Commons was greater than could be at present performed by the members of Government; for instance, hardly a Committee sat in which it was not desired to have a person connected with Government as Chairman or member of it. Such being the case, he objected to the reduction in the number of Government officers (the Vice-Treasurer of Ireland being one), as well as to the diminution of the salaries of office.

Viscount *Goderich* admitted the expenses incident to the holders of official situations were very great. There were many expenses which it would be impossible to enumerate; but for many years Parliament had proceeded cutting down the salaries of minor offices, and it would not be either fair or decent if they did not now proceed to deal with the salaries of places of greater consequence; and as the former had been reduced on account of the alteration effected by a change in the currency, the latter ought not to escape similar treatment. He must confess that he thought the objections of the noble Duke, as to the probability of the dignity of the Crown being brought in some measure into degradation by the arrangement of the Civil List, were of no weight. The salaries of many of the higher offices had been paid from various sources, and they were now to be taken from one. He contended that, of late years, Parliament acquired and exercised an indirect control over the items of public expenditure contained in the Civil List, which was equivalent to the direct control, and that, therefore, placing these items under the direct control of Parliament was, in practice and effect, no real change. He admitted, that the hereditary revenue of the Crown, in all its branches, exceeded the amount of the Civil List as it now stood, but that if all the charges to be found on the Civil List, even in the reign of George 2nd, were retained, the amount would exceed the hereditary revenues. The noble Duke had objected also to the abolition of the office of Auditor of the Civil List; but he thought the duties of that office might be efficiently performed by the Treasurer; and the salary of the Auditor was therefore a saving to the public.

Lord *Ellenborough* said, with respect to salaries, a Treasury Minute not yet on their Lordships' Table, had been made and printed, which, so far as it regarded the salaries of the officers of the Board of Control, he wished then to say was absurd, unjust, and injurious to the public service. The largest reductions were proposed in the salaries of the most efficient officers; and the saving was not to the people of England, for the people of England did not pay a shilling towards the salaries of those officers. Every farthing that could be saved in this department ought to be applied to strengthen and render it efficient. Having said so much, he was glad to have an opportunity of hearing his testimony to the merits of the officers of the Board of Control. From his knowledge of that department, he was bound to say, that the public could not have more efficient officers. He was satisfied, that when the noble Earl opposite came to reconsider the subject, he would find that he could make no reduction in the expenses of that Board. He could assure the noble Lord that the salaries of the clerks in that office were at present too low, and that the general strength of the department required to be augmented. With respect to the question immediately before their Lordships, he must express his regret, that the expenses of the Crown were in future to be exhibited as a specific annual charge, distinct from the Civil Government of the State, thus separating the expenses of the Crown from the expenses of the Government and exhibiting the former as a naked pageant to the people. This was not the time when such an experiment ought to be made. He objected to the plan of placing under the control of Parliament a large number of matters formerly charged upon the Civil List—matters closely connected with the Civil Government, and in relation to which the utmost inconvenience was to be apprehended from taking annual votes of the House of Commons. He believed that the best Reformer in pecuniary matters was an honest Government acting under the control of Parliament. A popular assembly was rarely just or wisely economical in financial matters; it was often extravagant, and frequently its proceedings were not equitable.

The Earl of *Carnarvon* had always been of opinion that the personal expenses of the Monarch were unjustly exposed to public comment when mixed up with the public expenses. The mode in which the salaries of public officers were charged, partly on the Civil List and partly on other funds, also created great confusion in the public accounts. Upon these grounds he was friendly to the separation which had now taken place. As to the reduction of the salaries of his Majesty's Ministers, he did not blame the present Ministers for yielding to the wishes of the public on that point. If they had rigidly resisted all reduction of their own salaries, they might not have obtained credit from the public on other occasions when they did their duty. Admitting this, as he (Lord Carnarvon) had never received, and was never likely to receive, any of the public money, he felt himself called upon to say, that he thought the public more likely to be losers than gainers by a further reduction of the salaries of Ministers. Every one who knew any thing of the expense of keeping up establishments in this country knew that it was impossible that Ministers could maintain their establishments, and perform what was expected from them, out of the salaries they received. The effect of any further reductions, then, would be, to oblige the King to choose his public servants from amongst the most opulent portion of the Aristocracy, and not from amongst those in whose hands from their principles and talents, the liberties of the country would be most secure. The King was at present obliged to select those whose private fortunes rendered them independent of remuneration—a circumstance which often excluded the best and most intelligent persons from office. Those who served the country, and who did not receive salaries equal to their expenditure, considered the country was under obligations to them, rather than that they owed the country a strict account for the money they received. It was not from Ministers that observations such as this could be expected. He thought it his duty, then, as an independent Member of the House, to state his objections to the proposition for the reduction of salaries. In doing so, he did not wish to throw any difficulties in the way of the details of the present measure, but he did feel it to be his duty to express his disapprobation of the plan for reducing the salaries of public functionaries.

The House then went into a Committee and the clauses of the Bill were agreed to without any Amendment.

The House resumed.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Tuesday, April 19, 1831.

Minutes] Sir Robert Ferguson took his seat for the City of Londonderry.

Bills. Read a first time, Customs and Excise Oaths, Cotton Wool Duties.

Returns ordered. On the Motion of Lord Morpeth, the quantity of Foreign Wool imported into Great Britain and Ireland during the year 1830; distinguishing the Countries from whence it was imported, the different Ports in the United Kingdom where such import took place, and the number of pounds weight which paid only one half-penny per pound Duty; the quantity of Foreign Wool re-exported from the United Kingdom during the last five years, distinguishing the Countries to which such exports took place; the quantity of British Sheep and Lamb's Wool, and Woollen Yarn, exported from the United Kingdom during the year 1830; distinguishing the Countries to which such export took place.

Petitions presented. In favour of Reform, by Lord Althorp, from the County of Perth, and from Towcester:—By Sir William Foulkes, from Grinshoe:—By Mr. William Russell, from Darlington, Durham, and Sedgefield:—By Mr. Spring Rice, from Fortrose Edinburgh Medical Society, and Rosemarkie:—By Sir Robbrt Peel, from Cork. Against Reform, by Mr. William Duncombe, from the Corporation of Leeds, from Bradford, Barnsley, and Doncaster:—By Lord G. BENTINCK, from King's Lynn:—By Colonel BERESFORD, from Burgesses of Berwick, resident in London:—By Sir GEORGE NUGENT, from Buckingham:—By Sir PHILIP EGERTON, from Chester:—By Lord CHARLES CHURCHILL, from Woodstock:—By Sir ROBERT PEEL, from Ilchester, Crail, and Ross-shire. By Mr. LITTLETON, from the Quarter Sessions of Stafford, in favour of the Settlement by Apprenticeship Bill. From Burslem, for the Repeal of the New Beer Act. By Viscount BELGRAVE, against the Cotton Factories Bill. For the Abolition of Slavery, by Mr. LITTLETON, from the Congregation of Cheadle Chapel:—By Mr. BOLTON CLIVE, from Sutton (Herefordshire).

PARLIAMENTARY REFORM PETITIONS.] Lord *Althorp* said, he rose to present a Petition from the Clergy, Gentry, Freeholders, and other inhabitants of the county of Northampton, in favour of Parliamentary Reform. He felt it necessary, in presenting this petition, to make a few observations, with reference to the circumstances under which it was agreed to. There were now Gentlemen in the House who were present at the meeting in which the petition was proposed and acceded to, who, if he did not state the facts accurately, could correct him. The meeting was convened on Thursday last, by the High Sheriff, in consequence of a numerously-signed requisition which had been forwarded to him. The party which was opposed to Reform, and that which was in favour of it, severally made considerable exertions to secure a majority. The two parties in the county were of nearly equal strength. He believed, that the majority of the country gentlemen, though he lived on the best terms with them, were adverse to his political opinions; and therefore he imputed his return for the county rather to feelings of private friendship than to any approbation of his political sentiments on some particular points. In order to oppose with effect the petition which he was about to present, many of the gentry invited to the meeting individuals who were connected with them in various parts of the county; and that it should not be a dry invitation, they gave to these persons, as he had been informed, a breakfast. The county meetings were usually held in the Shire-hall; but when the Sheriff arrived there to preside over this meeting, there was a vast deal of noise, which was continued for an hour and a half or two hours, to so great a degree that no human being who might desire to deliver his sentiments could make himself heard. At length a motion was made by an honourable relative of his, to adjourn the meeting to the open air, on the Market-hill; and another proposition was made to dissolve the meeting. The question was put, and the Sheriff decided that the motion in favour of adjournment was carried. Those parties who were opposed to the petition declined attending the meeting in the open air. They went to an inn, and there drew up and signed a protest against the proceedings. The Under Sheriff, the High Sheriff himself being unable, in consequence of illness, to go through the duty, took the chair at the meeting on the Market-hill. It was, he contended, a regularly convened county meeting, at which there were about 3,000 persons present, who agreed to this petition. He therefore had a right to say, that this was a petition of the county in favour of the Reform measure now under consideration. It might be said, that the meeting was not attended by many respectable persons; but to this he would answer, that there were present at the meeting individuals who were as respectable as any in the county. But it ought to be observed, that at meetings held out of doors, and even at meetings held within doors, persons in the lower class of life would be present. But he thought the petition which had been agreed to at this meeting went to prove, that no re-action on the question of Reform had taken place in the county of Northampton. As to the names signed to the protest, he was bound to say, that many of them were those of persons of the highest respectability, several of them his own personal friends. But there were also the names of others, who could not, on account of rank, object to those who were present at the out-door meeting. He saw amongst the signatures to the protest that of a chimney-sweeper and of a post-boy. Those persons certainly had a right to state their opinions, and he only mentioned the circumstance as a set-off against any charge of want of respectability which might be alleged against the meeting out of doors.

Mr. *Cartwright* said, that during the thirty-five years in which he had been connected with the county, he had never before known a meeting to be adjourned from the Shire-hall to the open air. There was sufficient room in the hall for 200 persons more than attended. At 12 o'clock, when he entered the hall, there was scarcely a soul there. Under all the circumstances, he must, therefore, contend that this was not the petition of the county of

Northampton. It did not, he was confident, express the sense of the resident clergy, gentlemen, and freeholders of Northampton. As he had said before, he never knew an instance of a meeting being held at Northampton in the open air, except on one occasion, when the noble Lord made a triumphal entry into Northampton, and stepped from his chariot into a waggon for the purpose of addressing the populace. That was the only time when such an occurrence had taken place in Northampton for thirty-five years. If the noble Lord would examine the names appended to the protest, he would at once perceive, that a great majority of the clergy and gentry of Northampton were opposed to the present plan of Reform. Those who signed that paper admitted that some Reform was necessary in the Representation of large and populous towns, although they could not give their sanction to such a measure as was now proposed.

Mr. *Vernon Smith* explained the part which he had taken at the Northampton meeting. In his opinion, the adjournment to the Market-place was proper. At the time that the adjournment was moved, the hall was as full as it possibly could be, and a vast number of people were congregated outside.

Sir *R. H. Gunning* said, that he could see no reason for the adjournment of the meeting. The freeholders, and all those who were concerned with the meeting, could hear much better in the hall than in the open air; besides, it was pouring torrents of rain at the time when the adjournment was carried. He firmly believed, that there was no proposition against which his constituents entertained a stronger objection then they did against this Bill. He had not before expressed his opinion on this question, and therefore he would make one remark before he sat down. He had heard many Gentlemen in that House state that they were friendly only to moderate Reform, but that they would nevertheless vote for the second reading of this Bill. He had told his constituents that he also was friendly to moderate Reform; but no gentleman to whom he had made that declaration had called on him to support a measure of so sweeping and comprehensive a description as the present. He was quite convinced, that if the hon. member for Middlesex had proposed such a measure a twelvemonth ago, it would have been denounced by many of the present Ministers as dangerous to the Constitution. He would not withhold his support from any moderate plan of Reform which was likely to be beneficial to the country, but he never would vote in favour of the present Bill.

Lord *Althorp* said, if the people of Northamptonshire were adverse, as had been said, to the Bill now before Parliament, it was rather strange that they should sign a petition in its favour.

Petition to be printed.

Mr. *Littleton* presented a Petition, which he had had for some time in his hands, emanating from a most respectable meeting of the inhabitants of Staffordshire, regularly convened by the High Sheriff, in consequence of a requisition to which was attached, among other names of great importance, the name of the Marquis of Cleveland. It was a petition of very great importance with respect to the rank and property of those by whom it had been signed. He believed that every populous and wealthy parish in that Shire had sent two petitions to Parliament on the subject of Reform: the one calling for some measure of Reform, and the other approving of that which was proposed by the Government. There was not one manufacturing parish with which he was acquainted in that county that was not unanimously favourable to the Bill. There might be some few persons who entertained fears and scruples on the subject, but the general feeling was decidedly in favour of the measure. He concurred in the opinion of the petitioners, and he would sacrifice his own private opinion on some minor points in order to secure the great object which Ministers had in view.

Mr. *Cressett Pelham* was adverse to the Bill, because it was of too sweeping a nature, and would diminish rather than increase the number of his constituents.

Sir *C. Morgan* said, that praise was due to the Marquis of Cleveland, whose name was affixed to this petition, as a Reformer; but when the House recollected the way in which he had dealt with his boroughs, it would perhaps think that he had tended to bring about the necessity for Reform.

Mr. *J. Campbell* admitted, that the noble Marquis had acted well, but men in a much humbler sphere of life had acted as well. The freemen of Stafford, for example, had acted in the most independent manner. They did not insist on retaining exclusive rights. No; they came forward fairly, and said, "Let our townsmen be admitted to the same privileges which we enjoy."

Mr. *Littleton*, in moving, that the Petition be printed, stated, that the meeting thought so highly of the conduct of the Marquis of Cleveland, that a specific Resolution, thanking him, was unanimously voted.

Sir *C. Morgan* said, that as the owner of many boroughs, the Marquis of Cleveland had conducted them in such a manner as laid the foundation of the present Bill.

Lord *J. Russell* said, that the noble Marquis who had been alluded to, used his boroughs as other borough-proprietors did—to support his own political opinions.

Colonel *Davies* said, that the noble Marquis could not be accused of tyrannical conduct, with reference to his boroughs, for he believed that a gentleman who sat for one of those boroughs would vote this evening against the Bill.

Petition to be printed.

PARLIAMENTARY REFORM BILL COMMITTEE—ADJOURNED DEBATE.] Lord John Russell moved the order of the Day for resuming the Adjourned Debate on the question for going into the Committee on this Bill.

Mr. *H. L. Bulwer* said, that he would not enter into the discussion as to the number of Members of which the House ought to consist. That, however, could make no difference as to the general character of the measure; but he hoped, that the right hon. Gentleman opposite would meet, in a spirit of conciliation and compliance, the wishes of those who desired to make modifications in the Bill, where those modifications did not trench on its general principles. He could not support the Amendment of the hon. and gallant member for Liverpool, for that would be to admit that England, Scotland, and Ireland, were separate kingdoms, instead of being one united empire. He admitted, that the Parliament had as much right to take away from, or add to, the number of Members for Ireland, as it had to give a Member to York, or any other county. When he saw the increasing wealth and population of Ireland—he would not say a word of Scotland, for she was able to take care of herself—but when he saw the increasing wealth and population of Ireland, he thought the increase of the number of Representatives for that country very judicious, and in his opinion, any alteration of the Bill in that part would be very injurious. In offering his opinion, perhaps he could not commence better than by giving a few comments on what fell from the hon. member for Newark. If he understood the argument of that hon. Gentleman, which, by the bye, was not his own, he had thought it necessary to let the House know the opinions of those who had slept with the Capulets for centuries—but, if these arguments were good for any thing, they were against having any species of Reform at all. So entirely, however, did he (Mr. Bulwer) differ from this opinion, that he considered this question to have been decided ages ago by the progress of civilisation, and that the same reason which rendered the framing of a Constitution advisable at all, now made measures of Reform and repair requisite. For, was the progress of society like the progress of the tread-mill, did the wheel of knowledge go round without making any advance? Though he approved of the principle of Reform, he thought it would be better if it did not go the length proposed in the total disfranchisement of so many small boroughs. There were certain small evils in a state which it was much better to bear, because they were often made a barrier to prevent greater evils. He would preserve some of those small boroughs, as a check upon the influence of popular passion. He thought, therefore, that the noble Lord might have effected a great improvement in the Representation without going to the extent of taking away so many small boroughs. It should be remembered, however, that when the noble Lord introduced this Bill, he seemed to have considered it as a speculative object in his closet; but now, when it was brought forward as a practical measure, it was necessary to look at it with a view to its practical working and effect. In order to consider it fairly, it was necessary to look at the state of Europe for some time back, and it was to be recollected that in all countries, at the period of his present Majesty's accession, the greatest excitement prevailed. The state of England partook of this description (however true it might be that when the gentry called on the lower classes they joined in the protection of property), when they considered, too, that a conflict had taken place between the police and the people in this metropolis, and so violent that it had been admitted by the highest authorities that his Majesty might not be able to pass in safety through what ought to have been a loyal and affectionate people; when these things were taken into consideration; and when Ministers had to bring forward a measure, it was plain that that which would have been received at other times with pleasure, would not be enough, and that they must bring forward one that would satisfy and soothe an angry and a discontented people. Therefore, the lesser measure, however he might have wished it, could not be introduced, because it would not, though it might pass that House, tranquillise the country. An hon. Member had said, that even this measure would not pacify the people; but of this, except that Gentleman's assertion, no proof had been offered. On the contrary, had they not been told by its opponents, that a sufficient proof of the demagogic nature of this measure was to be found in its approval by the mobs of Manchester and the hon. member for Preston? But, with all due respect for that hon. Member, his speeches had only convinced him (Mr. Bulwer) that he was a much better sportsman than a politician, and had satisfied all those around him that his views could not be attained. He had, however, learned from the hon. member for Preston that he did not consider that the Bill went far enough, and he considered it as an argument in favour of the Bill, that it did not meet the views of that hon. Member and of those who joined with him in his notions of Reform. He took it for granted that those who were opposed to, as well as those who supported Reform, had the same object in view,—that of preventing revolution. They were all agreed as to the end, but differed only as to the means; one party thinking that the concession of power to the people, to the extent proposed by this Bill, would be itself a revolution; the other, that if such power were not conceded, a revolution must be the consequence. Now, let the House consider what were the opinions of that class of Reformers who did not think this Bill went far enough. The opinions of one part of the Press—of those small periodicals which were published in defiance of the Stamp Acts, and had escaped the notice of the Attorney General, were opposed to the Bill, because it did not go far enough, and because they hoped that, by the rejection of this, Parliament would at length be obliged to concede that more extended Reform which they desired. He would read an extract from one of these cheap publications, called the *Poor Man's Guardian*. It was to this effect. The writer said, "He hoped the day was not passed, and that Parliament would refuse part of what the people sought for, as then they would be sure to get the whole." When he found all those republican writings opposed to the Bill, he thought it ought to be a reason for supporting it, because it would have the effect of destroying the influence of those parties. But while he admitted the danger of going too far, he could not shut his eyes to the still greater danger of refusing every concession. What, he asked, had caused the late French Revolution? Was it the moderate and conceding plan of Casimir Perrier, or the obstinacy of Peyronnet and Polignac? Whatever the hon. member for Newark might urge, the consequence of resistance to the public feeling, in the cases of Louis 16th and Charles 10th, was far more fatal than concession could have been. The one was hypocritical and weak, and lost his life upon the scaffold—the other was bigotted and obstinate, and was banished from his dominions. Neither of them understood the power of public opinion, nor the advantage of frankly submitting to its laws. In fact, we lived in times when public opinion was every thing, and when even the prerogatives of the Crown, aided by the power of the sword, would not balance the scale against the feelings of the people. Liberal concession, then, in such a time, was sound policy. In giving his support to this Bill on these grounds, he did so at the sacrifice of some private feeling, because his own constituents would be affected by the measure. He was not there the nominee of any person in the sense of being an organ of his opinion. The noble Lord to whom he more immediately owed his seat would not require that his opinion should be merely the organ of that which he himself entertained on this important question, and would not in any manner restrict his vote. He thought it was his imperative duty to support the measure, and under that conscientious conviction, he should certainly vote against the gallant General's Amendment.

Mr. *John Campbell* said, that if any thing could, more clearly than another, show the necessity of the Bill before the

House, it would be what had just fallen from the hon. Member who last addressed it, who had openly avowed that he owed his seat in the House to the influence of a peer. In the purer times of the Constitution such an avowal would be sufficient to unseat a Member, but we had now got so much accustomed to these matters, that our feelings were not at all affected by them. A predecessor of the right hon. Gentleman in the Chair had declared, that practices were now openly avowed with respect to seats in that House, which were sufficient to make our ancestors, could they be informed of them, turn in their graves; yet now an hon. Member talked of owing his seat to a peer just as he (Mr. Campbell) should talk of his constituents. The general subject had already been so fully discussed, that he could not hope to say any thing new on it. He would therefore confine himself to the amendment of the hon. and gallant member for Liverpool. The hon. and gallant member for Liverpool had a great objection to diminish the number of Members for England and Wales. He wished that number should be 513, neither more nor less. What was in the number 513 so sacred and mysterious? Lord Coke had certainly applied to the number twelve a certain sacred and mysterious influence, for he asked, were there not twelve golden candlesticks, twelve signs of the Zodiac, twelve Apostles, twelve months in the year, and twelve Judges in England? But why there should be any thing in 513 Members for England, 100 for Ireland, and forty-five for Scotland, because these had been the numbers fixed at the Union, he had yet to learn. At that period these were declared to be the reasonable proportions; but there was nothing to prove they could not be altered. If the gallant General proved that, he was right; but he had not done so, and only fixed himself on the number 513. He had looked into the Acts of Union with Scotland and Ireland, and there was nothing in them to prove to any lawyer or jurist that the numbers then fixed were invariable. If it were said, that the alteration of certain articles of the Union would be a breach of that Union, he would agree in that position, for the Union would be broken if the Presbyterian Church were no longer to be continued the Established Church of Scotland. But there was nothing declaring that the alteration of the number of forty-five Members would be a breach of the Union. On the contrary, it was clearly understood by the Commissioners for England and Scotland, that the number might be varied. It had been proposed by the English Commissioners that the number should be thirty-eight; and in Defoe's History of the Union there was the resolution:—"That the Lords Commissioners for Scotland, being desirous to conclude the matter, or meet the wishes of the English Commissioners, would not insist on more than what had been proposed by the Commissioners of England." They did not do so then, but looked forward to the justice of the British Parliament. That left the subject, therefore, completely open. It would have been absurd if any other meaning had been in the minds of the parties, for would it be argued that, whatever might be the changes that should take place in wealth or population, these numbers were to remain unalterable? For, suppose it were to happen that Scotland at some period possessed greater population and wealth than the Southern division, was the latter still to keep up the number of 513? Was there any necessity now? Was there any diversity of interests, or was there any greater difference between Scotland and England, than between one county and another? It might as well be contended that Cornwall should always have preserved her forty-four Members. At one time, perhaps, caution might be necessary, for there was a period when a motion for the Repeal of the Union with Scotland was lost in the House of Lords by only a majority of one. But now all the animosities that caused this were at an end. We might also hope to see the same sympathies prevail between England and Ireland, but the animosity between them now was not greater than that between England and Scotland for some time after the Union. Indeed it was much less, for, if the hon. member for Waterford brought forward his long-threatened motion for the Repeal of the Union, he might find a seconder, but he would not have another Member to vote with him. Wales, too, had formerly been an independent sovereignty, and yet was its proportion unchangeable? It had also been a hostile country, and had as little sympathy as possible with England. If this argument of the gallant General were tenable, we might go back to the Heptarchy, and learn the numbers of the Wittenagemote, to show that none of the divisions of the kingdom should send more Deputies than they did then. The very number of 513 Members for England and Wales, for which the gallant General contended, arose from the great abuse of the power of the Crown, in issuing writs for Members to serve for different towns before unrepresented. Under the Tudor sovereigns, 154 Members were added to the House, not allotted to the great towns, which then began to appear, such as Wakefield, Halifax, and Manchester, but to small places in the county of Cornwall. In Edward 1st's time no more than twelve Members were sent to Parliament from the county of Cornwall, but at present no less than forty-two were returned by different places in that county. If hon. Members were to examine the schedule A of the Reform Bill, they would find that the majority of the places mentioned in that schedule were first summoned to return Members to Parliament under the reigns of the Tudors, The borough of Aldborough was not larger at the time it had the privilege given to it of returning Members than at present. It was, therefore, only by an abuse of the King's power that such places were summoned to return Representatives. The writs issued to them could not be considered in any other light than as writs transferred by the power of the Crown. Hon. Gentlemen had all heard of a case which was argued before the House of Lords, in which it was contended that the possession of a barony gave a right to the possessor of a seat in the House of Lords. Lord Eldon, who was at the time Lord Chancellor, asked Lord Brougham, who was one of the counsel in the cause, whether an assignee, upon obtaining possession of the property, would have a right to sit in the House of Lords? Lord Brougham replied, that he would have such a right; and supported his assertion by saying that there were other and as great anomalies in the Constitution. Now it might be the constitution of the House of Lords, that some peerages were transferable, but it was not the constitution of the House of Commons that writs should be transferable. The House of Commons was intended by the Constitution to represent the people, and be returned by the people; and the true principle of the Constitution, was laid down in the writs issued by Edward 1st. *Quod omnes tangit ab omnibus approbatur.* All the people, according to that, ought to have a voice in the election of their Representatives. He admitted that in those summonses the principle of Universal Suffrage was laid down, and upon him and upon those who objected to Universal Suffrage was cast the *onus* of proving that Universal Suffrage would lead to inconvenience. He was prepared to show, that Universal Suffrage would lead to great inconvenience, monstrous ruin, and universal destruction. But still there was a medium between Universal Suffrage and giving the right to particular individuals to return Members to that House. He saw no reason why the numbers of that House should not be reduced, and he could not agree with some hon. Members in thinking the hon. and gallant General's motion of little importance. If, however, that motion should be agreed to, he hoped that the Reform Bill would still be allowed to pass, for he was confident that great benefit would be conferred on the country by that measure.

Mr. *H. Fane* thought that system of Representation the best which ensured the best government, and secured for the people equal laws, impartial justice, and equal rights. These advantages were obtained by our present representative system and responsible executive. In all human institutions, there must always be some defects; but instead of trying to remove faults where he found any, the noble Lord opposite had offered a visionary scheme of his own, in exchange for that system which had elevated the kingdom of England to such a pitch of grandeur and happiness. He believed, that if his Majesty's Ministers had proposed a moderate and temperate measure of Reform, the opposition to it would not have been great; but their plan was so immoderate, that he could not conceive how any person who was attached to the Constitution could give it his support. The noble Lord opposite (Lord J. Russell) had stated, that three years ago not many petitions had been presented on the subject of Reform; but that since that time such a change had taken place in the minds of the people, that the Table of the House was now covered with Reform petitions. He asked what had occurred in England to produce that change? Nothing had occurred in England; but in France a Revolution had taken place. The French had expelled an imbecile monarch; and immediately this country became affected with the French epidemic. We, though under circumstances diametrically opposite, were for imitating the example set by the French. Their charters were violated, and they revolutionized to get a Constitution; but we were to revolutionize to subvert one. The House had been told much of the necessity of Reform, but little of its benefits. Would Reform, he asked, ease the burthens of the people, and reduce the taxes? It would not. Whoever told the people that Reform would alleviate their distress, only deluded them. If the people chose to have colonies, they must keep up an army,—if they would have commerce, they must have a fleet to protect it,—if they would have a Monarch, they must have a Civil List,—if they would have a Church, they must pay tithes,—and last, not least, if they would retain the national honour, they must pay the National Debt. By Reform, the people of England meant reduction of taxes; by Reform, the radical faction meant the violation of national faith, and the overthrow of Church and State. The faction used Reform, as the hon. and learned member for Waterford did the Repeal of the Union, as the means to what they called a good end. By Reform, the faction hoped to effect a change of Government; but whoever attributed any desire to the people of England for the subversion of the Government libelled them. There was, at present, a great call for a cheap Government, but the people might learn from the history of their own country how little they were likely to obtain that object by violent changes. Charles 1st unjustly took 200,000*l.* from his people. For that offence he was brought to trial and suffered. The country, in the mean time, was afflicted by all the miseries of civil war, and at length submitted to Cromwell, who extracted 2,000,000*l.* from the pockets of the people. So much for Reform procuring a cheap Government. The advantage of the present system of Representation was, that all the different interests of the country found advocates within the walls of that House; but the Bill of the noble Lord would exclude from the enjoyment of the elective franchise all the labouring classes, who were thus held out as unworthy to participate in the councils of the country. There were but two bodies in the country who would, under the provisions of the Reform Bill, enjoy the elective franchise,—the higher classes, and the householders paying above 10*l.* a-year. He did not believe that Representatives chosen only by those two bodies would be able to conduct the affairs of the country advantageously, or preserve the national faith. Locke, in his treatise on Civil Government, stated, that "the power of the Legislature being derived from the people by a positive voluntary grant and institution, can be no other than what that positive grant conveyed; which, being only to make laws, and not to make legislators, the Legislature can have no power to transfer the making of laws, and place it in other hands." The number of the Members to be returned to Parliament by England, Scotland, and Ireland, was settled at the time of the respective Unions. With respect to the proportion of the Representatives, the noble Lord, the Paymaster of the Forces, had quoted a passage from one of Mr. Pitt's speeches to serve his own purpose. The passage quoted by the noble Lord was as follows:—"Considering the question in this point of view, I really think the precise number of the Representatives not a matter of great importance." Now he would quote the passage immediately following to serve his (Mr. Fane's) purpose. "At the same time," said Mr. Pitt, "when it is necessary that the number should be fixed, it is necessary to have recourse to some principle on which to found our determination." He only hoped, that some hon. Member would bring the question of the proportion of the Representation fairly before the House; for he thought that its being introduced under the disguise of the Reform Bill was an insult to the three United Kingdoms. The noble Lord opposite last night exclaimed in a tone of indignation, disclaiming the charge of partiality in the concoction of the Reform Bill, which had been brought against Government, that he did not envy the heart of that man who could entertain such suspicions. [Lord *Althorp* intimated dissent from the statement of the hon. Member.] All he would say was, that he envied not that man his heart who had conceived the present Reform Bill. He thought it would lead to great corruption and the vilest traffic.

Mr. *Wilbraham* said, he was determined to give the Motion of the hon. and gallant General his decided negative. He was neither jealous of the Irish Catholics nor the Scotch Members, and he thought the business of the House would be better done by a considerable diminution of its numbers. He had always entertained opinions favourable to Parliamentary Reform, and he had therefore no opinions to retract, nor inconsistencies to account for. He had always considered that the corrupt manner in which Members were returned for certain boroughs was a great evil, and a cause of that discontent which had lately manifested itself in the country. But he was free to confess, that when he first entered the House he took his station among those who were called moderate Reformers, and would have been glad to see the Representation amended by the transfer of the franchise of corrupt boroughs to populous places. But when he saw the cloak that was thrown over corruption in that House—when he saw the moderate proposals of the noble Lord, the member for Tavistock, uniformly rejected, and when he saw how the franchise of East Retford was disposed of, he then began to despair of measures of moderate Reform, and he was convinced that nothing but a great and comprehensive scheme of Reform would effect the object he had in view. He need not, therefore, say how much he was delighted with the plan of the noble Lord. It was a glorious measure, and worthy of those from whom it proceeded. It struck deep at the root of corruption, and maintained every interest in the State, except the interest of the boroughmonger. The House had heard a good deal of late about revolutionary measures, and charges had been made against Gentlemen for being democratic. He did not think the cause of truth was promoted by employing injurious epithets, or personal virulence. He would, therefore, abstain from such a course; and endeavour to call the attention of the House to what he conceived would be the practical effects of the Reform measure. In the first place he found forty-four Members were to be given to great commercial places, and he was sure that they would return Gentlemen as well educated, and as much attached to the Constitution, as any he saw around him. One difference, however, between these Members and some of the Gentlemen in that House would be, that they would know something about the interests of their constituents; and of those particular arts and mysteries which they would be sent to Parliament to represent and protect. With respect to the eight Members allotted to the districts round the metropolis, it was impossible for him to say what would be their character; but considering the great wealth and splendor of some of those places, he could not think that those who possessed that property would be desirous to throw everything into confusion. It was said, that these two classes of Members would be too democratical; but would they not be neutralized by the additional county Members? It ought, however, to be recollected, that these persons would be chiefly returned by the middle classes—by men, he would venture to assert, as loyal and as much interested in the welfare of the State as any class of inhabitants. On the whole, however, he could not see that the House would suffer by the change. A great deal had been said about the breaking in on the Constitution; but was not this frequently done? Was it not done in the reign of Henry 8th, when Wales and the bishopric of Durham were first allowed to send Representatives? Was it not done when Scotland sent forty-five, and Ireland 100 Members to the English Parliament; and when 100,000 people, but two years ago, were disfranchised? He did not see any evil likely to arise from taking the franchise from the lowest classes, because they were too often made the tools of the higher classes, and were prevented from following their own opinions. The middle and lower classes had been designated as revolutionary. He denied the assertion. There were, no doubt, some of the lower classes that might deserve such an epithet, but it was stigmatizing the middle classes to describe them as revolutionary. A great deal had been said about the great men that had been returned for these rotten boroughs, but not a word about the vast number of unprofitable Representatives. He represented one of those boroughs, and he could, therefore, speak with freedom—and his opinion was, if the whole class were swept away, the country would not materially suffer. By the change proposed in the Bill, 160 drones would be lost; but their places would be supplied by 115 useful Members. Much had been said about moderation; but, in fact, those Gentlemen who were now most clamorous for moderate Reform, were the very persons who opposed all Reform. The hon. Member concluded by stating, that he should vote for the Bill, and if it should be the last vote he should give in that House, he would console himself for the loss by the reflection that he had lent his aid in restoring liberty, and reviving the Constitution of the country.

Mr. *Charles Douglas* could not agree in the principle laid down by the noble Paymaster at his first announcement of the measure, with respect to the extension of the franchise to the class of 10*l.* householders. Nor did he generally anticipate that the composition of the House, after the change proposed by this measure, would be benefitted or improved in the manner expected by the noble Lord. He was convinced, quite contrary to what had fallen from his hon. friend the member for Kirkcudbright, with respect to the effect of the Bill upon Scotland, that the Bill, as altered, would not serve the Representation of that country. He should, therefore, feel it his duty to oppose it.

Mr. *Hawkins* spoke as follows:—As I consider the present Motion of the gallant General as the first of a series of somewhat similar measures, the tendency of which, whether intentional or not, will be to defeat what may be called the disfranchisement part of the present Bill, and as to all such attempts, I am prepared to give the most strenuous opposition in my power, I shall, perhaps, be sparing the time of the House if I take this opportunity of stating, once for all, my opinions on this part of the subject, and as briefly as possible, a few of the reasons which have induced me to consider the schedules A and B as the most important and most indispensable part of the present measure. I would, most assuredly, Sir, not have troubled the House now, had I succeeded in catching your eye on either of the former Debates; and even now were my own interests alone affected by the vote which I am about to give, I should have preferred giving that vote in silence; nor would I have obtruded upon the attention of the House any reasons for the correctness of those opinions, for the sincerity of which, such a vote would have been a sufficient guarantee. But, Sir, the House will probably think with me, that the sacrifice, even to a great constitutional necessity, of the privileges of those who have intrusted their interests to my keeping, demands a few words in justification of so painful a duty; and the more especially so as, in the present instance, this sacrifice of them is not rendered less painful to me by any corruption on their part. If I had paid, or was about to pay, directly or indirectly, by myself or by others, a single farthing for the seat I now hold, I might have been expected to reconcile myself without regret to this vote, upon the incontrovertible plea that purchase makes property, and that I had a right to do what I like with my own. But, Sir, as I have no such excuse to offer to my constituents, the smallness of whose numbers is their only fault, I am unable to avail myself of such an application of a new constitutional doctrine either in excusing myself to them, or in arguing to the House. Though I have no such exquisite reason, yet I think I have reasons good enough, and some few of them I shall, with permission of the House, proceed to offer. Of course, Sir, I shall avoid, as strictly as possible, all arguments for the mere purpose of proving that of which I am glad to see so many have become convinced since the first introduction of this measure, of which this House seems, at last, as unanimously convinced as the people—the necessity of some Reform; but one argument there is which I shall notice, inasmuch as the unfairness of its sophistry is only equalled by the constancy of its repetition. I allude to that class of antagonists who do not venture into the brunt of the battle with a bold and decided opposition to Reform, but who always entertain a sincere conviction, at any given moment, that the present is not the right moment for the discussion of this question, and they arrive at such conviction by this ingenious dilemma—when the people are clamorous for Reform, they tell us that we ought not to concede such a measure to the demands of popular turbulence; and when the people are silent, that silence is a proof of indifference, and, therefore, the measure need not be passed. I will readily allow, Sir, to these tacticians all the merit which is due for a very skilful disposition of such forces as they possess; but it is scarcely necessary to remind them, by way of serious answer, that if the turbulence of yesterday was their only reason for refusing Reform, the tranquillity of to-day is a conclusive reason for granting it. If, as they themselves say, we sit here to consult the interests rather than the wishes of the people, surely, Sir, their patience under misgovernment is no more an excuse for our denial of their rights, than would be their impatience under salutary control a reason for surrendering our own. And this allusion to the wishes of the people reminds me of one other argument of our adversaries, concerning the way in which this measure has been received by the people of England, which I will notice on account of its originality: and at this stage of the Debate we should be unreasonable indeed, if we were not thankful for originality of argument in any shape. If one of his Majesty's Ministers had told us as a proof of the merits of this measure, that its appearance had been hailed by Reformers of all parties, and all opinions, as the signal for rallying again round that Constitution whose regeneration they had abandoned in despair; if his Majesty's Ministers had told us how this measure had reconciled to the Legislative authority of this House the friends whom its corruption had disgusted, and the enemies whom its misconduct had exasperated, we should have found in the petitions laid on this Table since the appearance of the Bill the natural and satisfactory grounds on which such assertions were founded. But who ever expected to hear this fact seriously brought forward, as it has been, as a reason against this Bill?—"Your measure must be bad, because it is approved by every body."

"Your sins are great, because they are so small."

Sir, I have heard much in my childhood of a precept to this effect—that he who begins by attempting to please everybody, will probably end by pleasing nobody; but this is the first time I have heard either a person or a measure abused upon the express ground that it actually did please everybody. Surely, Sir, the dearth of argument on that side of the House has induced hon. Members, in the desperation of this last struggle for political existence, to snatch up hastily their adversaries' weapons at the risk of cutting their own fingers. Sir, I acknowledge this change of tone in the petitions of the people; and I hail it as a gratifying proof (to those by whom such proof is needed) that the people are not unreasonable; that they will give up as much to the prudence of their rulers as they expect to obtain from their generosity; and will prove by the example of the present, to those who will not condescend to read the history of the past, how very limited a measure of confidence on the part of a government in the fidelity of its subjects is repaid—with how full a confidence on the part of those subjects in the wisdom and integrity of their rulers. And now, Sir, that I may keep my promise of brevity better than such vows are usually kept, I will omit what I would have said on those inquiries into the primitive form of our Representative System, of which we have in former years heard so much; and I will more willingly give up those doctrines of abstract right so much insisted on by our predecessors in this great cause; I should even be content, for the purposes of this dispute, to assume that our right to our present liberties is a prescriptive right alone; for, by the very same evidence whereby this is proved, I claim the same prescriptive right to occasional necessary Reform. If I am referred to the records of history for the title deeds of our representative system, that same history tells me of alterations in that system, compared with which the present measure dwindles into insignificance. If I am told that the transfer of the elective franchise from Gatton to Birmingham, without judicial procedure, is a violent innovation, I cannot but recollect that within little more than a century, two independent Legislatures have been blotted out from the page of the Constitution, and with them the greater part of the representation whereof they were composed. If I am told that the vested rights of the present constituency are inviolable, I ask (and though so frequently asked before, it has never yet received an attempt at answer) what has become of the 40*s.* freeholders of Ireland? Sir, that very Revolution of 1688, which has sometimes been appealed to as the definitive resting-place of our constitutional ark, as the Sion of our political wandering, that Revolution which changed the succession to the Throne, is surely sufficient precedent for the disfranchisement of a nomination Borough. Sir, if the success of my own argument were the sole interest I felt in this question, I should willingly risk the event of the controversy on this appeal to historical precedent; but I will not place the cause of the people of England on any such narrow ground of defence. We seek not this Reform, as a matter of abstract right, but of practical expediency; we claim it, not as the fruit of historical research, but of historical experience; we ask it, not because it was so in our forefathers' time, but because it would have been so now, had our forefathers lived in ours. Sir, it is not enough to tell us that our borough system is now what it was

200 years ago. It is not enough to tell us that a system of tyrannical compulsion and corrupt influence which was in harmony with the violence and fraud of the political warfare of those days, which was in harmony with the remains of feudal power and the remembrance of feudal fidelity, which was suited alike to the selfishness of their political vices and the sternness of their political virtues; it is not enough to tell us that such a system is not grown worse, or even that it is considerably improved. If the political struggles of those days were compared with the like encounters of our own, they must be considered as the warfare of giants; they displayed the selfishness and tyranny of giant natures; and when the bludgeon was the umpire of popular meetings and the axe of legislative assemblies, it was natural and unavoidable that corruption and intimidation should be reckoned the two main pillars of established government and social order, and that political honesty should be identified with blind fidelity to the landlord or the party leader. But now, Sir, that the Sunday Pamphlet has superseded the bludgeon of the mob; now, that the daily journal has been admitted, by mutual consent, as a fitter arbiter between contending factions than the axe; now, that the prim schoolmaster is found a more effective bugbear to political disturbers than the grim headsman, it is too much to demand of us the continuance of those means of government whose worst corruption was unnoticed amidst the greater hideousness of the ends to which they were rendered subservient. Sir, I never contemplate the discussions which have passed on this question, but I feel myself half a convert to the now unfashionable doctrine of the wisdom of our ancestors. I am told that they had, of necessity, less experience, and less wisdom than ourselves. Less experience I admit they had; but that they had less wisdom I almost doubt, when I see that, unlike their descendants, they made, to the best of their ability, a practical application of that experience to the necessities and difficulties which occurred; and were Sir Thomas More really to rise from his grave for the purpose of instructing a Poet Laureate in Political Economy, he might well ask us what do we gain by our superior knowledge and accumulated experience, when a few sounding phrases and a few hard names are sufficient to deter us from putting to a practical use the results of that experience, and the deductions of that knowledge. So much, Sir, for the authority of past generations; now a few observations addressed to the reflection and the experience of the present. Of course, Sir, I shall not be called upon at this day, either in or out of this House, to answer an opponent who seriously pretends ignorance of the manner in which our nomination system works, whatever may be his opinion of the results which it produces. Upon the former of these questions, there is no longer either mystery or disagreement; to the latter I shall briefly address myself. Now, Sir, this question of the results of our borough system is a question of fact; and it is a question of fact to which the limits of debate preclude us from adducing satisfactory and direct testimony; for such testimony would be nothing less than the political history of England for such a period as the disputants should agree in considering a fair criterion. To enter satisfactorily upon such a field of inquiry, is, in this place, manifestly impossible; and to touch upon it by quoting a few isolated examples is only opening a vast magazine whence disputants on either side may furnish themselves with a species of light weapon of equal brightness, but equally indecisive. We have been told, for instance, of the talent habitually introduced into the House through the narrow portal of a close borough; but we have not been told what proportion this talent bore to the aggregate mediocrity, not to say occasional imbecility of such introductions. Hon. Members opposite string up their dozen of choice pippins in a golden row to win our admiration; but we have not been called to notice the bushels of crabs which have sprung from the same stock. And surely, Sir, it would not have weakened our opponent's case, if they had bestowed some pains in showing that this talent had been generally applied to the service of the country, and not to that of its possessors and their patrons. Napoleon's servile Senate was a collection of the talent, the science, and the experience, of France; but we shall hardly refer to that as a pattern of a Legislative Assembly. And these observations, Sir, remind me of what is, after all, the fatal objection to such a system of election; that which is, to my mind, the decisive reason against the existence of even the purest of these

boroughs. We have heard much boasting of the independence of our self-elected Legislators; and if independence is always to be measured by irresponsibility, it is not to be denied that they are most aristocratically independent of that people whose representatives they are so fond of styling themselves. But here, Sir, is the fatal taint in the source from whence they spring—here is that illegitimacy of origin which will ever stand in the way of that salutary respect which all rulers, to make their rule effective, should enjoy in the eyes of the people. Legislators they may be—wise and honest legislators if you please—but representatives they are not and cannot be. Hereditary members of an Elective Assembly—Peers in the House of Commons—by their presence here they intercept from the hereditary branch of the Legislature that popular confidence which they cannot enjoy themselves. Sir, there is no one remark which our adversaries are more assiduous in submitting to our attention than the necessity, that a legislative assembly should so far enjoy the confidence of the people that it should not be obliged to act as the mere momentary index of popular will; that it should represent the opinions of the community upon an average of years, and be responsible for the ultimate tendency rather than the particular line of its conduct. Sir, in this doctrine I most cordially agree; and I do, therefore, protest against the continuance of that system of representation which compels the people to interfere with a jealous expression of their opinions on each particular action of this House that does not fall in with their momentary humour; because they feel, that whether the ultimate results of that action be such as to justify us or not, they at least will have no future opportunity of controlling the actors, or of adopting precautions against the repetition or continuance of the action. It is, Sir, for these reasons that the press admonishes us by threats instead of advice; that the manufacturing artizan enrols his name in affiliated societies, instead of subscribing it to petitions; that the agriculturist winks at, if he does not encourage, the outrages of his labourers, as a circuitous means of lightening those taxes which had disabled him from meeting their demands; it is, Sir, for these reasons that (however our adversaries may persist with a politic affectation of fear to transpose the terms) that revolution has been called for when Reform was wanted; it is, Sir to the obstinate continuance of this antiquated corruption that we owe those periodical outbreaks of popular discontent which, since the first French Revolution, have kept that people, and among them the greatest intellect of the age, in a state of wonder at the continued existence of a Constitution which only throws off its peccant humours by this system of chronic convulsions. It is, Sir, to use the language of common life—it is because I am obliged to secure, not by force, at least by an understood readiness to apply it, the good conduct towards me of that man to whom I can offer no other motives; it is because a very little knowledge of human nature would make the most careless disposition unwilling to trust for a moment out of sight that man who has any power in his possession, but of whose character I do not approve, and over whose actions I have no control. But, Sir, as I said before, it is quite impossible to prove general misconduct, or general merit, by any number of particular instances which the limits of debate will permit us to quote; there is but one indisputable criterion to which we can appeal in this place; and that criterion must be sought by each individual among the results of his own observations, and his own experience without these walls. That criterion of legislative capacity is the general effect produced upon public opinion by the conduct of such a legislation: a slow, silent, continuous effect—visible, indeed, through the whole of its insidious progress, to those whose business it is to watch the signs of the times—the gathering thunder-cloud of a summer's day—unheeded by less attentive observers, until the first audible mutterings of its wrath, and unnoticed by the multitude in general, until it burst in storm and desolation on the land. This is that unerring criterion to which rulers have never yet appealed until the eleventh hour; this is that indisputable sign of the times which Governments never deign to notice until they can no longer close their eyes to the lightening nor their ears to the thunder. There is, indeed, Sir, on this question of fact—on this question of the good or bad results of our present system—one argument which I shall suggest to the House—an application of the old argument from cause to effect. What, Sir, is the plain state of the case now before this Court? Here are two parties; one affirming the good effects of our nomination system; the other at least equally numerous, and if not more disinterested, at least placed in circumstances which throw less suspicion over their testimony, affirming with as bold an appeal to experience, the bad effects of the same system! So far, Sir, the testimony in favour of our side is at least of equal value with that in favour of our adversaries; but what will be said when these very adversaries join most cordially with us in their character of the system which produces these much-disputed effects? Why, Sir, these very trumpeters of this House—these champions of our motley franchise—allow that they are astonished when they contemplate the apparently inadequate causes which produce these vaunted results; they allow that they cannot explain by what miracle of our politico-moral nature such purity is engendered of such corruption. We infer the existence of bad effects from bad causes. Our adversaries join with us in our character of the causes, but infer therefrom nothing but good effects. Thus much, Sir, for those who, abandoning the machinery of our Representative system as untenable ground, take up their position in defence of its results. But there is another, and no less numerous class, who, giving up both machinery and results as equally indefensible—who, acknowledging that they see here no exception to the old rule, of "like causes produce like effects," demur, nevertheless, to any proposal for amending the system from an apprehension of danger, the magnitude of which, in their eyes, is perhaps to be explained upon the old principle of "*omne ignotum pro mirifico;*" inasmuch as they have never yet been able exactly to specify what that danger is. The sole difference between them and us is, shall the decayed parts of the system be mended or not? Both are agreed how much the system wants mending, but one party is unwilling to begin so perilous a job. Both are agreed that it is in rags and tatters; but whenever we begin to thread the darning-needle they exclaim, "Leave it alone, in the name of prudence—in the name of caution—in the name of Robespierre and Danton—it is so rotten, that if you attempt to put a stitch in, the whole will fall to pieces." I will not stop, Sir, to remind such objectors what manner of compliment they are paying to the old garment which has served their turn so long, and for which they profess such a veneration; but do they not see the inevitable inference which the political renovators would draw from this admission? Would not the answer be ready and irreplicable? If the state of the garment be such as you avow, then it is high time to get a new one. And is not this, Sir, the dilemma in which the obstinate refusal of all the moderate and timely amendments has, for some time, placed us? Have we not been told by a loud, if not a strong party, that the Legislature of England is incorrigible?—that it is too rotten to be patched up—and that it is high time to get a new one? And to whom do we owe this, but to those who passed by every opportunity for a timely Reform, with an impudent denial of the existence of any blemish; and who now, when such denial is no longer possible, think to evade the results of their own obstinacy by an affectation of sudden discovery, that such blemishes have gone too far—have spread themselves too universally through the system—to leave any part where a repair may be commenced without danger of pulling the whole to pieces? And these, Sir, are the self-elected champions of our Monarchical Government! And these are the best grounds on which they would risk its defence! Sir, I am not of their opinion. I have better thoughts of that Monarchy of England, which has withstood far more serious renovation than this—I have better thoughts of those institutions which our ancestors feared not to reform and repair whenever they saw need so to do. I tremble not at their exposure to the ordeal of public opinion; through that ordeal they were never yet passed but they came out with equal beauty and with renovated purity; from those struggles which exude the superfluous flesh, the bone derives its strength and the sinews their elasticity. What these apprehensions of danger are, it is in vain for us to ask. Our opponents have on this subject contented themselves with vague generalities, nor have they even condescended to place before us any intelligible picture of those phantoms which exercise so powerful an influence over their own imaginations. We cannot, of course, be expected to combat those forces which will not take the field. We can only ask, what danger there will henceforth exist which does not exist now? What supports the Monarchy and Peerage now but public opinion? and how can that support be weakened when we have enlisted public opinion in their favour, by granting that Reform which, of all others, public opinion is now most loudly demanding? We have been told, indeed, that the House of Peers could not exist without the support which it derives from its nominees in this Assembly. But, Sir, were we to grant this we should immediately ask, what supports this Assembly? If the House of Peers is thrown back upon the House of Commons on what does the House of Commons rely? After all the discussions of the theoretical and the intrigues of the practical Statesman, we come ultimately and in the last resort to public opinion as the tortoise which is to carry the elephant, which carries the Ministerial world; and, however we may consult our distaste for unpalatable remedies—however we may think to avoid the bitter necessity of physic by attributing our strength to the disease of which we are dying—however we may flatter our imagined dignity by a vaunted independence of popular opinion—it is that popular opinion which is our best staff of support, though we will continue to insult it by clinging to a broken reed. This topic, Sir, reminds me of Mr. Canning, and which is thus briefly summed up in his own words:—"If you reform the House of Commons on the ground of past misconduct, what will you do with the House of Lords?" Now, Sir, this objection to Reform in general, is shortly and conclusively answered by a reference to that part of the Bill which is now the subject of discussion. In the schedules A and B is written that which we intend to do with the House of Lords: we intend to deprive them of that corrupt and unconstitutional influence which they exercised in this House; intend to confine them to their own Court; we wish in future that either House should be what it was intended to be, a Court of perpetual appeal from the decisions of the other, instead of that monstrous anomaly which they now offer to the world of two Courts, designed to control each other, but ruled in a great measure by the same judges, and controlled by a mutual influence. One complaint has been made against the particular part of the measure now under discussion, which comes with a peculiarly bad grace from those by whom it is now put forth; we are told of the anomalies both as regards population and property, which will still defend our Representative system, as if those anomalies could be put for one instant in comparison with those which now exist; and as if those very persons would not be the most vociferous in scouting such a Reform as would be necessary to sweep away all anomalies whatever. Another complaint I will notice is one not directed against the measure itself, but against those who have introduced it; and this complaint I approach with some diffidence of my own constitutional knowledge, Sir, I must confess (and I shall be thankful for correction if wrong), I must confess that I was not aware until the late debates on this question, that the appeal of a British King from his Parliament to his people was an unconstitutional measure. I had thought that both the theory and practice of our Constitution had decided, that a Parliament at issue with its constituents on a great constitutional question might, by no unprecedented exercise of the Royal Prerogative, be sent back to those constituents, if not for further instruction, at least for further proofs of confidence. And now, Sir, before I sit down, one word concerning that people of England, to whose hopes and wishes, as it seems, his Majesty's Ministers must not even allude in this House, without danger of being taunted from the opposite bench, with an appeal to their physical force! I, Sir, shall put forth myself no vaunting defiance of that giant power which now sleeps a faithful servant at our feet—that power which never yet put forth its strength but in our defence—and against which, if once it turn in madness on its master, no defiance will avail. If, as a Legislator, I am called upon to forget that the people have hands, as an Englishman I cannot forget that they have hearts; and at all times, indeed, but more especially in times like these, I do think those hearts worth the winning, even at the price of my own power. We have been accused of attempting by a threat of revolution to intimidate those very opponents, whose favourite argument against this Bill—whose staff of reliance, if I may judge from their cheers, is their own fear of revolution as the ultimate consequence. Why, Sir—threat for threat—upon our joint showing of the case, the question would only be which way led soonest and straightest to revolution. They do not defend acknowledged iniquities of the present system upon any other grounds than those of general expediency; they acknowledge the occasional personal, and constant moral corruption inflicted by our present nomination system; but it is the only way, forsooth, of keeping things quiet; the only way of saving the Monarchy, the Peerage, and the Church. Why, Sir, may we not entertain the same fears as our adversaries? Why are they to be allowed to allege their own prospective cowardice as a reason against that measure in favour of which we must not state our present apprehensions? Sir, I am not afraid of a revolution in either case. I am not afraid of that physical violence against which, if we were not protected by the good sense of the people of England, the bigotry of their self-elected rulers would be but as a broken reed. But I do think that we shall give no small confirmation of that charge of legislative incapacity which is now ringing in our ears, if we neglect to repair our House while it is still summer, because the winter hurricane is not yet upon the horizon. It is because we can retreat with dignity that I wish to retreat now; I wish to exchange that suspicious safety which we owe to the good sense rather than to the good wishes of the people, to the remembrance rather than to the continuance of former affection, to the habit rather than to the feelings of past fidelity—I wish to exchange that suspicious safety for the holiday security of a people's love. There be some few, I know, in all political parties, who care neither for a people's love, nor have faith in a people's gratitude; whose best political virtue is a proud consistency in wrong, and whose highest moral courage is an unreflecting security. Where, indeed, was ever seen a fabric of time-worn political privilege tottering to its fall, the majority of whose possessors have not displayed the same idiotic security, amidst the ruin which every one else foresaw. I will not detain the House by quoting proofs of that melancholy truth, of which political history is but one long example; I will go no farther back than to the early days of many whom I now address, and ask, was it the firmness of real or the madness of fancied security when the Court of Versailles drove the representatives of popular opinion to swear in a Tennis Court their own inviolability and the regeneration of France? Or was it the firmness of real or the madness of fancied security, when, as it were but yesterday, the breathless herald of approaching insurrection was ordered to wait on the threshold of St. Cloud

> "Donec Borbonico libeat vigilare tyranno."

What price, not the people of France alone, but all civilised Europe, were compelled to pay for chaining that first madness, is now matter of history; what price not France alone, but all civilised Europe, are about to pay for chaining this second madness, I dare not trust myself to prophesy; but I appeal to all impartial observers of past and passing events who have witnessed the reluctance with which that mighty people commenced the struggles for which they have paid so much, to say whether that people would not have repaid, with a rich return of confidence and love, the voluntary sacrifice of antiquated power, worthless and defenceless though it was. That such gratitude would have been felt by the people of France for such sacrifice, I do most sincerely believe; that such gratitude will be felt by the people of England for far less painful sacrifices I do most unhesitatingly affirm; and the more gratitude, inasmuch as such sacrifices on our part are not yet inculcated by the presence of that other fearful alternative. For the honour of this ancient monarchy, whose perils and whose triumphs for so many generations are chronicled in the proceedings of this House; for the sake of this faithful people who have stood by us in the hour of our trial, and borne with us in the hour of our pride, let us seize the opportunity which now presents itself, to inscribe ourselves on the page of history as the first recorded example of "power correcting its own usurpation."

Sir *George Warrender* said, that a speech more eloquent than the one just delivered by the hon. member for St. Michael he had seldom heard in that House. But the hon. Member offered by that speech one of the best defences for the present system; for, in his own person, he gave an instance of that eloquence and ability which had been introduced into that House through the nomination boroughs, and in the persons of borough proprietors; and he should be happy if, in the event of this measure being carried, it would have the effect of preserving for the service the same ability as was now possessed by some of those who were what the hon. Gentleman had described as a sort of representatives of the hereditary Peerage. Should the present system be superseded by a new one, the country would be compelled by the alteration in the franchise to return to Parliament demagogues, and men ignorant and unworthy of the trust reposed in them. He had heard with considerable dissatisfaction, that the Scotch, at least, had no right to be dissatisfied with the proposed change, because it inevitably must increase their influence and weight in that House, in proportion to the influence of the English Members. This, as a Scotchman, he felt called upon to reject—it was a boon he would scorn to accept. Never should it be said, that he, as a Scotchman, would consent to spoliate upon the boroughs of England. In this scheme for disfranchising, the guilt of bribery did not seem always to be followed by the appropriated punishment. There was no proposition to take away the representatives of Liverpool, yet Liverpool was the most corrupt of those boroughs that had been brought under the notice of the House. If that borough was disfranchised, and if Evesham, which was now under consideration, followed the same fate, he should then do what had never before been done—he should put in a claim for a large town in Scotland. The rights of Leeds, of Manchester, and Wakefield, had been asserted, but Glasgow had never been mentioned. If the boroughs of Liverpool and Evesham were disfranchised, he should put in a claim for Glasgow. He was determined to oppose the measure of Reform, but he would oppose it directly, and not by a side-wind, like the motion of the hon. and gallant General; least of all would he consent to a proposition, the result of which he considered would be injurious to the interests of Scotland. He could not help thinking it strange that those Scotch Gentlemen who represented English constituencies should be more favourable to the interests of Scotland than the Scotch Members. Twenty years since, he had represented a Scotch borough, and even if the Reform Bill were to pass, he did not yet despair of representing some populous place in his own country. To vote for the proposition of the hon. and gallant General would be in effect to say, that, let the population and importance of Glasgow or Aberdeen at any future period be what they might, let Scotland be ever so great and prosperous, it should only have the same number of Members, and that the whole representative body of Scotland should undergo no change, although at present it had only one more Member than Cornwall. Without supposing that this Bill would pass into a law, he might fancy that at some future period English boroughs would be disfranchised for corruption, and he would not destroy the chance Scotland at present possessed of obtaining the franchise, which would thus become vacant. He begged it, however, to be distinctly understood, that he did not vote against the proposition of the hon. and gallant General because he was favourable to the Bill to which it applied.

Mr. *C. W. Wynn* also congratulated the House upon the extraordinary ability displayed by the hon. Member for a close borough (Mr. Hawkins,) who, but for such modes of gaining admission into Parliament, might never have enjoyed the opportunity. He was sorry for his own sake that his hon. friend had forestalled him in these congratulations, but it was at least an evidence of their mutual sincerity that they were both of the same opinion. When such were the consequences of the present system, who would not wish that it should be perpetual? It was not possible for any constituency at all times to return Representatives equally excellent; but, looking back to the history of the House of Commons, he saw that men of the most splendid abilities had first fostered their talents in close boroughs, and had afterwards been deservedly chosen for populous places. Some individuals seemed possessed of hereditary ability, but the great mass of the House was unquestionably of a contented mediocrity of talent. Nearly all the great characters whom he had seen, or of whom he had read, had commenced their career, and had originally entered the House through the channel of a close borough. Without going into particulars, he would look to general results, and he would appeal to the government of the country for the last century as a proof of the excellence of the present system of Representation. If, on the other hand, a century of misgovernment could be shown, he would admit it as an irrefragable argument in favour of Reform. During that period, what country had enjoyed more general happiness—more public and individual liberty? in what country had a more rapid progress been made in arts and manufactures and literature? Had any nation met the same dangers, endured the same struggles, and triumphed with the same glory? The Government had been constantly supported by the confidence of Parliament and the suffrages of the people. He did not deny, that upon this subject the feelings of the people had been excited, but their good sense was now awakened, and they had returned to their reliance upon the House of Commons as at present constituted. He agreed with those who said, that times of peril and pressure were not the fittest for discussing a question of this sort; but he saw no reason to anticipate any such evils in a time of profound peace and growing prosperity. With regard to the Bill itself, he regretted that so much had been attempted in it, since the effect was, that the details had not been sufficiently examined; and he condemned the test of population, which had been resorted to as the criterion for conferring the elective franchise. Besides, it was little less than absurd to pretend to ascertain that population by a census taken ten years ago, when the lapse of only a few weeks would have furnished returns far more recent and accurate. Another anomaly in the plan was this;—that although those who voted for boroughs could not also vote for counties in respect of the same property, yet the population of those boroughs was taken into the calculation in deciding the point, whether the counties where they were situated should or should not be allowed additional Representatives. The right hon. Gentleman illustrated this point, by reference to the cases of Glamorganshire and Cumberland. Care ought to be taken not to give a double effect to some part of the constituency of the kingdom, by communicating to them a double right of voting. During the thirty years he had sat in Parliament, he had paid great attention to the different cases of corruption brought before the House; and when it was proper to do so upon strong proof, he had supported the extreme of disfranchisement. It was observable, however, that corruption had, in various cases, been established not against the lowest class of voters. At Cricklade, Aylesbury, and Retford, it had been proved against the householders. Those who had resided in houses of 10*l.* a year rent and upwards, had been shown, in many instances, to be the most corrupt; and what security was there that 200 out of the 300 voters in each place contemplated by the Bill under consideration, would not be very willing to accept 20*l.* a piece for their Suffrages? The measure was so complicated that in his opinion, the better course would be, to divide the subject-matter of the Bill as it was now framed, and submit it to the House in the shape of Bills specifically separate and distinct, for the question of the disfranchisement of close boroughs alone was quite sufficient to employ the attention of Parliament for an entire Session. The proposed registration would lead to perpetual disputes, and the provisions relative to the leaseholders were in the highest degree injudicious. It was intended that leaseholders of 20*l.* a year should not be allowed to vote during the two years subsequent to the renewal of their lease. Now the consequence of this would be, that for six years out of twenty such leaseholders would be deprived of their acknowledged privilege, as their leases would require renewal once every seven years. It had been said, that the general effect of the Reform would be to get rid of 114 drones, and to replace them by as many active and intelligent Members; but his experience rather showed, that the best men of business, and the most efficient Members of Parliament, were not usually those who represented counties or populous towns. Judging from his experience of that House, he should say, that the greater proportion of business was transacted rather by Representatives for boroughs than by county Members. Many of those who sat for boroughs possessed a commercial knowledge, and an aptitude for business which materially promoted the interests of the nation. Splendid talents would unquestionably make their way, but he begged to call the attention of the House to the case of the late Mr. Huskisson—a man not remarkable for the brilliancy of his abilities, but who invariably secured attention by his habits of business, and by the depth and accuracy of his knowledge. Instances of the same kind were frequent, and showed the necessity of some mode of introducing such useful and able men to public life. He was certainly of opinion that the present number of close boroughs was larger than necessary, but the proposed remedy was infinitely too sweeping. He was disposed to approve of the plan of throwing the small boroughs, where it could be done, into districts—not depriving them of their share in the Representation, but calling upon them to exercise it conjointly. Such a system prevailed in Wales, and was adopted by the present Bill. In the cases of Aldborough and Buckingham, where it had been tried, it had worked well, and a bill was before the House for extending it to Scotland. Let that experiment be made in one or two places first, and if it succeeded, next year it might be carried further. With respect to population, he thought that another Session ought to elapse before it was definitively fixed; a new census would be soon made, and was it to be said that it was fit to establish a principle in 1831, which might be altered in 1832? Claims to the franchise which could not justly be resisted, might next year be advanced, and the only answer must be, that the Bill had been passed, and that the application was too late. This brought him to the Motion immediately before the House. He saw no reason why the Representation of Ireland should be altered. It was true, that since 1800, and chiefly in consequence of the Union, Ireland had increased in population, wealth, and happiness [*"No, no," from Mr. O'Connell.*] The hon. Member, no doubt, had more personal experience than he had; but even he would not deny, that Ireland had increased in intelligence. Of late years the Members she had sent over were men of wider views, and greater talents than those who arrived in this country immediately after the Union. But it was to be recollected, that if the population of Ireland had been augmented, that of England had been augmented also, and in an equal proportion; and if the number of Members were to depend upon the number of constituents, it would be necessary to review the subject every ten or twenty years. For the reasons he had stated, unless stronger arguments than he had yet heard were brought forward, he was willing to adhere to what was established, if only because it was established: the onus of proving the propriety of a change rested upon those who advocated it.

Sir *G. Clerk* wished to state a few of the reasons which induced him to support the motion of the hon. and gallant General. The only reason why the measure of Reform had acquired a certain degree of popularity in Scotland was, that it proposed to give five additional Members to that part of the United Kingdom, and if he could approve of any part of the plan, it would be that. He did not think with the hon. Baronet (Sir G. Warrender) that the effect of the motion of the hon. and gallant General would be to limit the number of Representatives for Scotland: if that were his opinion, he would certainly not support it. He wished the case of Scotland to stand upon its own merits, so that, if necessary, additional Members should be given to Glasgow or Edinburgh, without reference to the numbers for England or Ireland. If, by acceding to the proposition of the gallant General, he should preclude the towns of Scotland from receiving any increase of Members hereafter, he certainly should not have voted in favour of it; but so far from that being his impression, he was convinced that the claims of Scotland to an additional share in the Representation would be rather strengthened than weakened by the adoption of the Resolution proposed by his gallant friend. He would transfer the franchise from boroughs proved to be delinquent to the large towns, and not at one swoop deprive England of forty-one Representatives. He had voted last year against the proposition of the noble Lord opposite to increase the numbers of the House, by adding Representatives for some of the large towns; but he would have had much less objection to such an increase than to the sweeping measure of disfranchisement which the noble Lord now proposed. He could not see any reason for the diminution of the number of Representatives, when the population, wealth, and intelligence, of the country had increased, and when that very increase was the principal ground on which the measure of Reform was defended.

Sir *John Malcolm* would not occupy the House by discussing the details of the Bill. He was opposed to the whole measure, by which an example would be given for taking away the charters of Englishmen. If that Bill were passed, and those boroughs, of which he himself represented one, were cut off from the Representation, how could men who had passed a great part of their lives abroad in the service of the country, and, therefore, possessed no local influence, obtain access to that House? How were merchants and professional men, however qualified by their peculiar experience to enlighten the deliberations of the Legislature, to obtain places in Parliament, they having no family or local influence? Nomination boroughs were the only avenue which the great mercantile Representatives of the great interests of our

East and West-India colonies had of admission to a seat in the councils, by which the property and well-being of 100 millions of our fellow-subjects were regulated; so that to cut off them was to deprive those great interests of any direct Representation. He had studied the Constitution of this country attentively during the last ten years—had had opportunities of contrasting its workings with those of the governments of almost every country on the globe—and, as an old man, would give his advice, not to rashly tamper with that which produced such inestimable blessings. Never had he felt so much pain, as when sitting in that place, he heard himself described as a piece of dirt by gentlemen in their charges of rottenness and corruption against those boroughs and their Representatives. Although, as a Scotchman, he was desirous to obtain all proper advantages for Scotland, he yet was of opinion that the Representation of England ought not to be diminished. If the new experiment upon the constituency were to be made at all, it ought, at least, to be confined to those places which had at present the right of Representation. With respect to the proposed increase of the Representatives of Scotland—although he was by no means deficient of that attachment to his country by which Scotchmen were distinguished—yet, using a military phrase, he must say that the Scotchmen had taken the liberty very often of billetting themselves upon England since the Union. On the contrary, he had never heard of an Irishman or Englishman having sat for a Scotch borough. He knew that in voting against the Bill, and also in supporting the Amendment of the hon. and gallant Member opposite, he differed from his constituents, and he felt that in doing so, he was acting with the boldness and independence in which he had prided himself throughout his life.

Sir *R. Wilson* thought, that the noble Lord who had introduced the Reform Bill had done honour to himself and the Administration with which he was connected, by the redeeming of their pledges to the nation, however objectionable in some of its details that Bill must be considered. That he should be obliged to find any part of it objectionable was a most painful course for him, but he must openly avow, that, his objections to the reduction in the number of the English Representatives were insuperable. He had never heard the noble Lord allege a single reason for that reduction; and certainly he could not understand why a diminution of the number of Members was to be considered advisable at a time when the business of the country was confessedly increasing. He knew that the time was not distant when England would require the aid of the full amount of her Representatives to maintain her interests; and he could not but be startled at the proposition which, instead of increasing, or at least preserving the amount, was, in effect, a decimation of the English Representation. He, therefore, felt himself compelled to dissent from a measure containing so insuperable an objection as that appeared to him; not to say anything of other serious objections which would flow from its operation. Whether, in those views, he was right or wrong, the moment he heard the proposition of his noble friend, he determined rather to relinquish his seat in that House, than give his support to that part of the Reform Bill. He had been sent into that House as a Reformer, and he would not appear to his constituents an enemy to Reform, by withholding his support from the Reform proposed by a Government with which he was associated on the general principles of their Administration, and on the general question of Reform. He felt an unwillingness to appear by such a vote the enemy of an Administration with whose general policy he concurred. Accordingly, on the very night the proposition was first broached, he communicated his misgivings to some hon. Members connected with the Government, and had with them a confidential communication, the result of which was, that he was led to believe that Ministers did not consider the proposed reduction as an essential portion of their measure of Reform, but as a suggestion for improvement in the machinery of that House, which they thought would be worthy of adoption. During the recess, he had had conversations with several other individuals, who confirmed him in that opinion; and he had also been assured by the gallant General who moved the Amendment now before the House, that his proceeding was not of a hostile character. Accordingly, agreeing with the gallant General in that view, and in his disapproval of the proposed reduction of the Members, he had promised to support the present Motion. In promising that support, he conceived that he was not acting in opposition to the views of his Majesty's Government. If it seemed necessary to give Representatives to places in Scotland and Ireland, hitherto unrepresented, it would be much better, he thought, to enlarge also than diminish the number of English Members. He felt, therefore, that in voting for the Resolution, he should not be opposing the extension of franchise to Scotland and Ireland, but only preserving the integrity of the English Representation; and he also was induced to believe, from his confidential communications with certain Gentlemen, whom he had reason to regard in the light of organs of the Government, that the reduction formed no essential part of the measure of Reform; and that, therefore, to oppose it, it did not follow but he might, as he would, vote for the Bill. On the 12th of April, the noble Lord (Lord John Russell) said, that as it was thought desirable by many persons who were favourable to the principle of the Bill, that the Members of the House should not be reduced, the Government had been induced to relax its determination on this point, not thinking it of vital importance. On the 13th of April, the noble Lord, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, said, that in order to remove erroneous impressions which seemed to have been made by the explanation of the noble Lord (Lord John Russell) on the preceding evening, he wished to state, that Government had no intention to restore the whole number of the Members which it was originally proposed to take from the House; but that if the House, upon consideration, should come to a decision not to diminish its Members, the Government would not think that such an inroad upon the principle of the Bill as to induce them to resist it, as they had never considered the reduction an essential part of the Bill. But, last night, that proposition was declared to be essential to the Bill; and the Motion of his gallant friend opposite was described by the noble Lord (Lord Althorp) to be an invidious measure, and they who supported it were set down as enemies to Reform. He was greatly surprised at that change of language. He was a Reformer, and he had been prepared to support the Government even on that point to which nothing could ever have reconciled him but the fear that opposition to it might cause the Bill to be lost; he meant the disfranchisement of the potwalloping boroughs, supporting which gave him great pain, for he had always considered them a most useful and efficacious part of the Constitution, acting like its safety-valves, and guarding the Constitution against any sudden ebullition of popular feeling. At the same time, he had never advocated Universal Suffrage, or the Ballot, because he believed, that if those measures were once conceded, they would lead to others by which the overthrow of the Constitution would speedily be effected. He was not the Reformer who could change his opinions on the subject of Reform every week. He was not a shifting Reformer. He was not the Reformer who put on and cast off his principles with as much readiness as his garments. He was not the Reformer, who by his indecision disparaged his own character, and threw doubt upon his own opinions. He was not one that could play the part of vacillation, as it might meet the purpose of the passing moment; far less could he permit himself to be influenced to do so by the most base and sordid motives. Neither was he the Reformer, who, having passed his word to his gallant friend opposite, that he would support his Motion, could afterwards appear to barter his political independence, in assisting the opposition of the Government to that Motion. He never bartered for place—nor sought to barter his political independence for the possession of political power. He thought it the duty of every man embarking in public life to sacrifice all private interests—to sacrifice not only his own hopes and fortunes, but those of his relatives, which he must hold far dearer than his own—rather than to compromise his character for political integrity. But the fluctuation of counsels on this question had been such, that it seemed as if the Government had set its fortunes upon a die, which, in prudence, ought never to have been cast. He regretted that uncertainty of counsels, as it endangered the measure upon which the peace and tranquillity of the country depended. He regretted it also on his own account, but he could not let mere personal considerations stand in the way of his zeal for the interests of his country, in whose service he had spent the best years of his life, and in which he had shed his blood. He did not believe that the fate of the Bill depended on the success of the proposition of the hon. and gallant member for Liverpool, but he felt himself placed by the fluctuating conduct of Ministers in an embarrassing dilemma. In the first place, he could not, consistently with his duty to his constituents, vote for a proposition which Ministers said would endanger the Bill; and in the next, for the reason he had stated, he could not consistently vote against the Resolution which he had promised to support. He felt himself in a position of extreme difficulty; he could not retract his promise to his gallant friend, nor could he (after the declaration of the noble Lord, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, last night) consistently with his duty to his constituents, vote for the Amendment, [*cheers.*] He could understand what was signified in those cheers. Who, then, were the men who dared by such cheers to impugn the integrity of his conduct? Let them stand up boldly in their places. He did not shrink from the difficulty into which he had been involved; though he felt that he had been inveigled into his present dubious position by his mistaken confidence in the assertions of Ministers. He was prepared to surrender to his constituents the trust which they had committed to him, if they disapproved of his conduct, and withdrew their confidence. If it should be the consequence of the course which he pursued on that occasion, that he should retire from public life, he should carry with him into his retirement a grateful recollection of the courtesy which he had ever experienced in that House, and a perfect confidence that he bore with him into private life an unblemished character for political integrity.

Mr. *Stanley* had listened to the speech of the hon. and gallant member for Southwark with no ordinary amazement. Language so different from that usually uttered by the hon. and gallant Member, he defended by imputations on Ministers of a change of sentiment, which however quickly discernible by the eye of an enemy, revealed itself but slowly to an ally. He really knew not how to reconcile such language with the professions of the hon. and gallant Member, of his having been a Reformer all his life. Such language was in truth a strange commentary on the text which the hon. and gallant Member had expounded with such emphasis when he said "I am and ever was a Reformer!" It was not for him to judge the hon. and gallant Member's motives; he had neither the right nor the intention to impugn them: it was a question between the hon. Member and his constituents alone to reconcile the tone and spirit of his present remarks with his pledges and declared attachment to the principles of a measure which he was now about to oppose. It was for himself only to explain to them the grounds of the conduct, why it was, that he who had obtained their suffrages as a Reformer, and who, in obedience to his pledge to them, expressed his readiness to resign his seat, after he had effected the mischief, perhaps, which that seat was given him to prevent. All that he would say was, that it did not strike him as the conduct of the honest and consistent Reformer, which the hon. and gallant Gentleman professed to be, first to defeat a great measure which he was sent to support, and then lay claim to high-mindedness of purpose by an expression of readiness to resign. As to the "confidential communications" of which the hon. and gallant Member had spoken, informing him that Ministers did not consider the proposition to reduce the number of Members fatal to the Bill,—he would only say, that it was impossible for the Government three weeks ago to have expressed an opinion on the present proposition, for it had not yet been more than two nights promulgated. But the hon. and gallant Member had, it seems, had other "confidential communications" besides that which he alleged to have had with the Ministers, who gave him credit for the character of a consistent reformer. He had a subsequent confidential communication with the hon. and gallant member for Liverpool, who had come forward with a proposition to defeat the Bill, the principle of which the hon. and gallant Member pledged himself to his constituents at Southwark to support. "But," said the hon. and gallant Member, "if I vote for the Resolution of the hon. member for Liverpool"—and he had not as yet, it should seem, made up his mind as to the side he should vote for—"I shall not do so in hostility to the general measure—for I conceive it not to be brought forward with such feelings." But, supposing the hon. and gallant Member, notwithstanding his confidential communication with the hon. Mover of the Resolution, had laboured under this delusion of its not having originated in a spirit of artful, covert hostility, to the Bill, till yesterday morning, how could he continue under the delusion after the proceedings of last night? Had he not heard a noble Lord (Lord Stormont) opposite attempt to reflect his little light on the character of that Resolution—had he not heard him admit, that though it was possible that some might vote for the Resolution who would also vote for the Bill, it was not brought forward in any friendly feelings? He knew not whether the hon. and gallant Member had taken a part in the "confidential communications" which led to that Resolution—indeed he knew not who had or had not—for it was a combination of a strange mixture of parties, and principles, and no principles, and motives, and stray voters from all parts of the House, all united in the concocting of a plan the most likely to embarrass the great measure of Reform which had received the sanction of that House, and, above all others, was stamped with the approbation of the country. He should like to know from the chief actors in these confidential communications, whether it was not a simple fact, that repeated discussions had been held on not less than four modifications of the original proposition of the hon. and gallant member for Liverpool before the present was ultimately agreed to. He said, that such was the fact, and he appealed to the hon. and gallant Member himself for the truth of his statement. [General *Gascoyne*—"Yes, there were some alterations."] He knew that such was the case; and yet the hon. and gallant Member, forsooth, told them that the proposition did not emanate in hostility to the principle of Reform. It was the deliberate, and, as its framers thought, the most efficacious, means of securing a large number of votes, so as to indirectly, but effectually, defeat the great object which the friends of the present Bill have in view. Would the hon. and gallant member for Liverpool venture to deny, that the first draft of the Resolution applied to "Great Britain" instead of "England and Wales?" And was it not in consequence of the unwillingness to provoke any marked hostility on the part of the Irish and Scotch Members that it was, after several modifications, altered to its present form? And yet this is the Resolution thus framed in deadly hostility to the Bill, which the "consistent reformer," the hon. and gallant member for Southwark, would forsooth support! He would also ask the gallant General, had there been one word said in the discussion upon the Amendment to prove the inconveniences which were apprehended from the altered proportions of the English to the Irish and Scotch Representation? Had they not, on the contrary, gone over and over the discussion of the principles of the Bill, whereas that principle had been already decided by the House, and still more decidedly approved of by the whole country? And had not the discussion of that almost universally approved principle been renewed upon a debate which professed to concern the relative proportion of the Representation of England and Wales to that of the remainder of the United Kingdom. If he rightly understood the hon. member for Southwark, that gallant Officer was bound, in duty to his constituents, to oppose the Resolution then before the House, although he could not support the Bill. What, then, was he to oppose the Resolution and the Bill also? Well, then, he was bound to speak against the Bill, as he had spoken, and to vote for it; or to speak in favour of the Amendment and not to vote for it or for the Bill? The gallant Member seemed to him to have very doubtful notions of his duty. He understood the gallant General to regret that the English people were by the Bill to be less efficiently represented, because the number of those professing to represent them was to be diminished. But he would ask the hon. and gallant Member, did he not believe, that although the number of English Members in that House were diminished by the Bill, still the real constituency, the number of Englishmen actually represented, would be considerably increased? The country had received the Bill with almost unqualified and universal approbation. The country was well pleased that the constituency was enlarged, and complained not that the number of Representatives was diminished by the measure, which at the same time cut off so many sources of corruption. Were the hon. Members who were prepared to vote for the Amendment proposed by the gallant General prepared to go still farther, and vote that the Members of the House should be increased? This would be the result of the vote, unless they were also prepared to contend that no additional Members should be given to Ireland and Scotland. The hon. and gallant General was, however, willing that Scotland and Ireland should receive an increase; but how were they to receive it, unless by giving to them some of the seats taken from rotten boroughs of England, or by increasing the whole amount of the Representation? This was the dilemma into which they were thrown by those who opposed the reduction of the number of the English Members, but who in reality were anxious, through the means of that opposition, to defeat the Bill altogether. There was a part of the question, connected with the proportions of the Members to be given to the three kingdoms, which he approached with the greatest pain. Much, indeed, did he regret, after all the discussions they had already had on such subjects, and after the passing of that great healing measure of Catholic Emancipation, which it was fondly hoped would have set the question at rest for ever—much, indeed, did he regret to hear the noble Lord (Lord Stormont) revive those discussions last night, and by again throwing down the apple of discord in that House, seek to secure an opposition to the Bill on questions of religious controversy. The noble Lord contended that it was not so much a question of the comparative number of Members which should be given to Ireland, as the propriety of not giving a greater proportion of Representatives to Catholic Ireland. In this respect he differed in some degree from the gallant General, who had no objection to give additional Members to Ireland and Scotland; but then the number of the Representatives of England was not to suffer any decrease. For his own part, he confessed he did not attach much importance to these questions of national proportion. As long as he found great cities and towns, or populous districts, deprived of their fair share in the Representative system of the country, it differed little to him whether these towns, and these cities, and these districts were situated in England, Ireland, or Scotland; for, he thanked God, they were now one united people. Did, however, the hon. Members and the noble Lord who advanced these arguments respecting Ireland and her Representation, recollect the consequences which must follow them, or consider what arguments they placed in the mouths of those who contended that Ireland, if it was to be considered as a part of the empire, was entitled to her fair share in the Representation; and that if she was not fairly represented in the Parliament of England, she must be represented elsewhere? He entreated them to consider this, and to beware how they strengthened the influence of those who advocated a separation, which he trusted in God would never take place, by denying to Ireland those rights which she was fairly entitled to demand from them. The complaints of the advocates of a Repeal of the Union were the more dangerous in proportion as they were founded in justice; and he trusted that the time was gone for ever, when they could hope to govern by a system of exclusion. They had passed the Catholic Relief Bill; they had abolished the penal laws; they had put an end to all religious distinctions, and he implored them, in the name of God, unless they intended to revert again to the vicious system they had abandoned, not to grudge to Catholic Ireland that fair share of Representation in the Parliament of England, to which she was entitled by her wealth, her intelligence, and her population. Was there any ground that the Catholics as Catholics should be deprived of the same proportion of Representatives to which their other fellow-citizens were entitled? He should now advert, for a few minutes, to a speech to which he had listened with little less astonishment than he had to that of the hon. member for Southwark—he alluded to the speech which had been delivered by his right hon. friend, the member for Montgomery. His right hon. friend had not spoken against the principle of Reform, he had not addressed a syllable to the House against that principle; but he had told them that his objections principally lay against the details of the Bill, to which, on the second reading, he had reluctantly given his assent, and which he said had astonished him when he found it brought forward. His right hon. friend, though not a member of the cabinet, was perfectly cognizant, previous to the introduction of the Bill, of the details of the measure, and of the extent to which they went, for they were communicated to him ten days before the measure was brought forward in that House, and yet his right hon. friend had expressed his astonishment at finding such a Bill brought forward. His right hon. friend said, that he did not object to the principle of the Bill, and that he was friendly to Reform. He could not therefore avoid expressing his astonishment, that his right hon. friend should now give so strong an opposition to the principle as well as to the details of a measure with which he had been previously so well acquainted. His right hon. friend, among other arguments against the Bill, had declared his objection to their taking up the principle of population in their distribution of the franchise. Now, the Government did not take population as a principle, but merely as a test, for the purpose of discovering whether the place to which they were disposed to give the franchise was above or below that rule of importance and consequence which would entitle it to obtain the right of returning Members to Parliament. But then his right hon. friend said, that population was no test of that. He (Mr. Stanley) admitted, that it was not an unerring test, but yet, at the same time, it enabled them in many cases to ascertain the real condition of those places to which it was necessary that their inquiries should be applied. As a proof of this, he would take leave to read a short statement to the House. He held in his hand a list of six places above and six places below the standard of population fixed by the Bill in the Schedules A and B; that is, of six places above and six below the numbers of 2,000 and of 4,000, which were the lines of disfranchisement adopted by the Government. In the six first places below the line of 2,000 inhabitants, he found a total of 152 inhabited houses at a rent of 10*l.* a year, making an average of twenty-five 10*l.* houses in each of those places. Again, in the six first places above the line of 2,000, there were 411 houses rented at 10*l.* a year, making an average of sixty-eight inhabited houses of that description in each borough. Again, taking the six first places above and below the line of 4,000 inhabitants, he found that the number of 10*l.* houses in the six below were 766, making an average of 127 and a fraction. In the six boroughs above the line of 4,000 inhabitants, he found there was a total of 1,314 inhabited houses at 10*l.* a year, making an average of 219 houses of that description for each borough. He repeated his confession, that population was not an unerring test, but he must also be permitted, from this statement to assert, that in taking the lines of 2,000 and of 4,000, they had taken those lines which afforded immediately above them a greater average of those householders to which they proposed to give the right of voting, in proportion to the population generally, than were to be found in those towns immediately below them. So far, therefore, the test of population had been found to be a good test. He was surprised that his right hon. friend should object to the disfranchisement of the nomination boroughs, and should then tell them that he did not object to the principle of the Bill. His right hon. friend had repeated the old arguments on the benefits which the House derived from these boroughs, through the facilities they afforded to the entrance of merit and talent into that House. He admitted that argument to its full extent, but he was satisfied that there would be as good an opening for virtue, and talent, and knowledge, after the Bill passed, as there was now, and he was quite sure, that there would be no indisposition on the part of the people to avail themselves of their assistance. The argument was, at the best, a mere *argumentum ad hominem*, and he was not disposed to deprive the right hon. Gentleman of the advantage of it. He was sure, however, that there would be no want of talent in that House if the Bill received its assent, and he really had no fear that it would ever become too pure. He did not set himself up to be a man of talent or genius, and yet it so happened (and he was sure that his right hon. friend would forgive him for stating the fact) that only about three hours ago he had received a letter, calling upon him to offer himself for the county of Montgomery at the next election, in opposition to his right hon. friend, with whose conduct, in reference to this measure, it appeared that his constituents were dissatisfied. He hoped his right hon. friend would not be alarmed: he had no intention to avail himself of the offer thus so liberally made to him; but he mentioned it for the purpose of showing that these persons, of whom there were so many distinguished by much greater powers than he could pretend to, would have no difficulty in getting into the House, and that they would find constituents in many places ready to come forward and afford them an opportunity of serving their country in that House. He held that, indeed, to be one of the great benefits of the Bill, that men of virtue and knowledge would have an opportunity afforded them of getting into that House without purchasing their seat, or being indebted to the favour of a patron. The right hon. Gentleman, the member for Montgomery, seemed to think that the Members for the House should be increased rather than reduced, and that they should keep pace in that increase with the growth of the population and prosperity of the country. Every one who knew anything of the conduct of business in that House, and particularly in the Committees up-stairs, must be sensible that numbers retarded the despatch of affairs, and that business was better done by those who represented large bodies of constituents than by those who merely represented their own opinions. The right hon. Gentleman said, however, that the business of that House was principally transacted by the Members of the rotten or nomination boroughs. He denied that it was so. Except on some occasions, when Members of that description were canvassed for some peculiar interest, or when they were called on to attend to the wishes of some of their constituents, or to obey the commands of their patron, he appealed to all who heard him, whether the real business of the House was not transacted chiefly by the Members for counties? He did not speak of public business when he said this. He knew that the greater part of the public servants in that House were generally Members for those boroughs. He believed, indeed he could mention cabinets in which almost every Member sat for a nomination borough. He alluded solely to that business which was intimately connected with the interests of constituents. His right hon. friend founded his chief objection to the Bill on the further demands to which it would give rise, and the continual excitement which it must keep up among those who would prefer these demands. His right hon. friend had said, that with every new census they would have a new excitement, and new demands from different places for constituents, to which they would be obliged to consent if they passed so extensive a measure as this. His right hon. friend did not deny, that an excitement existed at present; he did not take upon him to assert that there was not a general call for Reform; and how then did his right hon. friend propose to allay that excitement, and to stop those demands? Why, by not giving, for the present, above one-third of that which he admitted would be requisite to produce a temporary tranquillity, while he at the same time admitted that something must be done. The argument, he confessed, was not very logical, but it was the right hon. Gentleman's, and they were bound to take it for its worth. One word as to the rotten boroughs in connection with the relative proportion of Members between England, Scotland, and Ireland. It was said, that they proposed to diminish far too much the proportion as it already existed in favour of England. It was the object of the gallant General's motion to preserve that proportion. What was it, then, that they were about to disfranchise? Not the Representatives of the people of England, but those who either purchased a seat in that House for money, or owed it to the favour of a patron. These boroughs were the property of the first man who chose to buy them, and the Members who were sent to that House from them, were subject either to the influence of the man who had bought the borough in the one case, or in the other case of the patron of the borough who had returned them. It was expected that the disfranchisement of such boroughs would take from England its just proportion of Representatives; but what was the fact?—that, in many instances, those boroughs were represented by Scotchmen and Irishmen. He begged to call the attention of the House, in connection with this part of the subject, to a memorable instance of the manner in which it operated with respect to England. The gallant General, and those who supported him, were unwilling to increase the number of the Members of Catholic Ireland at the expense of England; and yet a distinguished member of the Catholic body had somehow or other, by means to which it was not necessary to allude, been selected to represent the English borough of Milborne Port. Did not this form a complete answer to all the arguments which had been put forward on the subject of the balance of Representation? The rotten boroughs, in fact, belonged to no country, and it was mere mockery to talk of the proportion of the Members of Ireland or Scotland, when it was in the power of any one who pleased, and possessed the means, to enter that House for one of the rotten boroughs of England. He had already occupied the time of the House much longer than he originally intended. He would conclude, therefore, by repeating what he had said frequently before, that the proposition now before them was a most insidious attempt to get rid of the

Bill, and secure the destruction of the measure proposed by his Majesty's Government. It was clear to every man, that on the vote to which the House would come that night, hung the question of Reform; and he warned the timid, although, perhaps, sincere reformers, that however they might be led to judge of the nature of the question before them by any specious arguments, that this was the time when they were called on to show their desire for Reform. He would tell them, and he would tell their constituents, that by the vote of that night they were either losing or gaining the first opportunity ever offered them of gratifying or of defeating those highly-raised and highly-excited hopes of the people, that they should at last possess a House of Parliament really representing the feelings, the wishes, and the interests, of every class in the country.

Mr. *C. W. Wynn*, as he had been personally alluded to by the right hon. Gentleman, expressed a hope that the House would permit him to say one or two words in explanation. The right hon. Gentleman, whom he had the pleasure of calling his friend, had charged him with having altered his opinions with respect to the Reform Bill—with having acted in a manner which he certainly could not have supposed that right hon. Gentleman would have imputed to him on such an occasion. The right hon. Gentleman stated, that he had seen the Reform Bill ten days before it was presented to that House, and that he had been advised with, and consulted, on its provisions. The Bill was certainly shown to him on the Saturday preceding the week on which it was brought in, and he then expressed his objection to it to the noble Lord who framed it. On that same evening he went still further, and expressed to the noble Earl at the head of the Treasury his doubt whether he could support the whole of its provisions. He told that noble Lord, that it was impossible he could pledge himself to support it, but that he would wait until its details were explained more precisely, as he had not been consulted until the plan was completely settled. The reason why he did not speak more decidedly at that time was, because he had not had an opportunity of reading the Bill more than once, and he was anxious to hear the opinions of those with whom he had always acted on previous occasions, in opposition to some of those strong plans of Reform which had been more than once urged on their attention. For these reasons he deferred, until a future day, saying more on the subject of an opposition which he, of course, considered to carry with it the immediate relinquishment of office. If it was meant to be insinuated that he had acted unfairly in not immediately tendering his resignation, he could only say, that he was most anxious, if he could have found it possible, to avoid opposing the Bill. He felt that he was bound to avoid that, as much from the feelings of private regard as from respect to the opinions of a large body of his constituents, who entertained opinions favourable to Reform. He wished, therefore, to support the Bill; but, on the most mature consideration, he found he could not. The announcement which the right hon. Gentleman had just made with respect to the county of Montgomery, was no news to him. He had heard of the intentions in the right hon. Gentleman's favour some time ago; but he could assure him he was not afraid of meeting him on the hustings at the election in that county. Two-and-thirty years of honest and zealous service in that House would, he hoped, prove sufficient to plead his cause with effect to the great body of his constituents. To their impartial judgment on his conduct he fully trusted, and he feared not the result.

Mr. *Stanley* disclaimed all intention to impute any act of unfairness to the right hon. Gentleman, the member for Montgomery. All he had said was this, that he felt surprised his right hon. friend could have any doubt for a week, or for a day, respecting the principle of a Bill which he had that night condemned so strongly.

Sir *George Murray* said, that the right hon. Gentleman had spoken of the Bill as likely to give that House better Members for counties; but it would not be easy to find more honest and able Representatives than they already possessed in the person of the member for the county of Montgomery. One of the main objections he felt to the Bill was that which he had expressed before, that it would open the door to all kinds of changes. It was said, however, as an excuse for these changes, that they were become absolutely necessary, and that they must be brought forward without delay. This was the reason offered for that great alteration in the political system of the country which they were now called on to adopt. He knew it would be said, that the Government were pledged to a plan of Reform, and that they could not avoid bringing it forward as speedily as possible. He admitted that the seeds of the present measure were sown on the Opposition benches, and the fruits, however unripe or unwholesome, were now offered them by the Government. While they talked, however, of the perfection of their plan, they seemed to forget the memorable and expressive declaration of a great statesman (Mr. Fox), that if, by the peculiar interposition of Divine Providence, all the intellect of men was collected together, it would be impossible for them to frame a perfect Constitution. Applying himself to Scotland, he must say, that the number of Scotchmen was greater now than it would be under the new system, for it was well known that great numbers of Scotchmen sat for English boroughs. The Bill itself would change the whole form of the Representation of Scotland. Population, which the authors of the Bill professed to be its principle, had not been extended as a principle to Scotland and Ireland. He had received a letter from the Moderator of the Synod in Scotland, stating, that in order to secure the Church of Scotland, there ought to be an addition to the number of Scotch Members proposed, of two representative Peers, and four Members of the House of Commons. He mentioned this to show the extravagant notions to which the Bill had given rise. He wished the Bill to be rejected, and the great majority of his constituents entertained the same desire. But it was certainly open both to those who were favourable and to those who were unfavourable to the Bill to support the Motion of the gallant member for Liverpool. He should give it his cordial support.

Mr. *Bernal* represented the inconsistency of those who argued for cutting off boroughs in which corruption had been proved, and who, in the same breath, recommended keeping open those channels by which Members obtained admission to that House, who would not otherwise be returned to it. An hon. and gallant General, who had served with so much distinction in India, had said, that he should not have been in that House but for one of the boroughs in question; but he appealed to that gallant Officer, whether his distinguished services would have obtained him his seat, if he had not agreed with his patron in opinion? For himself, although he was friendly to the colonies, and thought they were not sufficiently attended to, he sat there as a representative of the people of England; and he would in no case sacrifice what was proved to be for the interest of the country, to any consideration or feeling of his own. No remarks made either in or out of that House—no taunt of any kind should induce him to depart from what he felt to be the strict line of his duty. The effect of acquiescing in the motion of the hon. and gallant member for Liverpool would be most injurious to the Bill. How was it possible to say that the number of English Members should be 513, and yet to suppose that five additional Members were to be given to Ireland and five to Scotland? But where would be the danger of the addition? Could the addition of five members to Ireland, or the addition of five Members to Scotland, occasion any risk to the Church? It was evident that the object in supporting the hon. and gallant General's motion was, to throw out the Bill *in limine;* and he must express his surprise at the inconsistency of the hon. and gallant General, who, having voted for the second reading of the Bill, now objected even to its principle.

Sir *J. Malcolm,* in explanation, said, that he had scarcely landed in England when he received an invitation to represent the place for which he had the honour to sit, with an assurance that he should be as free as air. He should consider himself as a most degraded human being, if he had consented to support opinions which were not his own.

Mr. *North* observed, that he foresaw when he first read the original Bill, and he would undertake to say, that every lawyer in the House agreed with him, that the Bill would never be presented for the approbation of the Crown. Whatever might be thought of the fitness of its end, the means by which that end was to be obtained were so manifestly insufficient, that it was impossible that any Government, after due consideration, could think of adopting the Bill as it was originally introduced. It showed distinctly that those by whom it had been preferred had not fathomed the depths of the subject to which it referred. Every page of it betrayed marks of doubt, haste, and imbecility. It bore on its face the proof of the inability of its author, and he might apply to it the language in which Dryden had described the feeble and ricketty offspring of the subject of his satire:

> "Got while his soul did huddled notions try;
> And born a shapeless lump, like anarchy."

It was evidently necessary that great alterations should be made in the measure; but he had hoped that those alterations would be such as to correct its great original vice. That vice was the uniformity which the Bill introduced into the elective franchise. He had hoped, that the re-framers of the Bill would have given to the elective franchise that happy variety which had hitherto been found so inestimably beneficial to the country. He could not help thinking the House had not sufficiently considered the advantages which resulted from that variety. They were of this nature. If by any combination of circumstances one place had a leaning to a particular interest, the variety in the franchise created an antagonist bias in another place, which corrected the partiality. The whole system of the Representation was by that process beneficially adjusted. But the change which the noble Lord had made in the Bill was merely an addition to it; a continuance of that dull uniformity of the elective franchise which was the great fault of the Bill as it originally stood. The vessel still pursued its dull course in the stagnant water of a Dutch canal, upon an everlasting level. Not only in that respect, but almost in every other, the Bill was defective, and worse than defective. In the peculiar circumstances of the times, one should have thought that no means would have been resorted to, to point the attention of the people to the fact, that the Empire was composed of three distinct parts. Yet one of the express objects of the Cabinet seemed to be, by the introduction of three separate Bills, to emblazon that fact which every wise man would endeavour to keep out of view. If there were any time worse than any other for thus marking the difference in the three parts of a legislative body, belonging to what were once independent countries, it was at a time when a numerous and active party in Ireland had declared their determination to dissolve the happy union with Great Britain. One of the soundest and most philosophical principles which influenced the great men by whom the Bill of Rights had been framed was, while they made the changes which circumstances rendered necessary, to mark the extent of those changes, and not unnecessarily to disturb established institutions. But what was the conduct of the present Cabinet? They did not determine the extent of the changes which they proposed, and while they cut off the rights of boroughs, and conferred rights on other places, they disturbed various fixed and fundamental principles of the Constitution, which it was not necessary to disturb, and involved in discussion questions which it was not necessary to discuss. For instance, why raise the difficult and delicate questions connected with the Union between England, Ireland, and Scotland? What purpose could that answer but to excite every bad and rival feeling; to make the member for Waterford haggle in a bargain with the member for Kirkcudbright; and to render Paisley envious of the better luck of Limerick and Galway? The jealousies and rivalries of former times, long buried, his Majesty's present Government had exhumed. They had "burst their cearments," and "ope'd the ponderous and marble jaws" of their sepulchres, "to cast them up again." The disadvantages, however, of the measure, the authors and supporters of it declared were countervailed by the great benefit of which it was to be productive; described by the noble Lord, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, in his calm language as the destruction of nomination, and by the hon. member for Kirkcudbright as the annihilation of the boroughmongers. And here he must observe, that greatly as he respected the hon. member for Kirkcudbright, and highly as he estimated his genuine and sterling talents, he had heard him last night, not with pleasure, but with surprise. The hon. member for Kirkcudbright, after having adverted to the retrenchments made by the Duke of Wellington (a declaration highly complimentary to his Grace), declared that the power of the Crown over that House had been so weakened and impaired by those retrenchments, that it had been absolutely annihilated. And then the hon. Member added, "Will you not allow the power of the borough Lords to be annihilated also?" What kind of argument was this? Because one great mound against the injurious increase of popular opinion was broken down, therefore they were to destroy the barriers which still remained. Let that course be persevered in, and nothing would be left to resist the tide; and the Monarchy, the Peerage, and the Church, would soon be swept away as useless rubbish. The 10*l.* a year freeholders in counties, and the 10*l.* a year householders in towns would, for a time, engage in a contest, with alternate superiority, until some conquering dictator, like those of Germany or Gaul, would interpose and reduce all under his single domination. He begged to ask the friends of the Bill, in what way they supposed the Representation under it for populous places would be supplied? No candidate could possibly expect favour at a popular place without flattering the people by the adoption of popular prejudices. Any man who had been sent to prison for riot or libel—any preacher of sedition from the pulpit of democracy—any proprietor of a republican press, would be sure of success. What provision would there be for resisting men of that description, leagued together in a bond of common purpose? Vain would be the hope that the country Gentlemen in the House, not bound by any distinct tie, vacillating, doubtful, and incoherent, could stand against such a combination. Another view of the subject had been taken by the right hon. Secretary for Ireland. The right hon. Gentleman charged a noble Lord, who spoke from the Opposition benches last night, with throwing into the House that apple of discord which every wise and good man would wish withheld. But the right hon. Gentleman, and the other members of the Government, would find that any attempt on the part of Ministers to fix the agitation of Ireland on those who opposed this measure would be perfectly useless. He had been a firm advocate of the great measure of 1829, and particularly because it was likely to put an end to the agitation of that country, and restore the peace that was so much wanted. Everybody acquainted with Ireland was aware that that measure tore up by the living roots some of the strongest affections or prejudices of the Protestants of Ireland, but they consented to the sacrifice as a means of providing for the security and tranquillity of the country. To obtain those objects the 40*s.* freeholders were disfranchised, because they were likely to give a preponderance to the Roman Catholic interest. That measure was one of the peace-offerings to Protestant security. From the bench, near which he then stood, the present Lord Chancellor of England expressed himself hostile to the principle of the Bill, but declared that he would vote for it, as essential to the success of the great measure. The 40*s.* freeholders, however, were left in the towns, because there the Corporations were Protestant, and they having the power of admitting freemen through the means of their charters, would preserve their ascendancy. But the measure for reforming the Representation of Ireland annihilated these Corporations, and disturbed the balance that was there meant to be established. They had also passed an Act of Parliament contrary to the Constitution, giving to the Government great temporary power, which nothing could justify but the great advantages expected to result from it. On that occasion the language of Statesmen of all descriptions was, that agitation must be put an end to, for repose and tranquillity were above all things necessary to Ireland. The Government had, however, by this measure caused a far greater agitation in Ireland than was known before, and effected that which all good men had laboured to suppress. The Government might say, indeed, because there was an hon. Member of that House standing at the bar of justice, that it had done a great deal to remove all agitation. But it had harassed the Protestant mind; and then the right hon. Gentleman, the Secretary for Ireland, commanded them not to throw the apple of discord among the parties of Ireland. The Government had thrown it, and there it was lying. They had presented a measure to Ireland for which Ireland did not ask. The Irish called for the repeal of the Sub-letting Act; for the repeal of the Vestry Act; and for an amendment of the Tithe-laws; but not one voice was raised for Reform. He was wrong there, even one voice, that of the hon. and learned member for Waterford, was raised in favour of Reform as a means of promoting the dissolution of the Union. The hon. and learned Member admitted, that to bring forward any measure of that nature with an unreformed Parliament would fail; but he was satisfied that, with a reformed Parliament, a measure for the Repeal of the Union would not be impracticable. The hon. member for Limerick had denied this. But he preferred the reasoning of the hon. and learned member for Waterford to that of the hon. member for Limerick, for he conceived that any attempt to promote a measure for the Repeal of the Union with the present Parliament was quite idle, but a reformed Parliament would lead to a dissolution of the Union as a necessary consequence. The hon. member for Waterford felt that all his arguments would be confirmed by the Irish bill. The result of that measure would be, to place in the hands of the hon. and learned member for Waterford the power of nominating eighteen or nineteen Members of that House. That would be the inevitable consequence. The giving to the 10*l.* renters the right of voting gave it to those who had a chattel interest. He had had an opportunity of making himself acquainted with those people, and he was quite sure that this Bill would throw all the inhabitants of the towns into the hands of the agitators of Ireland. Men would be returned to that House who would be averse from all those institutions which the Members of that House respected, and on those said Members the Parliament could not rely for any co-operation in preserving those institutions which Englishmen venerated and were bound to preserve. If there were no other reason but this, on this alone he should be ready to give his support to the Motion of the gallant General, because he was anxious to preserve unimpaired the English Representation, as necessary to support and maintain the Protestant interest in Ireland, for which he was anxious, and which it was the duty of that House to support. It was his intention to have gone further into the subject; but at that late hour he would only say, that if any Members had been seduced to give their votes in favour of the Bill, on the supposition that it would promote the tranquillity, and secure the Protestant religion in Ireland, he hoped that they had now become sensible of their error, and would vote against it as injurious to the Protestant interest, which the Government was bound to protect, and that they would see that the Protestant interest of the empire required to be saved by the resolution from the ascendancy of the Catholics.

Mr. *O'Connell* was not surprised that the hon. and learned Member should have been one of the first to introduce religious altercation into this discussion; for he had done the same on the Catholic Question. It was easy by such means to catch a ready cheer, and captivate a few votes for the amendment. In all that concerned Ireland, nothing was more insulting than the air of patronage assumed by some men, who had no other claim to superiority than a pompous diction and theatrical gestures, and who pretended to take the poor agitators under their protection. The hon. and learned member for Drogheda, though he now sat for an Irish city, had been introduced into Parliament for one of the rotten boroughs, and nobody better than the hon. and learned Member could defend them. He was, however, quite misinformed, and the House was misinformed, as to the probable effects of Reform in Ireland. The hon. Member said, that he (Mr. O'Connell) advocated Reform in Parliament as a means of obtaining a Repeal of the Union. He had done no such thing. He had advocated a Reform as a means of getting justice for Ireland. He repeated it, he required justice for Ireland, and he believed that there was a chance of obtaining that from a Reformed Parliament. He had said, that a Reform of Parliament would be beneficial, but did the anti-Unionists join him? Did not Mr. George Ensor, who was one of the most intelligent and clever advocates of the Repeal of the Union, call on the people of Ireland to oppose Reform, as likely to raise up obstacles to oppose the Repeal of the Union? That was the argument of George Ensor. The hon. and learned Gentleman said, that he (Mr. O'C.) kept up agitation in Ireland; but what was likely to be the effect of introducing the Motion of the gallant General? Those who looked at the Irish Newspapers knew that the agitation of the Reform Question had not been caused by the discussion of the Union Question. Those who had most opposed the Repeal of the Union were most in favour of Reform. The counties of Antrim, of Down, of Armagh, which were much opposed to the Repeal of the Union, were the foremost in promoting Reform. He did not mean to follow the hon. and learned Gentleman through all his statements, but he would ask, as the hon. Member had stated, that it threatened the Monarchy, the Church, and the Peerage, if they all were founded on nomination boroughs? Did the Monarchy depend on them? Could the Peerage only exist by trafficking in boroughs? Could the Church not exist except on traffic or on corruption? Could the Peerage and the Monarch depend on practices that were crimes in the eye of the law? The Peerage of England had a better foundation. But was it right to say of the Protestant Church that it was founded not on "airs from Heaven, but blasts from Hell?" If such were the character of the Establishment, would they tell the people that their Church was nourished and sustained by what they knew to be corruption and crime? That description would make the Monarchy, the Peerage, the Church, depend on very cobweb ties. He knew, however, that they had a far better foundation. The hon. member for Kirkcudbright had spoken of the influence of the Crown being diminished; but the influence which had been restrained was that species, of which it had been said, that "it had increased, was increasing, and ought to be diminished." It was only the corrupt and improper influence of the Crown which had been diminished, and that had been taken by the oligarchy. That influence it was now necessary to diminish; and that which had been taken from the Crown and usurped by the Peerage this Bill would diminish. He had formerly spoken in that House of a sordid oligarchy, which had usurped the privileges of the people. But noble Lords and hon. Gentlemen had well defended the Aristocracy, by showing that what they had accidentally acquired of the property of the people they were willing to resign. His accusation had been well replied to, and a noble answer had been given by the splendid speech of an hon. Gentleman (Mr. Hawkins) who spoke in the early part of the evening. The proprietors of boroughs had been willing to resign their advantages. Would those who spoke of the safety of the Monarchy give up their emoluments? Would those who dreaded the fall of the Church, persuade the Clergy to resign their plunder? He was afraid not; but if they would, he would tell them that the Church of England would then have nothing to fear from a Reformed Parliament, but what it might have to dread from arguments founded in reason and Christian charity. The object of the gallant General's Motion was to prevent Ireland from getting her full proportion of Members. The Bill only proposed to add five Members to Ireland, and he could not conceive a topic better calculated to serve the cause of the anti-Unionists in Ireland, than the proposition to deprive her of her fair share of Representation. The speeches of the hon. members for Aldborough, for Brecon, and for Dysart, would admirably serve the cause of the anti-Unionists by shewing, England, Scotland, and Wales, combined to prevent Ireland from getting her fair share of the Representation! The Tories had printed the speech of the reforming member for Preston, and the speech of the gallant General would, on the same principle, be printed and circulated through Ireland. There was no better means by which to rouse the prejudices of the Irish, than to inform them that the English, Scotch, and Welsh Members, had combined to oppose doing justice to Ireland. No Member was to be reduced from England, no Member was to be reduced from Scotland, but Ireland had lost two-thirds of her Members at the Union. Ireland was the most miserable, the most distressed country of the world, and what did that arise from but the injustice done to that country? She suffered from losing her domestic Legislature. All she wanted was justice and adequate protection by a Legislature of her own. Would they do justice to Ireland? Would they give her a full share in the legislation of the empire, so as to take from her the necessity of demanding a domestic Legislature? Every tongue demanded, and every heart throbbed for, a domestic Legislature. Would they give that to Ireland? Ireland had lost two-thirds of her Members, and now, when it was proposed to restore part of them, among the persons who was found to oppose that was the hon. member for Drogheda. The hon. and gallant General had referred to what he called the combination of eighty-five Irish Members, to compel the Ministers to agree to their terms. There was, indeed, a meeting of eighty-five Irish Members, but only one was willing to pledge himself to resist giving taxes to Ministers till they had done something for Ireland; and this was what the hon. and gallant Member called a combination. There were eighty-five Members met; but only one was ready to agree to the proposition. They were spoken of as a club of mechanics who had combined for an increase of wages; and yet the hon. member for Drogheda supported the Motion, and was well content in making his points against the Ministers, and lauding his own religious liberality.

As for the hon. member for Liverpool, he was consistent in his hostility to Ireland. In the history of Parliament, he never knew an instance in which he had not voted against the interests of Ireland. The Irish Members had been charged with opposing all measures for the improvement of Ireland. There was a time when they were utterly subservient to the Minister, and when their names were never heard of except in the lists of the Government majorities; then they never fell under the ban of the gallant General's displeasure. Now that Irish Members represented a nation, and not a part of a pitiful province it was widely different. But he asked, what measures for the improvement of Ireland they had opposed? Was it the introduction of the Poor-laws? And were they such a panacea—were they found to work well in England? No one would presume to say they had. Therefore, Ireland should not be reproached with not taking English Poor-laws, until they were so amended as to be rendered worthy of example. The hon. member for Liverpool had also sneered at the statements respecting the amount of population in Ireland. The authority to which they had referred were the official returns of 1821. And these returns, he could tell the hon. Member, were below the real amount of population. In the county of Mayo alone, it was a well known fact, that the names of 33,000 persons more were written down as having got relief than were numbered in the returns. Another subject invidiously urged was, that Ireland did not pay her due proportion of taxation. This was a miserable fallacy. And now they refused Ireland the paltry boon of five additional Members. But, he repeated, it was a fallacy to say, that Ireland did not pay her due proportion of taxation; those who fancied she did not, were totally unacquainted with the real condition of Ireland. In the first place, the real amount of taxation paid by Ireland was far greater than it appeared. The taxes arising from the Customs were not placed to the credit of the Irish Treasury. Half a million of money was paid as a duty on tea, in London, which was not placed to the credit of the Irish Treasury. A great revenue was paid for rum and wine in Liverpool. Then there was all the money drawn from Ireland by the absentee landlords, which was spent in England, and paid taxes in England, without a single sixpence being put to the credit of the Irish Treasury. One-fourth of the surface of Ireland belonged to men whose rents were punctually paid, although they never once set foot in the country. Ireland, therefore, beyond any country on the face of the earth, needed protection, when one-fourth of the revenue of the country did not go to the credit of the Irish Treasury, but was expended in England. Taxation had in this country been compared to the moisture which was taken indeed from the earth by the sun's heat, but returned to it again in gentle and refreshing dew; but the scorching sun passed over Ireland, drawing up all the moisture, but no refreshing dew visited it in return. No! Let them talk not of taxation in Ireland until they understood the burthens that she bore. In the appropriation of the additional members, he contended that injustice had been done to Ireland. There were thirty-two counties in Ireland of which there were only two with a population of less than 100,000. If, therefore, these Irish counties had been English, they would have had thirty additional Members for Ireland. There were twenty counties with a population of above 150,000. If they were English, they would have two additional Members each, and if the Union was not a name and a mockery, they would yet receive additional Members. There were twelve counties in Ireland that had a population above 200,000, four a population above 300,000, and one population above 600,000, and yet not one additional Member was to be given to them. This was his case for Ireland. In this impartial proceeding was the real anti-Union agitation,—its source was to be found in the conduct of that House, which said, we will keep all for England, and then, if you please, you may come and ask us for more. Even the paltry addition of five was considered by some hon. Members too great. He hoped, however, the Ministry would have the firmness to persevere—the country was with them—Ireland was with them. The Amendment of the hon. Member was got up, and the country would feel it, to excite English prejudices; and Ireland would feel that it was anti-Irish, and that it was meant to excite a religious feud. It was a base calumny, to say that Catholic electors would prefer a Catholic candidate to a Protestant of higher qualifications. He referred to the election of Mr. Leader, who was preferred by Catholic electors to Catholic candidates. He called on any man to prove that this was not the fact. He called on the hon. member for Drogheda, who was the chief calumniator of Ireland at present [" *Order*," " *Chair, chair*."]

The *Speaker* explained to the hon. Member, that his language and manner were both unjustifiable, and expressed a hope that the hon. Member would himself feel it.

Mr. *O'Connell* confessed, that in the heat of debate he had been betrayed into expressions which were not parliamentary; he was sorry for it, and begged to retract them. He contended, however, that it was a gross misrepresentation of the feelings of Ireland, to say they were influenced by religious bigotry. And as to Catholic Members, he would, in reply to the hon. Member, say they were as deserving of confidence and as independent as any Members in that House. They had won their civil rights, and they would wear them thus—by, on all occasions, supporting the principles of civil and religious liberty. He would now come back to the Motion, and had further to remark, that there were fourteen towns in Ireland which, had they been in England, would have received the elective franchise. He declared, in conclusion, that he would support the Bill because he conceived it would be useful to the people of England, and he was influenced by no feeling from rivalry. He called on the House to reject the Amendment — he called on the gallant General himself to fling it to the winds. " But," said the hon. and learned Member, " I am laughed at—I have my answer."

Mr. *Hunt* was proceeding to move, that the House should adjourn, but there being loud cries for a division, he said, that as he had been alluded to so frequently during this debate, he would take the opportunity of saying a few words. It had been stated, that the member for Preston supported this bill as a fulcrum on which to put his lever to hoist the people into Universal Suffrage, and Vote by Ballot. He thought he could satisfy the fears of hon. Members upon that subject. He said before, and he again repeated, that he was only fearful that it would prevent him, and those who acted with him, from any chance of ever obtaining it. For the Ministers had, from the first moment, declared the Bill to be final, and as the people had in all parts of the kingdom petitioned for the Bill, the whole Bill, and nothing but the Bill, if they, or he for them, should ask for more, the Government would say, " No, this is not fair; the bargain was, that you should be satisfied with the measure we gave you, and you shall have no more." It had been said by those who addressed the House from this side, that on this Bill passing, the great towns would return those who had been convicted of some political libel, or who had been sent to prison for some riot. He would relieve the hon. Gentleman from any apprehension in that respect. Of all the individuals who intended to stand for various places in Lancashire in the event of a dissolution, none of them, he could assure the House, had ever been either convicted of political libels, or agitators. The hon. member for Kirkcudbright had told them, that in the reign of Edward 6th, all persons paying scot and lot had the right of voting. Now, although he had been a Radical Reformer all his life, yet with scot and lot, and the protection of the Ballot, he, for one, should not contend for any Reform beyond that. Scot, according to the old signification, meant the person who paid rates; and lot, signified that he stood his lot for the militia ballot. The hon. Member then alluded to his late journey to Manchester, and said he had received letters, stating that his answers were differently understood by the people from what he had intended. But when he stated that the flags of the several bodies of men that came to meet him were inscribed with " Annual Parliaments"—" Vote by Ballot "—" Universal Suffrage" —and " No Corn Laws," whatever words he might have used, would he not have been justified in describing their feelings as he had done? He opposed, or rather exposed, the Bill, because it did not come up to any one of the points he had advocated. If he had been a general reformer, and never expressed an opinion before, he might be called a captious man, if he were not satisfied with the Bill; but as it was, if he acted otherwise, he should be false to the whole professions and principles of his life. It had been said to him by some reformers, " Why do you expose any part of the measure? Let us get this first, and then we will get the rest after." He knew that, out of doors, the reformers considered the Bill as a stepping-stone to other objects. This was the fact. But he did not consider, that he should be acting honestly if he had described the measure as one of unmixed good, as the hon. member for Waterford did the Catholic Question, and afterwards say give us the Vote by Ballot. In his opinion the only efficient Reform was Universal Suffrage and Vote by Ballot. That was the species of Reform which he looked upon as an unmixed good. He had never said out of the House what he would not repeat in it. He would support the measure all the way through. The Amendment of the gallant General appeared to him so proposterous, that he did not intend to have voted at all upon it. He meant to leave the House without dividing on it, and would have done so, if he had not heard from the Government that they considered it a matter of great importance; and he then resolved to give them his humble support, as he would, were it simply for the disfranchisement of one rotten borough. [" *Adjourn*," " *Question*."]

Sir *Robert Peel* said, that he rose rather for the purpose of bringing this discussion to a conclusion, for it seemed to him that the attention of the House was exhausted, and that nothing further could be said upon the subject, than to enter into any lengthened remarks on the measure which had then been so long under discussion. Delay, too, had this disadvantage, that it propagated itself; and if it were resorted to on this occasion it would only be resorted to again. He had purposely avoided rising immediately after the speech of the hon. and learned member for Waterford, for he was afraid that he might catch the contagion of the spirit of that speech. If he had caught it, he should only have done so from the temporary excitement of the debate, for he had not been habituated, with respect to that hon. Member's country, to entertain the feelings that had pervaded his speech with respect to this country. He had a deeper and a better reason for feeling a strong interest in the prosperity of Ireland than existed in the mere circumstance of the union of the two countries. Six years of his early life had been passed in Ireland, and he entertained feelings of kindness towards it, and an interest in its prosperity, which he trusted would never expire. But where, he would ask—where was the man who did not feel that the interests of this part of the empire were involved in those of Ireland, and that anything which impeded the prosperity of Ireland must re-act upon England; and that he who was sordid and mean enough to hope to gain an undivided advantage for this country, would hope it in vain, for one of the two countries could never procure a benefit at the expense of the other? While he listened to that speech, and to the sort of contest that had been excited with respect to Irish and English interests, he could not but draw a melancholy foreboding of what were likely to be the consequences of the subject-matter of this night's discussion. Why was it necessary that this Question of Reform should be mixed up with that of the relative proportions of the number of Members? Why had the Government abandoned the prescriptive number, and proposed to establish a different proportion in the number of Members from different parts of the British empire? Why was it to be taken for granted in the argument, that the attempt to purify England necessarily involved a spirit of hostility towards Ireland? Could nothing be said, however strong might be their feelings, in favour of retaining the old number of Representatives for England? Could nothing be said by them as Englishmen, in vindication of that measure, and yet avoiding that other difficulty which was not incidental to the Question of Reform, of inflicting injury on Ireland? Since the time of Charles 2nd there had not been any variation in the number of English Representatives. Till this Bill had been introduced, there had not been a complaint made on the subject of the relative number of Members for England, Scotland, and Ireland. But this Bill, or, if it was not carried, he feared even the bare proposition of it, would introduce these complaints; for the Bill was a gratuitous assumption of a cause for their existence. Let this Bill pass, and see the consequences of a departure from a prescription so long preserved. Discussions and comparisons of population would be constant. Not Ireland only, but every county in England, would be discussing the principle of the Bill, and asking whether it were fairly applied or not. They would not be contented with the population returns of 1821. It was not merely in Ireland, but in every county and town in England, that this Bill would be thus discussed; and the people would ask whether the principle on which it affected to go, had been properly applied? If, as the hon. member for Waterford supposed, the number of Members was an indication of the prosperity of the country, and if as the noble Lord said, property was to be represented, why was not England entitled to ask for an increase in the number, to be sent to Parliament; why was not England entitled to ask it, not only for herself, with her increased manufacturing and commercial wealth, but with all her enormous colonies acquired since the last settlement of the number of Representatives, and containing 100,000,000 of people? At least England was as well entitled to make the demand as either Scotland or Ireland. He regretted, that this subject had been introduced, that the Government had proposed any departure from the proposition which the law had established and custom sanctified; and he feared that what he said would be the consequence of the introduction of such a topic. At the same time, if it was shown that the basis of the Union was founded on a calculation not fair, as between the two countries, though there was no other consideration for the change, he should be induced to consent to the increase for Ireland without a corresponding increase for England, though he would not consent to the same increase in England, without a similar increase for Ireland. He, for one, however, saw no reason for adding to the number of the Members for Ireland. He did not, at the same time, agree in opinion with those who thought that the hon. and gallant General's proposition, if carried, necessarily precluded such an increase, for he saw no particular reason why the Members of that House might not be increased, though he did not deny, that it would be inconvenient. It was, therefore, most unjust to accuse those who supported that proposition with hostility to Ireland. All which they contended for was, the maintenance of the present number of Repr entatives for England, which was surely not unreasonable. The Ministers had at one time said, that they did not consider the question of number to involve the existence of the Bill itself, but that, if the sense of that House was in favour of the maintenance of the present number, they would agree to the opinion, and bring in a Bill in accordance with it. ["No, no" from Lord *John Russell.*] Such at least had been his understanding of the noble Lord's statement, and he had asked the noble Lord if that understanding was right, and the noble Lord answered in the affirmative. Yet, after all this, the fate of the Bill was now made to depend on the present Amendment. He confessed himself hostile to the Bill, but he exercised a fair hostility to it. He was prepared to persevere in a fair and direct opposition to the Bill. There had been a talk of conclaves. There not only had been a talk about it, but it had actually been a charge against them, and a charge of enormous delinquency, that the party who opposed the Bill had met together to consider the means of defeating it. This was a strange charge, and if the present Ministry could direct the course which their opponents should pursue, he would predict that they would be a much more fortunate Ministry than any that had preceded them; but if they could do so, it would be fatal to the free discussions of the House of Commons. But it had been also charged against them, that those who composed the late Ministry had formed a "strange union" with those who had voted against them on a particular question. What, was it a charge against them that they had united with the anti-Catholics; and was it meant that they should say to these Gentlemen, there is an old grudge between us which must yet be kept alive? Surely it was not meant that they should act on such rules of conduct. If, however, it was meant that they should do so, he begged leave to assert his opposition to the principle, that men were not to unite together for the purpose of defeating a measure to which they were opposed. It had been asked why he had not brought forward some other plan of Reform according with his notions upon the subject? He did not intend to do any such thing, and for this among other reasons, that if he did propose any such measure, he should be taunted with framing a bill as a means, and with the view of getting back to office. He assured them most sincerely, that the charge would be most unfounded; for so much did he deprecate these changes of Administration, and so highly inconvenient did he deem these changes, that he had stated some time since, there would be nothing more gratifying to him than to be able to support the Ministry in some moderate change of the existing system. The noble Lord opposite had said that there were but two authorities on this subject—Earl Grey and the Duke of Wellington. Certainly, after that declaration, he ought to be convinced that there was not an end of respect for the Aristocracy; but he ought to be the more especially convinced of that fact when he was further told, that between these two authorities he had nothing to choose. But if it were true, that there were but these two opinions, he might even take that of Lord Grey; and he would ask, what was that noble Lord's opinion at the end of last year? He was happy to take that opportunity of declaring, that no one had a higher opinion of the noble Lord than himself, for none more sincerely esteemed that noble Lord's ability and integrity; but what had that noble Lord said at the close of the last year? Why, that the measure of Reform which he desired was moderate, much more moderate than the present measure could possibly pretend to be. The Lord Chancellor, too, had then held the same language. He did not quote these opinions of those noble persons merely for the purpose of showing their inconsistencies, as the noble Lord opposite had seemed to imagine. His own speeches, indeed, had been quoted in that manner, so that he seldom saw an hon. Gentleman rising on the opposite side of the House to speak on this question, but his mind vacillated between the vanity of having his speeches quoted, and the fear of being taunted with inconsistency in what he had spoken. In fact, in most instances when hon. Gentlemen on the opposite side rose to speak, he saw two volumes of the Parliamentary Debates open, the passages was marked down, and the volumes were handed up to the hon. Member before he began. He believed that the speech he had delivered on the Catholic Question was the foundation of many remarks in speeches made in the course of the present Debate. There was, however, a great difference between the Catholic Question and the Reform Bill. In the former, the matter admitted of a final settlement: it was a restitution not a change in the Constitution; but the Reform Bill admitted of no such settlement, and was a complete change of the Constitution. With respect, also, to the 40*s*. freeholders, of whom so much had been said, he must observe, that the most ample compensation had been granted. The 40*s*. Catholic freeholders were compensated by their establishment upon a footing of equality with the rest of their fellow-citizens, while the Protestants received by the change the assurance that they would not again be overwhelmed by the influx of Catholic voters. But he repeated once more, that if he had the same proof of necessity, the same proof that the change of the nature of English voting was as requisite as the change which had been in Ireland, he should not hesitate to make the sacrifice. But having strong doubts as to the policy of the present measure, he could not consent to such a plan of confiscation. He did not see, either, that this measure equally balanced the different interests it affected. The Ministers proposed to give an undue proportion of influence to the Metropolis. By the present Bill they gave no less than sixteen Members to London and its environs. These Members, who would always be on the spot, who could always consult their constituents, and support themselves by their opinions, would exercise in that House a power which no other sixteen Members in it could possess. This arrangement was at least unfortunate. They followed the example of France, and gave to London that species of influence which was so unjustly and perniciously exercised in Paris. He was opposed to the Bill on general principles. One of these was the uniform right of voting which it attempted to establish. All aristocratic influence was to be destroyed, while all democratic influence was carefully retained. The former object was accomplished by the extinction of the small boroughs. The latter was the whole aim and scope of the Bill. The noble Lord opposite had last night declared, that he did not wish to destroy the influence of the Peerage—that, in fact, he wished it to continue; and yet it was a charge made against him (Sir Robert Peel) that he exercised an influence in Tamworth. The only influence he exercised was that which the noble Lord wished to see still enjoyed by the Dukes of Devonshire and Bedford. Would the noble Lord deny the wish, or would the learned Lord Advocate, who now cheered so loudly, say to what he owed his present seat in that House, but to the influence exercised by a Peer in the borough of Malton? He was glad to find that such an influence would be maintained; but influence it was, and the influence of a Peer, of the venerable Earl Fitzwilliam, who could now exercise without obstacle his influence over that borough. Malton was now retained, but what was there to prevent, three years hence, the populous towns from interfering with the elective franchise of that borough, and declaring that it ought not to be placed in the same situation with themselves, for its claim was influenced by a respectable nobleman, whose character, as well as his property and wealth, had given him the power of purchasing their suffrages? With reference to the assertion, that there was no middle course between the opinion of Earl Grey and the Duke of Wellington, he must remind them, that the Gentleman who now entertained that opinion, had not always held it, and that when the right hon. Baronet opposite held a more elevated situation than he did at present [pointing to the post in the third row of seats on which Sir J. Graham used to sit], he had recommended the formation of a middle party of country Gentlemen, who should check both the others in the extremes that either might possibly fall into. He now returned to the Bill itself, to which he had the strongest objections; and first and chiefly, that it went to create a great change in the mode of voting, and thus decidedly altered the constituency of the country. The number of dwelling houses in Manchester rated between 10*l.* and 20*l.* was 1,770, while those rated above 20*l.* amounted only to 851; the amount of the assessed property in houses above 20*l.* was 29,300*l.* while the amount below 20*l.* was 22,130*l.*; so that, according to the first proposition of the noble Lord, the Representation of Manchester would be placed entirely in the hands of the 1,770 10*l.* householders, owning only three eighths of the property of the 851 householders above 20*l.* He did not say respectable voters would not be found, but he did say that superior intelligence and superior property would be overborne. To remedy some part of this obvious inconvenience, the noble Lord now proposed that persons assessed to the rates of a place, though not resident, should be allowed to vote. How would this new plan operate as to Manchester? The assessed value of the dwelling houses there was 51,000*l.*, while the assessed value of the factories, counting houses, &c. was 240,000*l.* According to the first proposition of the noble Lord, the Representatives for Manchester would be given to the 51,000*l.*, while the 240,000*l.*, because it belonged to out-voters, would be excluded from the right of giving any vote. The noble Lord, however, had at length discovered his mistake, and, to use the expression of the Lord Chancellor, was now about to sluice the 2,621 voters with 4,500 nonresidents. But after this alteration, of which the House heard yesterday for the first time, what became of the principle of the Bill? He would not absolutely say that this was against the principle of the Bill, but it showed the necessity of the Ministry deeply considering the measure before they proposed it to the House. The noble Lord concluded his speech by asking—and no doubt it was an important question—"Supposing, after examining this measure, you reject it, who will you find capable of governing this country?" He had heard the same question asked (though he believed in a different mode and tone from that adopted by the noble Lord); but he had heard it said, "if we are incapable of administering the public affairs, at least we will render them impossible to be administered by others." But, surely, even in the mitigated sense in which the noble Lord used it, it was a great objection to the Bill, if it was to have this effect, viz. that those who consistently opposed it, and believed it, in its ultimate consequences, to be pregnant with ruin, had the alternative offered them by his Majesty's Government, either to accept that which they believed to be radically wrong, or to be convinced that it had become impossible for others than the present Ministry to conduct the affairs of the Government. He should deeply lament if this indeed was the alternative. He knew not whether it was or not; but this he knew, that he saw no advantage in relinquishing the exercise of his deliberate judgment, or in yielding, against the dictates of that judgment, to the popular clamour on this Bill, or in yielding to the infuriated menaces of that Press which exerted in so degrading a manner the irresponsible power with which it was endowed, and which, to make it wholesome or even bearable, ought to be exercised with the most scrupulous care. Besides, if he were to give way to those motives, what security had he that he must not persevere in the resignation of his own judgment and conviction to the same influence? His conscience, in acting on his own judgment, was at rest. He could not expect to gain anything by the defeat of the measure. The Bill interfered with no interests of his. Quite the reverse: for if it produced the effect which its friends ascribed to it, it would add to his influence in every county where he possessed any property. He, therefore, could not be influenced by those motives which he had heard ascribed—and, as he believed, most unjustly ascribed—to honest men, who had endeavoured, from the sincere convictions of their minds, to resist this measure as pernicious and destructive. What might be the consequences of the Bill he would not say; but if it should prove prejudicial to the interests of the country, he should hold responsible for it, that Ministry which had prepared the Bill without due consideration of its importance, and by so doing, had reduced them to such a state of embarrassment, that they must either acquiesce in what they believed to be injurious to the Constitution, or witness the melancholy prospect of the affairs of this realm being submitted to misrule and anarchy.

Sir *James Graham* said, that with respect to the motives that had been attributed to the opponents of this measure by the friends of the Bill, before any weight was laid upon that, it should be remembered, that the basest motives had been attributed to those who had brought forward this measure; though he must observe that his noble friend (Lord Althorp) had on the previous night well answered such insinuations, when he had observed, that the Ministry would have been unworthy of the slightest confidence, could it for one moment be supposed, that in bringing forward a measure, which he would readily admit to be the most important since the Accession of the House of Brunswick to the throne of these realms they had attended to either private or party interests, or done other than pursue an open, manly, and straight-forward course. The right hon. Baronet had mistaken his right hon. friend, the Secretary for Ireland, in thinking that he had complained of any combination among the open enemies of the measure. The right hon. Baronet himself had given an open and manly opposition to the Bill; and when he (Sir James Graham) sat at that post to which the right hon. Baronet had referred, and where it might, perhaps, be his destiny to return—for he agreed with his right hon. friend, that the vote of that night would be vital to the Bill itself, and that, if defeated in this, it would be a question of anxious deliberation with the Ministers, whether they could venture to urge the rest of the Bill on the future attention of the House—when he sat at the place the right hon. Baronet had pointed out, he had openly opposed several measures, and he had recommended combinations to oppose others, but the right hon. Baronet, he was sure, would do him the justice to say, that he had never recommended a combination to defeat a measure which he professed his desire to support. He remembered the arguments of which the right hon. Baronet had made use, and was willing to admit that they were consistent with those now employed by the right hon. Baronet. At the same time the argument of the right hon. Baronet equally applied to those who had voted for the second reading of the Bill, as to those who had spoken in favour of the gallant General's motion; for the speech of the right hon. Baronet not only impugned the principle of the Bill, but went into details—and, although approving some of them, still sought for support of this amendment. The right hon. Baronet spoke to all sides in this way; but he (Sir J. Graham) had not as yet heard one argument from the other side, that it would be politic to disfranchise one small borough, or extend the franchise to any large town. If that were the opinion of any one of them, why not say so? It was well understood that the gallant General's proposition was, that the number of Representatives for England and Wales should not be diminished. But how could that be carried into effect, and not destroy the Bill? The right hon. Baronet had felt that himself, and thought the only way to meet it would be to propose an additional number of Members to the House. To that proposition, however, the Government could not agree. When, last year, his noble friend (Lord J. Russell) had proposed that Members should be given to Leeds, Manchester, and Birmingham, the right hon. Baronet had opposed the motion, because the present number was sufficient, and even inconveniently large, and more would be excessive. That, too, was an opinion not peculiar to himself, for it was that of one of his constituents, Mr. Southey, whose authority would be of considerable weight he believed with some Gentlemen in that House. Mr. Southey had said, that the number of the House was inconveniently large, and made it bear the character of a popular rather than of a deliberative assembly. Although he (Sir James Graham) could not go that length, yet he agreed with Mr. Southey that, if the number could be diminished, it would be proper. The right hon. Baronet asked, was it wise to bring forward such a measure? But had it been done gratuitously? No; but because the time had come when the nomination boroughs ought to be at an end. In looking into the details of the Bill, the Representation of Scotland necessarily came under their view; and it was impossible, looking at the wealth and importance of that country, and at its growing prosperity, that the basis of Representation should not be extended in it; and he would appeal to the hon. member for Edinburgh, whether he could deny, that the addition of at least five Members was necessary. When an addition was made to Scotland, it would be unjust not to make a similar extension to Ireland, and neither would be possible if an addition were at the same time to be made to the English Members of the House. That, indeed, was not to be thought of; for were the principle allowed, they might be trebled or quadrupled. He saw no other means of adding to the Representation of Scotland and Ireland but by diminishing that of England. He had endeavoured to be explicit upon this point, and although they had been taunted with the changes they had made in the Bill, he trusted that he had exhibited nothing which could be construed into a wish to conceal or to obscure. He did not say, that if this amendment were carried, the ministers would abandon the Bill, but he did say, that if the amendment were carried, it would be a matter of very grave consideration to the Ministers whether the Bill had been so impugned that they ought to attempt to carry it through its other stages; and he therefore warned the friends of the Bill not to concur in the Amendment. Though clouds and thick darkness might have overcast the measure—though he might return, as he was ready to return, into that class of his fellow-citizens in which he had formerly moved—still, thinking that this measure would effectually secure the stability of the throne and the most valuable institutions of the country,—thinking that nomination was actual power, and a power that ought not to be exercised,—thinking that the time was now arrived at which the people must have, not a nominal, nor a virtual, but a real Representation, thinking, too, that the stability of the Constitution depended on rallying around it again the deserted and deserting affections of the people; entertaining these opinions, he sat down with the most perfect conviction, that in the observations which he had addressed to the House, he had said nothing which had not a tendency to support the stability of the Throne and the security of those institutions which they all agreed it was most desirable to uphold for the welfare of the country.

General *Gascoyne* rose amidst the most deafening cries of "Question" and "Divide". The gallant Member said that he had understood that his motion would not affect the principle of the Bill. If he had understood the noble Lord, the mover of this Bill, aright, in a conversation which he had had with the noble Lord only yesterday, the noble Lord had distinctly stated to him, that his amendment would not touch the principle of the Bill. He conceived, therefore, that he was bound to persevere in his amendment.

Mr. *Mundy* said, that he had voted for the second reading of the Bill, and as he intended to vote for the Amendment, he wished to make one observation. The Amendment, as he understood it, merely went to prevent the diminution of the English Members, and that diminution he conceived to be fatal. In giving this vote, he begged to guard himself against the imputation of voting against Reform. He hoped that the Ministers would not think it necessary to abandon the Bill, if this Amendment were carried; but that the Bill would be so modified and so altered, that it would be made acceptable to the majority of the House.

The *Attorney General* rose amidst cries of "Question," which, for a long time, rendered him totally inaudible. When the learned Gentleman's voice rose above the clamour that had so long prevailed, he said, that the House was very naturally anxious to come to a division after this long discussion, and that it was very far from his intention to defer for any length of time the gratification of that anxiety. [*Loud cries of "Question."*] Gentlemen might, however, be assured, that he was not a person to be silenced by clamour of that kind. He must say, that honourable Gentlemen, who put themselves forward to prevent his expressing his opinions, did not do justice either to the constituents he represented, or to the situation which he filled. The simple question before them was, whether they should pronounce a resolution that the number of the House should not be diminished. Now he believed that the point of view in which he was disposed to place this question, had not yet been suggested, and he hoped for the attention of the hon. Gentleman who spoke last, who had voted for the second reading, and meant to vote for the Amendment. It was merely this, that by agreeing to the Amendment, the House would fetter the hands of the Committee, in the most inconvenient manner. The pledge might be found to hamper their proceedings, and was clearly unnecessary into the bargain. The whole House being the Committee, had full power to act upon this opinion if they entertained it; but suppose a certain reduction adopted, the consideration how the whole number should be kept up, might involve them in the greatest perplexities. [*Cries of* "*Question*."] Again he repeated, that he was not to be put down. Complaints were made of public clamour; but if the hon. House proceeded in this course—if these interruptions were continued, and succeeded, the public would see, that the question had been strangled by the clamours of those who had a present interest in defeating it. He, conceived the friends of the measure could not adopt a course more unwise and imprudent than to give the slightest sanction to a proposition which should have the effect of embarrassing the operations of the Committee. Very possibly the gallant General might have an expedient to propose—they might split Liverpool into several districts, and give to each a Representative, and so fill all the possible vacancies. After what had recently occurred in Liverpool, Reformers might be excused for pausing before they adopted this expedient. Yes, it would defeat the measure, and the hon. Gentleman opposite, who cheered the observation, plainly avowed, that such was the object of the Motion. He wished to know, was the hon. Gentleman a friend to the Bill; did he propose the Amendment in amity, and with the view of doing the Bill a service? If so, how came it that all who now supported him were its most inveterate enemies? It had been said, that the present Bill was a concession made to public clamour. He hoped he might be permitted to say, that there was not in that House—nor in the country, one man less disposed to yield to that degrading influence than he was. He would not go one step in obedience to it; but, at the same time, he would say, that the possible imputation of yielding to such an influence would not deter him from avowing his determination to support to the utmost that which he thought right—that which promised to effect the long-cherished and always unchanged opinions which had governed his political conduct—that which the country had received with acclamations, and which, if rejected, they would hear of with the loudest expressions of discontent and grief. [*Cheers, and* "*No, no.*"] He would put it hypothetically, if the Gentlemen opposite pleased, and say "if the people received it with acclamation;" but let him tell them, that it was an hypothesis which was supported by a large number of tolerably stout petitions, independently of what had been called the clamour of the multitude, and independently of the imaginary phantom which the opponents of the measure fancied they saw among their antagonists; namely, a tyrannical Press. An hon. Member had told them, that when in addressing, a large body of the people, he informed them that this Bill, if passed, would neither give them food nor clothing, the people who had before been favourable to the measure became opposed to it. Now, without meaning to question the assertion of any hon. Member of that House, he must be allowed to say, that this occurrence could only have taken place in some of the lately disturbed districts of the country, where the grossness of the ignorance that unhappily prevailed, had led to the commission of outrages which none but the rudest and most uninformed could ever have been brought to commit. To say that such an opinion could be maintained in any other classes of society, was a libel, without any foundation in truth. With regard to the Press, he could not read all the publications of the day; but he must say, that he heard a great deal more about those publications in that House than he heard out of it. A great soreness betrayed itself, and something like a feeling of resentment, that their purity should be questioned for a moment. But could they expect the Press to be mute on so great an occasion? When the highest interests were discussing here, did they require neutrality in public opinion, and enjoin its most effective organ to be silent? If a bill were passing through the House, to remedy the defects of any other establishment, the Press would blamelessly allege against it the delinquencies that required correction; and when the abuses of the Representation fixed Parliamentary Reform upon us, was the House of Commons alone to be exempt from criticism? A century of experience had convinced the people that the public business could not be transacted as it ought, but they must be debarred from complaining of an evil so enormous, and that discussion which alone can remove it is denounced by the right hon. Baronet as the language of intimidation.

Sir *R. Peel*.—I never said, that that was intimidation.

The *Attorney General* resumed.—The right hon. Baronet, in speaking of the Press, had complained of intimidation, and he knew not how to give his words any other meaning. Another kind of intimidation, indeed, he seemed to have imputed to the Ministers themselves: one of them was charged with exultingly avowing, that the country was brought to such a state by the agitation of Reform, that if the present Ministers could not carry on the affairs of the country, they had at any rate spoiled the machine of Government for any other hands. Where such a phrase was said to have been used he knew not: never in public, to his knowledge, and reporters of private conversations should be heard with caution. But he would venture to give the true interpretation of this rumour, and if any such remark had been made, would assert that it was tortured from its true meaning. It was doubtless the plain but important statement of an undeniable truth, that if the Reform proposed by Ministers were rejected, the greatest difficulty in governing the country would result—a grave and weighty consideration for all men in the country and for themselves, at the present moment, before they came to a division; for in the opinion of many, that division would be decisive of the fate of the Bill, and of Reform. Then he asked hon. Gentlemen, whether or not they were prepared to grant some measure of Reform, and what that measure would be? He thought it unworthy of the right hon. Baronet to impute to the noble Lord who had said that the Duke of Wellington and Earl Grey were at the head of two parties, the one against all Reform, and the other in favour of Reform, an intention to insinuate that those two persons dictated their opinions to those who were of their party. All that the noble Lord meant to say was, that their different opinions represented the doctrines of their respective parties.

Sir *R. Peel* said, that was just what he had stated.

The *Attorney General*.—Then what became of the imputation of aristocratical dictation?

Sir *R. Peel* said, that the noble Lord had stated that there were two authorities on the subject of Parliamentary Reform. He never understood the noble Lord to say that those two persons had the power to dictate their opinions to others; but he had understood the noble Lord to say, that the Duke of Wellington and Earl Grey expressed two extreme opinions, and that between them there was no medium.

The *Attorney General* said, he had understood the right hon. Baronet to make such an imputation on the noble Lord as he had stated; but he would pursue the topic no further. The right hon. Baronet had said, that he had not the least disposition to return to power; but he put it to the House, whether it was not likely that any individual desirous of returning to power would pursue the course adopted by the right hon. Gentleman? He did not agree with his right hon. friend (Sir J. Graham) that should the present Motion be carried, Ministers would have to resign; but if the Motion was carried, and Ministers did resign, he would ask those who were to succeed them, to look at the circumstances under which they would come into office. What was the state of their opinion with respect to Parliamentary Reform? The Duke of Wellington's opinion on the subject was well known, and therefore he would leave that noble individual out of the question. He dared to say, that the hon. Gentlemen opposite could get up an Administration without him; but he must be allowed to say, that it would be something like the play of Hamlet, with the part of Hamlet left out. [The cries of "*Question*" which had been occasionally heard throughout the whole of the hon. and learned Gentleman's address became very frequent and loud.]

Lord *John Russell* rose to order, in consequence of the constant interruptions which his hon. and learned friend experienced, and said, unless he (the Attorney General) was allowed to express his sentiments, he should move the adjournment of the House. He claimed a hearing for his hon. and learned friend, and should afterwards stand upon his own right to reply on the whole Debate.

The *Attorney General* thanked his noble friend for the interference, and observed, that his last remark made it needless for himself to trespass much longer on the House. He would ask whether the Government, should the Duke of Wellington's Administration be restored, would bring forward any measure of Reform? The right hon. Baronet had said he was not prepared to say what plan of Reform he might agree to; but he would ask them if it were proper, in such an emergency, not to be prepared what to do? In fact, a determination to promote Reform had been too long delayed, and ought to have been come to at the commencement of last Session, and some preparation made for the storm which evidently was coming. The right hon. Baronet said, he was not altogether hostile to Reform, and the right hon. Baronet, lately the Secretary for the Colonies, was even favourable to it, but they were opposed to this Bill; the only attempt made to carry Reform into execution. That Ministers were sincere and in earnest, their conduct fully proved, when they braved the certain hostility of so large a portion of the House of Commons. They had executed honestly, what they had conceived boldly. The welfare of the country, not less than the opinions of the people, demanded the measure at their hands, and he trusted the House, like the people, would stamp their exertions with approbation. It was absurdly argued, that one of the objects of the Bill was, to exclude the monied interest from all share in the councils of the nation. Yet money had both the means and the instinct of taking pretty good care of itself, and the possessors of it were unjustly aspersed by the supposition of wanting all popular talents to endear them to the people. On another occasion they would resent the insinuation that their time was consumed in poring over their ledgers, and they disqualified from bearing a part in public concerns. The state of society in England soon mingles them with the most distinguished of her sons, in their education at our public institutions, in the equal intercourse of daily life, in their mutual enjoyments of the sports of the field, and in the alliances they daily form with the high-born and noble. The House of Commons alone is not the place to which their talents and accomplishments would fail to procure admission, far better and more honourable when purchased by ability, than by corrupt bargains and disgraceful bribery. One thing he admired and envied in the enemies of Reform—their self-complacency. Every good thing that exists in spite of corruption, they trace to corruption as its cause; and thus, when the eloquent and hon. Member (Mr. Hawkins) addressed them, in one of the ablest arguments he had ever heard, which put down every one of the sophisms by which Reform is encountered, do they deny his premises?—No! Do they question his conduct?—No! but they boldly claim him and his unanswerable speech in their own troop. "He is one of us," they exclaim; "he sits for a close borough, he owes his return to the system you condemn." As if he owed to that system his superior understanding and enlightened views, when the first act of his matured mind was, to sacrifice the unhallowed advantages, which fortune gave him, to the conviction that they could not be retained without dishonour to himself, and detriment to his country. The example of the hon. Member was even more convincing than the eloquence which was so deservedly praised. The same remark might be applied to the great lights which the borough system boasted of introducing into the House, forgetful of the numbers it excluded, and of the dulness and corruption by which, if it did not quench their brilliancy, it counteracted their effect. If Knaresborough derived honour from the names of its illustrious burgesses, their efforts were directed to the downfal of its burgage tenures. If Malton was justly proud of his right hon. and learned friend (the Lord Advocate) he came among them to say, that as a close borough Malton ought to exist no longer. When Burke had filled the same seat, he struggled in vain against those corrupt majorities which the borough system placed in the hands of Government, to avert the shame and ruin of the American War. That system, hatched in jobs, and ever producing them anew, had inflicted on us the dead weight of a National Debt, from which relief was almost hopeless. So closely are the disastrous consequences interwoven in every part of the State, that their removal can scarcely be expected by that of their original cause. But there being no other remedy; the experiment is worth trying; the state of the question forbids the Government to be neutral, and they stake their fate on this measure. When the right hon. Baronet abstained from suggesting any particular scheme of Reform, lest he should be accused of courting the support of some reformers who might not approve of the Bill, it is strange, that he did not perceive how his present conduct exposed him to the same charge. But the heaviest charge of all against the late Government is, that they could fold their hands, and come to no decision on a principle of such immense importance in its own nature, and which the feeling of the country made so practical and pressing. He denied the justice of censure that right hon. Baronet had passed on the Bill, from the absurd supposition that a uniform right of voting must throw all elective power into the hands of a single class, to the imputation of partiality in disfranchisement, where an arbitrary line must be drawn, and fall where it would, some would think themselves entitled to complain of it. The vote of that night might possibly retard the Bill, but could not finally defeat it; but he wished hon. Members who had given it their support to be fully aware of what they were doing. All the foes of the measure were united as friends to the Motion. A noble Lord (Lord Stormont) who had called himself the Patroclus of his learned friend (Sir C. Wetherell) had found another Achilles in the gallant member for Southwark (Sir R. Wilson), and both had been in council with the other gallant General (General Gascoyne) who must be called the Nestor of the conclave, on the Motion now before the House. It was in vain to talk of the Motion being friendly to Reform, or conceived in the spirit even of mitigated hostility. If carried, the proof that the majority of the present House of Commons is against the measure, will be complete. How such a result may be received by the country he would not pretend to anticipate, but whatever might become of the Motion, or of the minority, he should derive lasting satisfaction from his honest co-operation with his noble friend, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, whose vindication of his conduct and his motives, none who heard it were likely to forget. Surrounded by the friends of his youth, and acting on his well-known principles, his noble friend had placed his honour on an imperishable foundation, and entitled himself to the lasting gratitude of his country.

Lord *J. Russell* said, that although he was reluctant to obtrude himself upon the attention of the House, yet, considering the part he had taken, and that he had not yet spoken upon this particular question, he was compelled to request the indulgence of hon. Members for a few minutes, while he gave an explanation upon points in which he only was concerned. A motion had certainly been mentioned last week, to declare that the total number of the House ought not to be diminished; and his noble friend (Lord Althorp) and himself had stated, that they would take it into consideration; but the proposition of the hon. and gallant General was entirely different. It was not that the total number of the House—including England, Ireland, Scotland, and Wales, should not be diminished—but that the total number of Members for England and Wales, should not be diminished. That was a motion of parliamentary tactics, brought forward, indeed, by the hon. and gallant General, but concocted by more wily advisers, by which an attempt was made to bring together all the enemies of the Bill, and to entrap such of its friends as might be dupes and gulls enough to fall into the snare. With deep regret he found that the first dupe, the first gull who ran headlong and blindfold into it, was his hon. and gallant friend the member for Southwark, whom until this moment he (Lord J. Russell) had looked upon as a not less staunch, or less strenuous Reformer, than himself. Upon the point of population, he would say, that neither Lord Somers, the great author of the Union with Scotland, nor Mr. Pitt, the able promoter of the Union with Ireland, had ever thought that there should be necessarily a particular rate and proportion between the number of inhabitants and the number of Members. In the same way Ministers had thought that they had an opportunity, not of adding to the proportion of Scotland or of Ireland, but of giving Members to large, populous, and commercial towns, and upon the principles of Lord Somers and Mr. Pitt they had proceeded. Where they thought there was a want of Representatives, they wished that Representatives should be given. If the Motion were carried, and Ministers were called upon to deliberate on the fitness or unfitness of increasing the Members of the House, to decide on the affirmative, would seem little less than an act of folly; and supposing it decided that the English Members should continue as numerous as at present, what would become of the assurance of the hon. and gallant General, to the Scotch and Irish Members, that they were not prevented from having additions to their number? If, indeed, the conduct of the Bill, and the determination of the House, were in the hands of the hon. and gallant General, he might order it as he pleased; but he (Lord John Russell) gave warning to the Members for Scotland and Ireland, that if they supported and carried the Motion before the House, they must relinquish for ever the hope that new Representatives could be given to either. He was convinced, that the Irish Members would feel it as he had put it; but not so the Scotch, who, by a little sophistry and a great deal of special pleading, had been led to believe, that the two objects were compatible. The Motion worded as it was, had been designed merely to put the advocates of the Bill in a dilemma, and to retry the question of the second reading. Ministers had thought that the vote of the House in favour of the second reading was conclusive, that the measure should be referred to the Committee, and he (Lord J. Russell) said with the noble Earl at the head of the Government, that any improvement which left the efficiency of the Bill unimpaired would be adopted; but that by its principle, the Government was ready to stand or fall. When he had last night introduced the names of Earl Grey and of the Duke of Wellington, he had had no other object than to show, in the shortest form and in the plainest manner, that there were but two courses—Reform or no Reform. The Duke of Wellington had avowed himself the friend of all close boroughs, and had defended the present system and all its abuses, as the most perfect that the wit of man could devise. Earl Grey, on the contrary, had applied himself to secure the confidence of the people, by obeying the universal call for Reform. If the Bill were thrown out, the consequences might be various. He would not give it out as a threat, but he might allude hypothetically to the results. The Crown might, in the first place appeal to the country, in order to ascertain whether it approved of the decision of the House of Commons. That was at least a possible case, and it would be a very constitutional course. But suppose some modified plan of Reform were introduced and adopted before the dissolution of Parliament, it must be dissolved afterwards, in order to give the people the benefit of the change. Would that be accomplished with peace and satisfaction, and would not the first step in the new House of Commons be for some Member, favourable to this rejected measure, to bring forward a motion to revive it? He (Lord John Russell) could not imagine how any of the supporters of the present Bill could refuse to vote for such a motion, and then, instead of peace and satisfaction, there would be a continual struggle between the people, on the one hand, to obtain effectual Reform, and the House of Commons, on the other, to resist it. It had been said that this Bill would only be a stepping-stone to those who wished for greater changes; but he appealed to any man whether a more moderate Bill, which satisfied nobody, and offended many, was not much more likely to be converted into a stepping-stone. Indeed, the objection of the hon. member for Preston was, that this Reform would be final, and that, when once it was made nothing more would be granted. He must contend, therefore, that this Bill was not only much more likely than any measure of what was called moderate Reform to preserve the enduring excellence of the constitution of the House, while it secured the confidence of the people in its deliberations and decisions, and confirmed their affection and loyalty to the Throne but also to prevent further alterations. The object of the Bill was to raise a bar to the accomplishment of the wishes of those who looked forward to more extensive and violent changes. In conclusion, therefore, he earnestly entreated all who were friendly to the measure to vote with him and his friends.

The House then divided. For General Gascoyne's Amendment 299; Against it 291—Majority 8. The Resolution "It is the opinion of this House, that the total number of knights, citizens, and burgesses, returned to Parliament for that part of the United Kingdom called England and Wales, ought not to be diminished," put and agreed to.

Committee on the Bill deferred till Thursday.

A LIST OF THE

MINORITY AND MAJORITY.

MINORITY.

Against the Motion, therefore *For* the Bill.

ENGLAND.

Adeane, Henry John	*Cambridgeshire*
Althorp, viscount	*Northamptonshire*
Anson, sir George	*Lichfield*
Anson, hon. George	*Yarmouth*
Arcedeckne, Andrew	*Dunwich*
Astley, sir J. Dugdale, bt.	*Wiltshire*
Baillie, John Evan	*Bristol*
Bainbridge, Edward T.	*Taunton*
Baring, William B.	*Callington*
Baring, Francis T.	*Portsmouth*
Baring, Francis	*Thetford*
Baring, sir Thos., bt.	*Wycombe*
Bayntun, Samuel A.	*York*
Belgrave, visc.	*Cheshire*
Benett, John	*Wiltshire*
Bentinck, ld. W. G. C.	*King's Lynn*
Bernal, Ralph	*Rochester*
Bethell, Richard	*Yorkshire*
Biddulph, Robert M.	*Denbigh*
Blake, sir Francis, bt.	*Berwick*
Blandford, marquis	*Woodstock*
Blount, Edward	*Steyning*
Bouverie, hon. Philip P.	*Cockermouth*
Bouverie, hon. Dunc. P.	*New Sarum*
Briscoe, John I.	*Surrey*
Brougham, James	*Downton*
Buller, James W.	*Exeter*
Buller, Charles, jun.	*West Looe*
Bulkeley, sir R. B. W.	*Beaumaris*
Bulwer, Henry L.	*Wilton*
Bunbury, sir Henry E.	*Suffolk*
Burdett, sir F., bt.	*Westminster*
Burrell, sir C. M., bt.	*New Shoreham*
Burton, Henry	*Beverley*
Buxton, Thos. Fowell	*Weymouth*
Byng, George	*Middlesex*
Byng, George S.	*Milborne Port*
Calcraft, rt. hon. John	*Wareham*
Calthorpe, hon. Fred. G.	*Bramber*
Calvert, C.	*Southwark*
Calvert, Nicolson	*Hertfordshire*
Campbell, John	*Stafford*
Carter, J. B.	*Portsmouth*
Cavendish, Henry F. C.	*Derby*
Cavendish, William,	*Cambridge Univer.*
Chaytor, W. R.	*Durham*
Cholmeley, Montague J.	*Grantham*
Clive, Edward B.	*Hereford*
Coke, Thomas Wm.	*Norfolk*
Colborne, Nich. W. R.	*Horsham*
Cradock, Sheldon	*Camelford*
Crampton, P. C.	*Saltash*
Curteis, Herbert B.	*Sussex*
Davies, Thos. Henry	*Worcester*
Denison, Wm. Joseph	*Surrey*
Denman, sir Thomas	*Nottingham*
Duncombe, Thomas S.	*Hertford*
Dundas, hon. John C.	*Richmond*
Dundas, hon. Thomas	*York*
Dundas, hon. sir R. L.	*Richmond*
Dundas, Charles	*Berkshire*
Ebrington, viscount	*Devonshire*
Ellice, Edward	*Coventry*
Ellis, hon. G. J. W. A.	*Okehampton*
Euston, earl	*Bury St. Edmund's*
Evans, William	*Leicester*
Fazakerley, J. N.	*Peterborough*
Ferguson, sir Ronald C.	*Nottingham*
Fitzroy, lord James	*Thetford*
Foley, John H. H.	*Droitwich*
Foley, hon. Thomas H.	*Worcestershire*
Folkes, sir W. J. H. B.	*Norfolk*
Fordwich, lord	*Canterbury*
Fortescue, hon. Geo. M.	*Hindon*
Fyler, Thomas B.	*Coventry*
Gisborne, Thomas	*Stafford*
Graham, sir J. R. G.	*Cumberland*
Graham, sir Sanford	*Ludgershall*
Grant, Robert	*Norwich*
Greene, Thomas G.	*Lancaster*
Grosvenor, rt. hon. Robt.	*Chester*
Guest, Josiah John	*Honiton*
Guise, sir B. W. bt.	*Gloucestershire*
Gurney, Richard H.	*Norwich*
Harvey, Daniel W.	*Colchester*
Hawkins, John H.	*St. Michael*
Heron, sir Robert, bt.	*Peterborough*
Hobhouse, John Cam.	*Westminster*
Hodges, Thomas L.	*Kent*
Hodgson, John	*Newcastle-upon-Tyne*
Horne, sir W.	*Bletchingley*
Howard, Philip Henry	*Carlisle*
Howard, hon. William	*Morpeth*
Howard, Henry	*New Shoreham*
Howick, viscount	*Higham Ferrers*
Hughes, William H.	*Oxford*
Hughes, William Lewis	*Wallingford*

Hume, Joseph	*Middlesex*
Hunt, Henry	*Preston*
Ingilby, sir W. A., bt.	*Lincolnshire*
Jeffrey, F.	*Malton*
Jerningham, hon. Hen. V. S.	*Pontefract*
Johnstone, sir J. V. B.	*Yorkshire*
Kemp, Thos. Read	*Lewes*
Knight, Robert	*Wallingford*
Labouchere, Henry	*Taunton*
Langston, James H.	*Oxford*
Lawley, Francis	*Warwickshire*
Lee, John L.	*Wells*
Lefevre, Charles S.	*Downton*
Lemon, sir Charles	*Penryn*
Lennox, lord John Geo.	*Chichester*
Lester, Benjamin Lester	*Poole*
Lloyd, sir Edw. Price, bt.	*Flint*
Loch, John	*Hythe*
Lumley, John S.	*Nottinghamshire*
Lushington, Dr.	*Winchilsea*
Lyttleton, Edward John	*Staffordshire*
Maberly, John	*Abingdon*
Macaulay, Thomas B.	*Calne*
Macdonald, sir James, bt.	*Calne*
Mackintosh, rt. hon. sir J.	*Knaresboro'*
Marjoribanks, Stewart	*Hythe*
Marryatt, Joseph	*Sandwich*
Marshall, William	*Leominster*
Martin, sir Thomas B.	*Plymouth*
Martin, John	*Tewkesbury*
Mayhew, W.	*Colchester*
Milbank, Mark	*Camelford*
Mildmay, Paulet St. John	*Winchester*
Morpeth, viscount	*Yorkshire*
Morrison, James	*St. Ives*
Newark, lord	*East Retford*
Noel, sir Gerard N., bt.	*Rutland*
Nugent, lord	*Aylesbury*
Ord, William	*Morpeth*
Osborne, lord F. G.	*Cambridgeshire*
Palmer, Charles	*Bath*
Palmer, Charles F.	*Reading*
Palmerston, visc.	*Cambr. Univers.*
Pechell, sir Samuel J. B.	*Hellestone*
Pelham, C. A. W.	*Newtown*
Pelham, John Cresset	*Shropshire*
Pendarvis, Edw. W. W.	*Cornwall*
Penrhyn, Edward	*Shaftesbury*
Petit, Louis H.	*Ripon*
Philipps, sir R. B. P.	*Haverfordwest*
Phillips, George Richard	*Steyning*
Phillpotts, John	*Gloucester*
Polhill, Frederick	*Bedford*
Ponsonby, B. Will. F. S.	*Poole*
Portman, Edw. Berkeley	*Dorsetshire*
Powell, W. Edward	*Cardiganshire*
Poyntz, W. S.	*Ashburton*
Prendergast, Michael Geo.	*Westbury*
Price, sir Robert, bt.	*Herefordshire*
Pryse, Pryse	*Cardigan*
Ramsbottom, John	*Windsor*
Ramsden, John Charles	*Malton*
Rickford, William	*Aylesbury*
Ridley, sir M. W., bt.	*Newcastle-up.-T.*
Robarts, Abraham W.	*Maidstone*
Robinson, sir George, bt.	*Northampton*
Robinson, George R.	*Worcester*
Russell, William	*Durham County*
Russell, Charles	*Reading*
Russell, lord William	*Tavistock*
Russell, Lord J.	*Tavistock*
Russell, Robert G.	*Thirsk*
Sandon, viscount	*Tiverton*
Saunderson, Alex.	*Cavan*
Schonswar, George	*Kingston-upon-Hull*
Sebright, sir J. S., bart.	*Hertfordshire*
Sefton, earl of	*Droitwich*
Seymour, lord	*Okehampton*
Sheil, R. L.	*Milborne Port*
Slaney, Robert A.	*Shrewsbury*
Smith, J.	*Chichester*
Smith, R.	*Buckinghamshire*
Smith, John Abel	*Midhurst*
Spence, George	*Ripon*
Stanley, lord	*Lancashire*
Stanley, hon. Edw. G. S.	*Windsor*
Stewart, P. M.	*Lancaster*
Strathaven, lord	*Huntingdonshire*
Strutt, Edward	*Derby*
Stuart, lord Dudley C.	*Arundel*
Stuart, ld. Pat. J. H. C.	*Cardiff*
Surrey, earl of	*Horsham*
Sykes, Daniel	*Beverley*
Talbot, Christ. R. M.	*Glamorganshire*
Taylor, Mich. Angelo	*Durham City*
Tennant, Charles	*St. Alban's*
Tennyson, Charles	*Bletchingley*
Thomson, Charles P.	*Dover*
Thompson, William	*London*
Thompson, Paul B.	*Wenlock*
Tomes, John	*Warwick*
Townshend, lord Chas. V. F.	*Tamworth*
Tynte, Chas. Kemys	*Bridgewater*
Tyrrell, Charles	*Suffolk*
Uxbridge, earl of	*Anglesey*
Vere, James J. Hope	*Ilchester*
Vernon, Geo. Granv. V.	*Lichfield*
Villiers, Thomas H.	*Wootton Bassett*
Waithman, Robert	*London*
Walpole, hon. John	*King's Lynn*
Warburton, Henry	*Bridport*
Warrender, rt. hn. sir G. bt.	*Honiton*
Waterpark, lord	*Knaresborough*
Watson, hon. Richard	*Canterbury*
Webb, Edward	*Gloucester*
Wellesley, hon. Will. P. T. L.	*St. Ives*
Western, Charles Callis	*Essex*
Whitbread, Wm. Henry	*Bedford*

Weyland, John .. .. .. *Hindon*
Whitmore, Will. Wolr. .. *Bridgenorth*
Wilbraham, George .. *Stockbridge*
Wilks, John .. .. .. *Boston*
Williams, John .. .. *Winchelsea*
Wood, Matthew .. .. .. *London*
Wood, Charles .. .. .. *Grimsby*
Wood, John .. .. *Preston*
Wrightson, W. B. *Kingston-upon-Hull*
Wrottesley, sir J., bt. .. *Staffordshire*

SCOTLAND.

Abercromby, hon. col. G. *Clackmannansh.*
Agnew, sir Andrew, bt. .. *Wigtonshire*
Campbell, Walter F. .. *Argyleshire*
Campbell, hon. capt. G. P... *Nairnshire*
Ferguson, Rob. C. .. *Kirkcudbright*
Grant, rt. hon. C. .. *Inverness-shire*
Johnstone, John J. H... *Dumfries-shire*
Maule, hon. William R. .. *Forfarshire*
Stewart, sir Mich. S. bt. .. *Renfrewsh.*
Trail, George .. .. *Orkney, &c.*
Wemyss, capt. James .. .. *Fife*

ROYAL BURGHS.

Duff, hon. Alexander .. *Elgin, &c.*
Kennedy, Thomas Francis .. *Ayr, &c.*
Johnston, James .. *Stirling, &c.*
Loch, James .. .. .. *Tain, &c.*
Ogilvie, capt. .. .. *Perth, &c.*

IRELAND.

Acheson, visc. .. *Armaghshire*
Bateson, sir Robert .. *Londonderryshire*
Belfast, earl of .. .. *Antrimshire*
Brabazon, lord .. .. *Dublinshire*
Browne, hon. William .. *Kerryshire*
Browne, James .. .. .. *Mayo*
Browne, Dominick .. .. *Mayo*
Brownlow, Charles .. *Armaghshire*
Bruen, col. Henry .. *Carlowshire*
Burke, sir John, bt. .. *Galwayshire*
Chapman, Montague L. .. *Westmeath*
Chichester, sir Arthur, bt. .. *Belfast*
Dawson, Alexander .. .. *Louth*
Duncannon, viscount .. *Kilkennyshire*
Fitzgerald, ld. Wm. C. .. *Kildareshire*
Fitz-Gibbon, rt. hon. Rd. *Limerickshire*
French, Arthur .. *Roscommonshire*
Grattan, James .. *Wicklowshire*
Hill, lord Arthur .. .. *Downshire*
Howard, Ralph .. .. *Wicklowshire*
Killeen, lord .. .. .. *Meathshire*
King, hon. Robert .. .. *Corkshire*
King, hon. Henry .. .. *Sligoshire*
Lambert James S. .. *Galwayshire*
Macnamara, William N. .. *Clare*
Mountcharles, earl .. *Donegalshire*
O'Connell, Daniel .. *Waterfordshire*
O'Connell, Maurice .. *Clare*
O'Connor, Owen .. .. *Roscommon*
O'Ferral, Richard M. .. *Kildareshire*
O'Grady, Standish .. *Limerickshire*
O'Neil, hon. gen. J. .. *Antrimshire*
Prittie, hon. Francis A. .. *Tipperary*
Saunderson, Alex. .. *Cavan*
Somerville, sir Marc. bt. *Meathshire*

BOROUGHS.

Boyle, hon. John .. .. *Cork*
Callaghan, Daniel .. .. .. *Cork*
Chichester, sir A., bt. .. *Belfast*
Cradock, hon. John H. .. *Dundalk*
Ferguson, sir R. .. .. *Londonderry*
Hill, lord George A. .. *Carrickfergus*
Jephson, C. D. O. .. .. *Mallow*
Knox, hon. J. .. .. *Dungannon*
Knox, hon. John Henry .. *Newry*
Lamb, hon. George .. .. *Dungarvon*
Leader, Nicholas P. .. .. *Kilkenny*
Newport, rt. hon. sir J., bt... *Waterford*
O'Brien, William S. .. .. *Ennis*
O'Hara, James .. .. .. *Galway*
Ponsonby, hon. George .. *Youghall*
Rice, Thomas Spring .. .. *Limerick*
Russell, John .. .. *Kinsale*
Smith, Robert V. .. .. .. *Tralee*

TELLERS.

Duncannon, visc. .. *Kilkenny Co.*
Rice, T. S. .. .. .. *Limerick*

MAJORITY.

For the Motion, therefore *Against* the Bill.

ENGLAND.

Acland, sir Thos. D., bt. .. *Devonshire*
A'Court, Edw. Henry .. *Heytesbury*
Alexander, James .. *Old Sarum*
Alexander, J. D. P. .. *Old Sarum*
Antrobus, Gibbs Crawf. .. *Plympton*
Apsley, lord .. .. .. *Cirencester*
Archdall, Mervyn .. *Fermanaghshire*
Ashley, lord .. .. .. *Dorchester*
Astell, William .. .. *Bridgewater*
Atkins, John .. .. .. *Arundel*
Attwood, Matthias .. *Boroughbridge*
Baldwin, Charles B. .. .. *Totness*
Bankes, George .. .. *Corfe-Castle*

Bankes, William John .. *Marlborough*
Bankes, Henry .. .. *Dorsetshire*
Baring, Alexander .. .. *Callington*
Barnes, Frederick .. .. *Dunwich*
Bastard, John .. .. *Dartmouth*
Beckett, rt. hon. sir J. bt. .. *Haslemere*
Bell, Matthew .. *Northumberland*
Beresford, Marcus .. .. *Berwick*
Blackett, Christopher .. *Beeralston*
Bonham, Francis R. .. .. *Rye*
Bradshaw, James .. .. *Brackley*
Brudenel, lord .. .. .. *Fowey*
Brogden, James .. .. *Launceston*
Buck, Lewis W. .. .. .. *Exeter*
Burge, W... .. .. .. *Eye*
Burrard, George .. .. *Lymington*
Buxton, John Jacob .. .. *Bedwyn*
Calvert, John .. .. *Huntingdon*
Capel, John .. .. *Queenborough*
Carrington, sir E. C. .. *St. Mawes*
Cartwright, Wm. R...*Northamptonsh.*
Cecil, lord Thomas .. .. *Stamford*
Chaplin, Charles .. .. *Lincolnshire*
Chaplin, Thomas .. .. *Stamford*
Churchill, lord Charles S... *Woodstock*
Clinton, Clinton J. F. .. *Aldborough*
Clive, viscount .. .. .. *Ludlow*
Clive, hon. Robert H. .. .. *Ludlow*
Clive, Henry .. .. *Montgomery*
Cockburn, rt. hon. sir G. .. *Plymouth*
Cocks, James .. .. .. *Reigate*
Constable, sir Thos. A. C. .. *Hedon*
Cooke, sir Henry F. .. .. *Orford*
Cornewall, Fred. H. .. *Bishop's Castle*
Cotterell, sir J. G., bt. *Herefordshire*
Courtenay, rt. hon. T. P. .. *Totness*
Croker, rt. hon. J. W. .. *Aldeburgh*
Curzon, hon. Robert .. .. *Clitheroe*
Cust, hon. Peregrine F. .. *Clitheroe*
Cust, hon. Edward .. *Lostwithiel*
Darlington, earl of .. .. *Saltash*
Davis, Richard Hart .. .. *Bristol*
Dawson, George R. .. .. *Harwich*
Dick, Quintin .. .. .. *Maldon*
Domville, sir C. .. *Plympton-Earle*
Dottin, Abel R. .. .. *Southampton*
Douro, marquis of .. .. *Aldeburgh*
Dowdeswell, John Edm. .. *Tewkesbury*
Drake, Thomas T. .. *Agmondesham*
Drake, William T. .. *Agmondesham*
Duncombe, hon. Wm. .. *Yorkshire*
Duncombe, hon. Arthur .. *East Retford*
Dundas, Robert Adam .. .. *Ipswich*
East, sir Edward H. bt. .. *Winchester*
Eastnor, viscount .. .. *Hereford*
Egerton, Wilbraham .. .. *Cheshire*
Egerton, sir Phil. de M. G. .. *Chester*
Egerton, William T. .. .. *Lymington*
Eliot, lord .. .. .. *Liskeard*
Encombe, viscount .. .. *Truro*
Estcourt, T. H. S. B. .. *Marlborough*
Estcourt, Thos. G. B. .. *Oxford Univ.*
Ewing, James .. .. .. *Wareham*
Fane, sir Henry .. .. *Hastings*
Fane, hon. Henry S. .. *Lyme Regis*
Fane, John Thomas .. *Lyme Regis*
Fane, John .. .. .. *Oxfordshire*
Fardell, John .. .. .. *Lincoln*
Farrand, Robert .. .. .. *Hedon*
Fitzgerald, John .. .. *Seaford*
Fleming, John .. .. *Hampshire*
Foley, Edward T. .. *Ludgershall*
Forester, hon. G. C. W. .. *Wenlock*
Forbes, sir Chas., bt. .. *Malmesbury*
Forbes, John .. .. *Malmesbury*
Freemantle, sir Thos., bt. *Buckingham*
Freshfield, James W. .. *Penryn*
Gilbert, Davies .. .. *Bodmyn*
Gladstone, T. .. .. *Queenborough*
Gordon, James A. .. .. *Tregony*
Gordon, John .. .. *Weymouth*
Gore, William O. .. *Carnarvon*
Graham, marquis of .. *Cambridge*
Grant, sir Alex. Cray, bt. .. *Westbury*
Gresley, sir R. .. .. *New Romney*
Greville, hon. sir C. J. .. *Warwick*
Grimstone, viscount .. *St. Alban's*
Gunning, sir Robt. Hen. .. *Northampton*
Gurney, Hudson .. .. *Newtown*
Handley, W. F. .. *Newark-on-Trent*
Harris, George .. .. *Grimsby*
Hardinge, sir H. .. *Newport, Cornw.*
Hastings, sir C. A. bt. .. *Leicester*
Heathcote, sir W. bt. .. *Hampshire*
Herries, rt. hon. John C. .. *Harwich*
Hill, sir Rowland, bt. .. .. *Salop*
Holmes, William .. .. *Haslemere*
Holmesdale, visc. .. *East Grinstead*
Hope, John T. .. .. .. *Gatton*
Hope, Henry T. .. .. .. *East Looe*
Hotham, lord .. .. .. *Leominster*
Houldsworth, A. H. .. *Dartmouth*
Howard, hon. Fulk G. .. *Castle Rising*
Hoy, James B. .. .. *Southampton*
Hulse, sir Charles, bt. .. *West Looe*
Ingestrie, viscount .. .. *Hertford*
Inglis, sir R. H. bt. .. *Oxford Univers.*
Irving, J. .. .. .. *Bramber*
Jenkins, Richard .. .. *Shrewsbury*
Jermyn, earl .. *Bury St. Edmund's*
Jolliffe, sir William G. H...*Petersfield*
Jolliffe, Gilbert E. .. *Petersfield*
Jones, John .. .. .. *Carmarthen*
Kearsley, J. H. .. .. *Wigan*
Keck, George A. L. .. *Leicestershire*
Kemmis, Thomas A. .. *East Looe*
Kenyon, hon. Lloyd .. *St. Michael*
Kerrison, sir Edward, bt. .. *Eye*

Kilderbee, Spenser H.	*Orford*
King, sir John D., bt.	*Wycombe*
Lascelles, hon. Henry	*Northallerton*
Legh, Thomas	*Newton*
Leslie, Charles P.	*New Ross*
Lewis, rt. hon. T. F.	*Radnorshire*
Lindsay, James	*Wigan*
Lowther, sir John, bt.	*Cumberland*
Lowther, viscount	*Westmorland*
Lowther, hon. Henry C.	*Westmorland*
Lushington, J. L.	*Carlisle*
Luttrell, John Fownes	*Minehead*
Lygon, hon. Hen. P.	*Worcestershire*
Lyons, W.	*Seaford*
Mackillop, James	*Tregony*
Mahon, visct.	*Wootton Basset*
Maitland, viscount	*Appleby*
Malcolm, Neill	*Boston*
Malcolm, sir J.	*Launceston*
Mandeville, visct.	*Huntingdonshire*
Manners, lord Robert	*Leicestershire*
Miles, Philip J.	*Corfe-Castle*
Miles, William	*New Romney*
Miller, W. H.	*Newcastle-under-Line*
Morgan, sir C., bt.	*Monmouthshire*
Mundy, Francis	*Derbyshire*
Neeld, Joseph	*Chippenham*
Norreys, lord	*Oxfordshire*
Nugent, sir George, bt.	*Buckingham*
Owen, sir John, bt.	*Pembrokeshire*
Owen, Hugh O.	*Pembroke*
Palk, sir Lawrence V., bt.	*Ashburton*
Palmer, Robert	*Berkshire*
Patten, John W.	*Lancashire*
Peach, Nathaniel Will.	*Truro*
Pearse, John	*Devizes*
Peel, right hon. sir Robt.	*Tamworth*
Perceval, Spencer	*Newport, I. of W.*
Pigott, George G. W.	*St. Mawes*
Pitt, Joseph	*Cricklade*
Planta, Joseph	*Hastings*
Pollen, sir John W., bt.	*Andover*
Powlett, lord W. I. F.	*Durham Coun.*
Praed, W. M.	*St. Germains*
Price, Richard	*New Radnor*
Price, Samuel Grove	*Sandwich*
Pringle, sir Wm. Henry	*Liskeard*
Pusey, Philip	*Chippenham*
Raine, Jonathan	*Newport, Cornwall*
Reid, sir John R.	*Dover*
Rogers, Edward	*Bishop's Castle*
Rose, rt. hon. sir Geo. H.	*Christchurch*
Rose, George P.	*Christchurch*
Ross, Charles	*St. Germains*
Ryder, hon. Granville D.	*Tiverton*
Sadler, Michael T.	*Newark*
Scott, sir S.	*Whitchurch*
Severn, John C.	*Fowey*
Seymour, Horace B.	*Bodmyn*
Shelley, John V.	*Gatton*
Shelley, sir John, bart.	*Lewes*
Sibthorp, C. D. L. W.	*Lincoln*
Smith, Samuel	*Wendover*
Smith, Abel	*Wendover*
Smith, sir Culling E.	*Pontefract*
Somerset, ld. Rob. E. H.	*Gloucestersh.*
Somerset, lord G. C. H.	*Monmouthsh.*
Stanley, William S.	*Stockbridge*
Staunton, sir George T.	*Heytesbury*
Stephens, Stephens L.	*Barnstaple*
Stormont, viscount	*Aldborough*
St. Paul, sir H. D. C.	*Bridport*
Stuart, William	*Bedfordshire*
Sugden, sir Edward B.	*Weymouth*
Sumner, George H.	*Guildford*
Taylor, George Watson	*Devizes*
Thompson, George L.	*Yarmouth*
Thynne, lord John	*Bath*
Tomline, William Edw.	*Minehead*
Townshend, lord J. N. B.	*Helleston*
Townshend, H. G. P.	*Whitchurch*
Trench, Fred. William	*Cambridge*
Trevor, hon. Geo. Rice	*Carmarthensh.*
Tudor, George	*Barnstaple*
Tunno, Edward R.	*Bossiney*
Twiss, Horace	*Newport, Isle of W.*
Tyrell, John T.	*Essex*
Ure, Masterton	*Weymouth*
Valletort, viscount	*Lostwithiel*
Vaughan, sir R. W. bt.	*Merionethsh.*
Villiers, viscount	*Rochester*
Vyvyan, sir Rd. Rawl. bt.	*Cornwall*
Wall, Charles Baring	*Guildford*
Walrond, Bethel	*Sudbury*
Walsh, sir J. B.	*Sudbury*
Ward, William	*London*
Welby, Glynne Earle	*Grantham*
West, Frederick R.	*East Grinstead*
Wetherell, sir Chas.	*Boroughbridge*
Whitmore, Thomas	*Bridgenorth*
Williams, Owen	*Marlow*
Williams, Thomas Peers	*Marlow*
Williams, Robert	*Dorchester*
Winchester, Henry	*Maidstone*
Wood, Thomas	*Breconshire*
Wortley, hon. Charles S.	*Bossiney*
Worcester, marquis of	*Monmouth*
Wyndham, Wadham	*New Sarum*
Wynne, Charles W. G.	*Carnarvonshire*
Wynn, sir Watkin Wm., bt.	*Denbighsh.*
Wynn, rt. hn. C. W. W.	*Montgomerysh.*

SCOTLAND.

Arbuthnot, hon. H.	*Kincardineshire*
Blair, William	*Ayrshire*
Clerk, sir Geo., bt.	*Edinburghshire*
Douglas, hon. Charles	*Lanarkshire*

Drummond, Henry H.	*Stirlingshire*
Gordon, hon. Will.	*Aberdeenshire*
Graham, lord Montagu W.	*Dumbartonsh.*
Grant, hon. Francis W.	*Elginshire*
Gower, lord F. L.	*Sutherlandshire*
Hay, lord John	*Haddingtonshire*
Hope, hon. sir Alex.	*Linlithgowshire*
Maitland, capt. A.	*Berwickshire*
Montgomery, sir James, bt.	*Peebleshire*
Murray, rt. hon. sir Geo.	*Perthshire*
Pringle, Alexander	*Selkirkshire*
Rae, sir William, bart.	*Bute*
Scott, Henry F.	*Roxburghshire*

ROYAL BURGHS.

Balfour, James	*Anstruther*
Campbell, Archibald	*Glasgow, &c.*
Carnegie, sir James, bt.	*Aberdeen, &c.*
Dalrymple, sir Adol. J.	*Haddington, &c.*
Dundas, rt. hon. Wm.	*Edinburgh*
Loughborough, lord	*Dysart, &c.*
Lowther, John Henry	*Wigtown, &c.*
Monteith, Henry	*Lanark*

IRELAND.

Archdall, gen. M.	*Fermanagh*
Beresford, lord G. T.	*Waterfordshire*
Blaney, C. D.	*Monaganshire*
Castlereagh, viscount	*Downshire*
Clements, John M.	*Leitrimshire*
Cooper, Edward J.	*Sligoshire*
Coote, sir Chas. H., bt.	*Queen's County*
Corry, viscount	*Fermanaghshire*
Corry, hon. Hen. T. L.	*Tyroneshire*
Fitzgerald, rt. hon. Mau.	*Kerryshire*
Forbes, viscount	*Longfordshire*
Hart, George Vaughan	*Donegalshire*
Jones, Theobald	*Londonderryshire*
Lefroy, Anthony	*Longfordshire*
Maxwell, Henry	*Cavan*
M'Clintock, John	*Louth*
Rochfort, Gust.	*Westmeath County*
Shirley, Evelyn J.	*Monaghanshire*
Stewart, sir Hugh, bt.	*Tyroneshire*
Valentia, viscount	*Wexfordshire*

BOROUGHS.

Bernard, viscount	*Bandonbridge*
Brydges, sir J. W. H.	*Coleraine*
Cole, hon. Arthur H.	*Enniskillen*
Coote, Eyre	*Clonmell*
Dering, sir E. C.	*Wexford*
Goulburn, rt. hon. Henry	*Armagh*
Handcock, Richard	*Athlone*
Lefroy, T.	*Dublin University*
Leslie, Chas. P.	*New Ross*
Meynell, Henry	*Lisburne*
Moore, George	*Dublin*
North, John H.	*Drogheda*
Ogle, sir Charles, bt.	*Portarlington*
Pennefather, Matthew	*Cashel*
Tullamore, lord	*Carlow*
Wynne, John	*Sligo*

TELLERS.

Gascoyne, Isaac	*Liverpool*
Chandos, marquis	*Bucks*

PAIRED OFF, in favour of the Bill.

Beaumont, Thomas W.	*Northumberland*
Burke, sir J.	*Galway*
Cholmondeley, lord H.	*Castle Rising*
Gordon, Robert	*Cricklade*
Heathcote, sir Gilbert, bt.	*Rutland*
King, H.	*Sligo*
Knox, J. J.	*Duncannon*
Loch, J.	*Kirkwall*
Newport, sir J.	*Waterford*
Sanford, Edward A.	*Somersetshire*
Smith, George	*Midhurst*
Tavistock, marquis of	*Bedfordshire*
Tufton, hon. H.	*Appleby*

PAIRED OFF, against the Bill.

Beresford, sir J. P. bt.	*Northallerton*
Borradaile, Rich.	*Newcastle-under-L.*
Bradshaw, R. H.	*Brackley*
Dickinson, William	*Somersetshire*
Houldsworth, T.	*Newton*
Knatchbull, sir Edw., bt.	*Kent*
Lyon, D.	*Beeralston*
Nicholl, rt. hon. sir John	*Bedwyn*
Peel, William Yates	*Yarmouth*
Roberts, W. A.	*Bewdley*
Smith, Thos. Assheton	*Andover*
Stuart, James	*Huntingdon*
Vaughan, John E.	*Wells*

HOUSE OF LORDS,
Wednesday, April 20, 1831.

Minutes.] Bills. Read a third time, Civil List. Read a second time, Post Office Sale.

Petitions presented. Against Reform, by the Earl of Kinnoull, from the Freeholders, Justices of the Peace, and Commissioners of Supply, of the County of Perth:—By the Duke of Gordon, from the Counties of Ross and Elgin:—By the Earl of Haddington, from Edinburgh. In favour of Reform, by the Marquis of Lansdown, from the Ward of Castle Baynard:—By Earl Grey, from Carnarvon, Fife, Reigate, Hastings, and eight other places:—By Earl Grosvenor, from the County of Chester, and from several other places. For the Abolition of Slavery, by Lord Auckland and Lord Suffield, upwards of 600 from various Places and Congregations of Protestant Dissenters.

Breach of Privilege — Case of "The Times."] Lord *King*.—My Lords, I have a Petition to present to your Lordships from the gentleman who was at the Bar of the House yesterday—I mean Mr. Lawson, the Printer of *The Times* newspaper, who is now in custody under your Lordships' order. I move that the petition be now read.

The petition was read by one of the clerks of the House as follows:—

"To the Right Honourable the Lords Spiritual and Temporal.

"The humble Petition of John Joseph Lawson, the Printer of *The Times*, now in custody,—

"Showeth,—That your petitioner feels the sincerest regret at having given offence to your right honourable House, and to the Earl of Limerick in particular, and craves pardon for the same; and humbly begs, in consequence of this acknowledgment of his error and regret, he may be set at liberty by your right honourable House.

"And your Petitioner will ever pray.

"John Joseph Lawson."

The Earl of *Limerick*.—My Lords, I know not whether it is necessary for me, after what I have already said on a previous occasion, again to repeat, that in bringing forward this subject, I have been actuated by no personal feeling or motive. I did it merely on the ground of what I considered a gross attack having been made, through an individual Member of it, upon your Lordships' House, by the publication in question. Having so done, and your Lordships having come to the decision that the paragraph complained of contained a gross libel on the individual who has the honour to address you, I conceive that I have done my duty towards your Lordships and myself. I declared at the time of bringing this subject under consideration, that which I now repeat—namely, that I sought not then (nor do I look now) for the infliction of any severe punishment whatever upon the individual concerned. I am, however, perfectly aware that for former offences of a nature similar to this, but inferior in point of atrocity, very severe punishments have been inflicted. My Lords, I can show that parties have been sent to Newgate for three months for matters much lighter than the present. There was put in my hands this morning a paper containing two precedents of very serious punishments for Breaches of Privilege. The first case is that of Flower, and the other is the case of Mr. Perry, the Editor of the *Morning Chronicle*. It occurred on the 21st and 22nd of March, 1798. There was something comical in this Breach of Privilege. I refer, of course, to the terms of the libel, which arose under these circumstances:—Some observations were made in the House of Lords on the late hours observed at the Opera, and on the fact of the amusements being sometimes continued, so as to push them into the Sunday morning; also upon the almost naked dresses of the ladies. In reference to this the *Morning Chronicle* made the following remarks; — "The House of Lords must now be admitted to be highly important as a political assembly notwithstanding it has of late appeared to be nothing more than a Chamber where the Minister's edicts are registered for form's sake. Some of their Lordships are determined to vindicate their importance. It is there that the dresses of the opera dancers are regulated! One of the Roman emperors recommended to the senate, when they were good for nothing else, to discuss what was the best sauce for a turbot. To regulate the length of a petticoat is a much more genteel employment." This paragraph having been brought under the consideration of the House, was declared to be a gross and scandalous libel, and a Breach of the Privileges of the House; and Mr. Perry, and Lambert, the Printer of the paper, were committed to Newgate for three months. My Lords, I merely mention this, to show your Lordships what were the feelings, and what the conduct of the House of Lords at the period referred to, in reference to facts not nearly so gross as the present; but at the same time that I refer to the precedent, I have no intention to push this question to an extremity of punishment, and whatever your Lordships may decide in relation to it will be perfectly acceptable to me, knowing as I do that your determination will be guided by justice, temper, and moderation.

The Earl of *Mansfield* said, he felt disposed to move, that the petition do lie upon the Table, and that it be taken into further consideration to-morrow.

Lord *King*.—I am sorry that the noble Earl has made that observation. According to the feeling of the House yesterday, when Mr. Lawson was called to the bar (if he had not declined to answer some questions put to him), the course to be pursued would have been to have had him reprimanded and discharged at that time. Following up the course which the opinion of the House seemed yesterday to dictate, I feel inclined to move, that the petitioner be now called to the bar, reprimanded, and discharged.

Earl *Bathurst* wished the House to be cleared.

The Earl of *Malmesbury*.—I cannot approve of the noble Lord's suggestion, because, so far from wishing to conceal our proceedings from the public, I hardly conceive it possible to give them sufficient publicity. I am one of those who are disposed to maintain your Lordships' privileges, but I feel confident that our privileges can be better maintained by public than by private discussions. With respect to the proceeding to be adopted in this case, I had a motion in my hand yesterday, that the Printer be called to the bar, reprimanded, and discharged. I propose that the noble Baron who presented the petition, should make a like motion to-morrow. It might be thought premature to make it to-day, as many Lords who were present yesterday may not be prepared to entertain it at this moment. Under all the circumstances of the case, I think it will be better for the noble Lord to give notice of motion for to-morrow.

Earl *Grey*.—I entirely agree with my noble friend who spoke last, that when we are called on to consider a case like the present, and to enter into the question of privilege, there is considerable advantage in having our proceedings more especially public. Let it be borne in mind that in making this remark I by no means say that cases may not arise for proceeding with closed doors, but, generally speaking, I am of opinion, that in order effectually to maintain the character, dignity, and privileges, of the House, it is better for your Lordships to proceed without any secresy whatever. I am the rather anxious to lay down this principle, as in many cases of privilege the House has been cleared, at the same time that in others a contrary, and as I think a better, course has been taken. In the case of a complaint of Breach of Privilege arising a short time ago out of a message sent by an individual to a noble Lord, which message was interpreted to be in the nature of a challenge, I objected to the House being cleared, as was proposed, stating that I thought it better that the proceedings should take place in public, and accordingly they were so conducted. It was upon the principle of expediency in that (as in the present case) that I recommended that the orders of the House for the exclusion of strangers should not be enforced. With respect to what is to follow, I feel inclined towards the course recommended by the noble Earl opposite. My Lords, I should feel inclined in the present case, taking into consideration all the circumstances of it, and recollecting the noble Earl's disposition not to enforce any extreme penalty (although he quoted examples of severity—for what purpose it is not for me to say), I say I should feel well contented to call Mr. Lawson to the bar immediately, to have him reprimanded by the Lord Chancellor, and then discharged in the usual manner, on payment of his fees. But perhaps with a view to conciliate unanimity of opinion, and for a reason stated by the noble Earl opposite, it may be better to adjourn the consideration of the Petition till to-morrow, on the understanding that the motion be then agreed to for calling the individual to the bar, and having him reprimanded for an offence which he has acknowledged, with an expression of contrition and regret at its occurrence. I trust that there will be no objection to the individual being then discharged, and that the discussion may terminate here.

The Marquis of *Londonderry*.—I confess, my Lords, I did understand, from the course yesterday taken, that it would be competent to any noble Lord, to deliver his sentiments on this subject in the event of the presentation of a petition, and to take the opportunity to state whether, in his opinion the punishment now proposed, or a greater punishment, should be inflicted. My Lords, when the resolution of the House is, that this individual, or the editor of the Paper, has been guilty of a scandalous libel, it appears to me that confinement for a short period and a reprimand are but small punishments for the offence. I am not the individual to urge a strong measure of punishment, but I think it should be stated distinctly, that if we are disposed on the present occasion to allow the individual to escape with a small mark of our displeasure, still if such practices be continued, and if the privileges and the dignity of the House be attacked in future, that we will not be satisfied with the infliction of a light punishment, but will take measures to bring forward the editor, and individuals really guilty; for I cannot believe, that the person who appeared at the bar was the real author of the libel. I say, my Lords, we must then proceed to discover and adequately punish the individual who masks himself under the unfortunate man at the bar. I would here observe, that if there are individuals connected together for the purpose of writing such offensive paragraphs in this or any other Papers, I trust they will, if they have any feelings at all, sustain bitter pangs within their minds, when, on this occasion, they see your Lordships reprimand their publisher and printer, who, perhaps, has been merely obliged to comply with the orders of his employers. My Lords, when I saw the noble and learned Lord on the Woolsack, who I thought should have been a defender of your privileges, rather than a supporter of their impugners—when I saw him last night placing himself between the House and such an offender, for the purpose of shielding the latter, I really was almost disposed to believe, that the noble and learned Lord was acting as counsel for a defendant in this proceeding.

The *Lord Chancellor.*—My Lords, I rise to order: at the same time I must say, that, personally, I have no objection to the noble Lord's course, so little do I dread its consequences. If I were the noble Lord's friend, I should dread the consequences to himself: he is perfectly at liberty, so far as I am concerned, to go on and make what exposition it may please him to make of me or of himself to your Lordships. I care not one rush for what the noble Lord can say—he may go on with his sarcasms, insinuations, or charges, as he pleases; but I would rather have the noble Lord's charges than his insinuations. I never use insinuations, I always bring direct charges; I would rather have the noble Lord's open hostility than his covert enmity. I am sure he is incapable of persisting in insinuations—the noble Lord has too much honour and high-mindedness for that: therefore, as the noble Lord has hinted something but charged nothing, I put myself on my defence before your Lordships and call upon the noble Lord to charge me with something.

The Marquis of *Londonderry.*—I beg the noble and learned Lord to believe, that no one has a higher respect than I have for his great and splendid talents; but with all his logic, and talents, and oratory, the noble and learned Lord shall not put me down, nor prevent me from discharging what I conceive to be my duty. The noble and learned Lord's great abilities and acquirements may often enable him

> "To make
> The worse appear the better reason."

He possesses commanding eloquence which carries every thing before it like a torrent, and an individual like myself can have but little chance in an encounter with him; but, pigmy as I am, I tell the noble Lord, that neither he nor any other person shall deter me from taking a proper course. I shall now continue the observations I was about to make when interrupted by the noble and learned Lord; and I must say, that I did expect the noble and learned Lord to have taken a different part on the occasion in question. The noble and learned Lord set out last night with telling your Lordships that there was no use in proceeding with the case; but the House came to a Resolution, *nemine contradicente*, directly against the noble and learned Lord's recommendation. What was the next step taken by the Lord Chancellor? The noble and learned Lord near me having proposed fine and imprisonment, the Chancellor again started up and opposed a punishment which, for my own part, I think would have been well applied in the present instance. The Lord Chancellor's opinion did weigh with your Lordships, and the proposition was abandoned. What I submit is, that the noble and learned Lord did not take the part which became him in reference to the gross outrage committed on the feelings of the noble Earl, and against the privileges of the House. These are the sentiments which I was about to give utterance to, when interrupted by the noble and learned Lord, and which I am not now ashamed to express. I shall now observe that the unfortunate individual who was yesterday at the bar, is not, in my opinion, the person most worthy of being visited with punishment. If the petition be brought up, I shall move for a copy of the affidavit deposited at the Stamp-office and containing a list of the names of the proprietors of *The Times*. I give notice of my intention to move for this document to-morrow, and I mean to have it produced, because I think we may thus find individuals to tell us at the bar who the real writers of those paragraphs are. Sure I am that Mr. John Joseph Lawson is not one of the writers; I am convinced that in this respect he is as innocent as myself. My Lords, I have so far stated my sentiments on this subject, and when the petition is brought up, or taken into further consideration, I shall also consider myself at full liberty to express my opinion. I beg the noble and learned Lord to believe that I am the last man in the world to fail in respect for his great talents, but if he thinks to overwhelm me by the torrent of his eloquence, he will find himself mistaken. I shall always stand up firmly for what I conceive to be right.

The *Lord Chancellor*.—I know not whether I should not better consult your Lordship's feelings and my own by taking no notice of what has been just uttered by the noble Lord, in one of the most extraordinary speeches which I have ever heard; but I am desirous of setting myself right with your Lordships, and with the noble Marquis whose indignation we have witnessed without knowing the grounds of it. As for my reason for calling the noble Lord to order—it being the first, as it may perhaps be the last time in my life that I shall call any noble Lord to order under similar circumstances—I did so because he saw fit to stigmatise the conduct of an individual Peer, by saying that that individual had acted the part of an advocate or counsel for an offender, at a time when that offender was before him, as one of the Judges of the highest Court in the kingdom.

The Marquis of *Londonderry*.—One word in explanation. I meant to convey and, indeed, said, that the conduct of the noble and learned Lord was such as almost to make me believe that the noble and learned Lord was the advocate of a defendant.

The *Lord Chancellor*—My Lords, able and skilful orators, like the noble Marquis frequently have a cunning way of rendering it difficult to get at their meaning according to the known and ordinary acceptation of the terms which they employ, they wrap up and mystify so successfully; but I, as your Lordships well know, am a plain man, and I say, without any subtlety or refinement, that the noble Lord's mode of expressing himself, even now, is such as would almost make me believe that he meant to insinuate that my conduct on the occasion in question was more worthy of a hired advocate than of an impartial Judge, sitting in the highest Court in the realm. My Lords, the noble Marquis is quite right in not allowing any man to prevent him from doing what he conceives to be his duty; far be it from me to attempt to make the noble Lord refrain from any given proceeding, or to impede or obstruct him in the discharge of his parliamentary duty; but what I beg him to do for his own sake, seeing he has hinted a complaint, for my sake, and for the sake of the dignity of your Lordships' House (of the privilege of which he is so staunch an upholder), is, that if he has any charge, in connexion with this subject, against me, or any other Member of the House, to state it in an open, manly, and straight-forward way. The charge which the noble Lord has insinuated is, that in respect of the individual who yesterday appeared at the bar, I played almost the part of an advocate, although that person was admitted to have committed a breach of privilege, and that, to the noble Lord's great and unmixed astonishment, instead of taking the part of the House, and siding against the culprit, I went with the offender, and against the House, upon a matter declared, *nemine dissentiente*, says the noble Lord (and if declared without dissent, then must even I have been a party to the declaration), to be a gross infringement of privilege—a false and scandalous libel. Now just look at the noble Lord's argument: the noble Lord says I sided with the culprit, and unfairly endeavoured to bring him off; yet it appears I agreed to the proposition for declaring the paragraph a gross and scandalous libel; so that, according to the noble Lord's reasoning, I must have been a party to the rejection of my own plan. But the noble Marquis has given a very imperfect account of the transaction, considering that I myself stated to your Lordships, whatever might be my advice, founded on experience, as to the expediency of your Lordships not getting much deeper in the difficulty created by prosecuting this breach of privilege, that at all events, if you were disposed to go on, it was quite a matter of course that your decision must be against the accused, it being perfectly evident that the article complained of was a breach of privilege. Whether this was an abandonment of the privileges of your Lordships' House (and the noble Lord accuses me of abandoning them) I know not; I leave it to your Lordships to determine. Having, in the outset, expressed my opinion as to the character of the offence, I only offered my advice—advice that might have been dictated through imprudence, as to the result of getting into unnecessary discussions on the privileges of your Lordships' House, discussions which can tend to nothing less than to the support of your privileges and dignity. Nothing has passed this night in the face of the public, any more than last night behind the backs of the public, to alter my opinion as to the inexpediency of these discussions. But I was the first to declare myself a friend to the maintenance of the privileges and dignity of the House, and I was also the first to advise such a course to be adopted as might render every measure to be taken in this proceeding a measure sanctioned by the unanimity of the whole House. As has been stated, when fine and imprisonment were proposed, I entreated the noble and learned Lord who suggested them, not to press the proposition, which, by the way, was never formally made, but only thrown out for consideration. It is only justice to the noble and learned Lord to admit, that he was under the impression that fine and imprisonment were the least punishments that had ever been inflicted under similar circumstances, and upon that account only the noble and learned Lord proposed them. But that I should ever agree with the noble Marquis to fine a man 100*l.* and commit him to Newgate for six months, for a breach of privilege such as this, is altogether impossible. I must first have this question of your Lordships' privileges debated at length. I must open up the question of the right of the House to imprison for six months and inflict a fine—it may be of 10,000*l.*—on an individual, tried by no jury, and defended by no counsel, because a noble Lord may complain of his feelings being injured by a newspaper paragraph. Why, my Lords, if such a principle were to be admitted, one noble Lord would complain of one newspaper, another would direct your attention to a breach of privilege in a second, and the practice might be extended till your Lordships' House would be converted into an Inquisition instead of a Court of Justice. My Lords, before I can admit such a principle, I must have this matter argued; and if the noble Marquis thinks it a mere motion of course, that the King's subjects shall be sentenced to imprisonment and fines, he is very much mistaken, and will find, that every time such a thing shall be proposed, he and I must meet and battle, first, the point of law, secondly, the point of privilege; and if, upon these points, the right of fine and imprisonment be established, then we must dispute the point of justice to the public, of humanity to the individual, and of prudence and discretion in your Lordships. For these reasons, and because I am a friend to the character, privileges, and dignity of this House, and desirous of upholding them, and not that I act the part of counsel to an offender against your Lordships' privileges, I shall give my vote for the measure that will soonest get rid of the difficulty, and it is no fault of mine that it has been created.

The Marquis of *Londonderry.*—My Lords, I wish to say a few words in explanation, and though I may be supposed to be writhing under the eloquence of the noble and learned Lord, I still think I am able to answer one or two points of his speech. As to the charge which he says I brought against him, I certainly did state that the noble and learned Lord's course in the matter, and the arguments which he used, put me in mind of an advocate; and it appeared to me, that if the noble and learned Lord had really been arguing the case in the capacity of counsel for the criminal, he could not have spoken with more zeal or eloquence on his behalf. As to the noble and learned Lord's not upholding the privileges of the House, my remark is fully justified by the speech which he has just delivered; for in the latter part of it he appears to doubt the existence of those privileges. If the noble and learned Lord doubts them, I do not; and I must say, I should much rather have heard the sentiments which he has uttered on the subject expressed by any one rather than by him. I think the privileges of the House go much further than the noble and learned Lord seems to imagine, and I am sorry for the latter part of his argument, because, being of opinion that fine and imprisonment may be justly inflicted by the House, I am sorry to see the fact questioned by such an authority as the noble and learned Lord.

Lord *Wynford.*—I am much obliged to my noble and learned friend for his explanation of what fell from me on this subject last night. What I said upon that occasion has been altogether misunderstood. I never moved, that fine and imprisonment should be inflicted; I did not propose that fine and imprisonment should be inflicted on Mr. Lawson, but I proposed that what the noble Lord on the cross-bench threw out on the subject of fine should be adopted; and, as usual in all such cases, that the party should be imprisoned till the fine was paid, consistently with the practice adopted in all the Courts. But I never dreamt of uniting the two punishments of fine and imprisonment and I never thought of inflicting a fine till the person at the bar had refused to disclose who was the party concerned in the publication in question. I certainly thought that his refusal, and his putting himself upon his confidential situation, in justification of that refusal, had aggravated the case, and on that account I proposed a fine. The noble and learned Lord on the Woolsack, although he did not directly dispute the authority of the House to inflict fine and imprisonment, appeared disposed to throw some doubt upon it. For my own part, I should tremble to hazard an opinion contrary to that of the noble and learned Lord upon this or any other subject, were I not fortified by some decided authority. Such an authority does exist in the present instance: I allude to the case of "The King and Flower;" the defendant having been committed by the House, applied to the Court of King's Bench by *Habeas Corpus*, and no case was ever argued with greater ability than this by the defendant's counsel; yet the Court, without hearing any answer, at once confirmed the authority of Parliament. This decision sets at rest the question of right, and I thought it due to the House to quote it, as the privilege seems to have been questioned by my noble and learned friend. But although I stand up for the power of the House, and insist upon its authority to fine and imprison, I would disclaim any intention of acting up to the extent of the power, or any thing like it: on the contrary, I shall be quite content with whatever may be done on this occasion, which, in the opinion of those more conversant than so young a Member of the House can possibly be with the practice and privilege of Parliament, shall appear fit.

The Marquis of *Lansdown.*—I think that this case should be disposed of at the time proposed by the noble Lord, and, if possible, with a complete unanimity of feeling on the part of the House; and I am happy to collect, that there is at present but little difference of opinion as to the course which it may be ultimately expedient to adopt. What I protested against last night was, the principle of bringing an individual to the bar without sufficient notice. I have not expressed any opinion as to the existing authority of the House, but I said that upon a question on which great doubts had been thrown, we ought not to come to a resolution hastily, or act upon the feeling of the moment, when we might afterwards wish that our resolution had been adopted after better and more mature consideration. It is but justice to the noble and learned Lord opposite, to admit that his proposition was not persisted in. The first feeling —namely, that the individual at the bar should be called up and reprimanded—was abandoned, on a comparison of his case with one which had recently occurred, and in which a similar course was taken. It was thought, that what was considered sufficient punishment in the one case might be too light in the other: besides, in the case of the individual who had received the reprimand, the party was brought, at a considerable expense to himself, from Ireland, so that the punishment was greater than it could be in the present instance. Upon that consideration, and also in reference to a doubt whether Mr. Lawson's apology to the House, and to the noble Earl, was sufficiently ample, the idea of reprimanding and discharging him last night was abandoned. But now both objections appear to be got rid of. The individual has been subjected to some further confinement, and may be retained in custody till to-morrow. The petition, which has been read, expressing his deep regret at having failed in respect to the House, and to the noble Earl whose feelings have been hurt on this occasion, seems to be ample. Thus, both pleas, the inadequacy of the punishment and the want of a proper apology, have been removed, and under these circumstances, I put it to your Lordships, whether the more reasonable and lenient course will not be, to direct Mr. Lawson to attend at the bar to-morrow, in which case he can be reprimanded and discharged. In these proceedings, my Lords, I can most readily concur; but, my Lords, I beg to state now, that if any noble Lord shall to-morrow propose to carry the matter any farther than this, I shall most certainly oppose the proposition of that noble Lord.

Earl *Bathurst.*—I rise, my Lords, merely to observe, that even if the proposition for taking this discussion with closed doors can justify the imputation which has been made by the noble Earl opposite, still I think that it would have been far better if such a proposition had been acceded to. I am far from contending that it is always necessary that your doors should be closed upon every discussion respecting the privileges of your Lordships; but I do say, that when you have to debate a complaint of libel, or an imputation of libel, or other matter of the like nature, it would be much better, in my opinion, to deal with such things with closed doors. I am sorry, therefore, that the order of your Lordships was not enforced to-day; and after what we have heard, I believe that I am addressing very few indeed among your Lordships who do not concur with me in that expression of regret, and who are not now, whatever they might have thought at first, of opinion that it would have been much better to have taken this discussion with closed doors.

Earl *Grey* said, I am sure, my Lords, it will be in the recollection of your Lordships, that I only differed from the noble Lord as to the propriety of excluding strangers. The ground of my opposing the exclusion of strangers is this, namely, that I do not think that it is to the advantage of the privileges of your Lordships, and much less to the dignity and the character of your Lordships, to take such a discussion as this with closed doors. I did not, however, my Lords, throw any imputation, even the most distant, upon noble Lords who took a contrary view of the manner in which, upon such occasions, the privileges, the dignity, and the character of your Lordships would be best consulted.

Lord *Tenterden* said (as far as he could be understood, for his Lordship spoke in a very low tone)—My Lords, after what has fallen from the noble and learned Lord on the Woolsack, I think myself bound to inform your Lordships, that it is the constant practice of all Courts of law, in inflicting a fine, to add to that infliction this farther term—namely, that the party fined shall be imprisoned until that fine be paid. I speak, my Lords, of the superior Courts in Westminster-hall; and I am sure that instances of this practice will be found in all of those Courts. Now, my Lords, I cannot bring myself to think, that while the Courts of Westminster-hall possess this privilege, it can properly be denied to your Lordships. In what cases, under what circumstances, and to what extent, your Lordships should exercise that privilege, is quite another question, and one upon which I do not propose to say one word; but I must declare, that I think the right of your Lordships to the exercise of that privilege is clear, distinct, and indisputable. And why, my Lords, was this power conferred? It was conferred, my Lords, not for the protection of those who possess it—not for the sake of the House of Lords—not for the sake of the House of Commons—not for the sake of the Courts of law, all of whom are in equal possession of the power—but for the sake of the nation at large, for whose welfare and well-government it was absolutely necessary, that all men should be taught to pay due reverence to the great legislative council of the kingdom, and to those tribunals of justice in which the laws of the land are administered. These, my Lords, are the reasons why the two Houses of Parliament, and why Courts of law, possess this power; these are the reasons why each of them ought to possess it: and I am quite sure that if they, and especially the two Houses of Parliament, did not possess this power of vindicating themselves, it would be impossible that their respective duties could be performed with dignity to themselves, or with advantage to the country.

The *Lord Chancellor* said—My Lords, I am once more compelled to embark in this unfortunate discussion. I say compelled, because, after what has fallen from my noble friend, the Lord Chief Justice, upon the subject of parliamentary law, I feel myself under the necessity, the absolute necessity, for the sake of the dignity and the character of Parliament—for the sake of the country and of the subjects of the King, as well as out of kindness to my noble friend,—first of all to set my noble friend right upon a point of so much importance; and, next, to give my noble friend an opportunity of reconsidering what he has said, and then of explaining himself to your Lordships. I have said, my Lords—and I repeat it now once more—that I do very much doubt the existence of this power with which your Lordships are said to be invested, and to which some of your Lordships appear to cling with so much and such fond tenacity; and, my Lords, if I do entertain this doubt, I have at least the consolation of knowing that I am countenanced in my scepticism by some of the very highest constitutional authorities, and by some of the greatest lawyers, as well constitutional as general lawyers, that ever the Bar produced, or that ever adorned the Senate, or that ever added weight and dignity to the Bench. But, my Lords, in spite of the support which I receive from such great and learned men, I believe that I am quite wrong, and I believe so, my Lords, because you tell me so. True it is, my Lords, that you are judges in your own cause, and if I do not raise any argument upon that as between your Lordships and myself, with regard to the existence of this power, yet, let me tell your Lordships, that the fact of your being judges in your own cause ought to make you very slow to exercise this power: for though you will always be the judges in your own cause in matters of this description, if you possess this power, yet, let me tell you, that you will not always be what judges ought to be—calm, temperate, dispassionate, disinterested, and just judges; but yet, without these essential qualifications of judges, destitute of the only qualifications which can ensure a fair administration of justice, and being, moreover, at once a party to, and the judges of, the cause, your course of proceeding will be, to drag a man to your bar against whom there has been no indictment, to tell him what charges are made against him—to whom you allow no counsel to advise with him, either with regard to matter of fact or matter of law—whose defence, be it what it may, will be deemed good or bad according to your opinions, and not according to any other criterion: and upon this man, so situated, you will, without deliberation, and under a sense of wounded dignity, proceed to pass what sentence you may please to pass, for the sentence will be regulated by your pleasure and by nothing else; or if by any thing else, by some precedent laid down by men who before your times have appeared in the same character of party, accuser, and judge—whose object may have been punishment, not justice—who may have been influenced, not by respect for your privileges, but by vindictiveness arising from some personal offence, and may perhaps have taken as little time as yourselves to allow their resentment to subside. And this, my Lords, this is the course by which you propose to vindicate your privileges, and to preserve the dignity and the character of your Lordships' House unsullied! I know very well, my Lords, that this is no reason against the possession of this power—I mean no reason for saying that you have it not; but I think it may perhaps be a very good reason why you ought never to have had it: and surely, my Lords, it is a reason as strong as it ought to be convincing—surely, my Lords, it is the very best possible reason why you should abstain from the exercise of that power: surely, my Lords, it is the very best possible reason why you should have taken that advice which I took the liberty to tender to you—to tender to you for the sake of your privileges, and not for the sake of violating your privileges—namely, that you should abstain from the exercise of such a power, except in cases of imminent and absolute necessity. Now my noble friend the Lord Chief Justice may be very right—and I know your Lordships think he is—in saying that you have this power; but he cannot be right in the reasons which he has given for the possession of that power. Let him be quite right in saying that you have the power, but he must be quite wrong in the reasons which he has assigned for saying that you have it. What were those reasons? I heard them, my Lords, with wonder and amazement. He tells you, that because the Courts of law in Westminster-hall have the power to fine and imprison, so also must the Houses of Lords and Commons have that power. Good God! my Lords, who ever heard till this moment—when were you ever told till this day, when you have been told it by a Lord Chief Justice of England—that the House of Commons has the right to inflict fines and imprisonment upon his Majesty's subjects in vindication of their privileges? No one who knows any thing about the law and the constitution of the country can hesitate for a moment in saying that the Lord Chief Justice is grievously in error here; and until I am told by my noble friend, in terms the most clear and the most explicit, I will not believe that he is prepared to defend and justify in law what he has thus said; for he has thereby conferred upon the House of Commons a power, which none of his least-learned, none of his worst, none of his most corrupt, none of his least calm, his least temperate, or his least respectable, predecessors, ever dreamt of arming the Commons with. But I may be doing the Lord Chief Justice wrong; he may think, in conformity with the reasons he has given, that the House of Commons has this power though it does not exercise it, for upon that, at least—the non-exercise of it—there can be no doubt. And if so, perhaps my noble friend thinks that the Commons have the power of examining upon oath as well as your Lordships, and that your Lordships and the Commons participate equally and reciprocally in all the privileges and powers incident to each. It is quite clear, however, that my noble friend supposes that the Speaker of the House of Commons may summon a man to the bar of the House, fine him 100*l.*, and imprison him till the fine be paid. Yes, this must have been the opinion of my noble friend, which I hereby give him an opportunity of retracting, as I have no doubt he will; for, upon reflection, my noble friend must see that that opinion is utterly untenable, although his whole argument was intended to support and demonstrate it—that argument being, that as the Courts in Westminster-hall had the power, so also must the Houses of Lords and Commons have it. My Lords, I have been dragged into this discussion—I have been compelled to say this; for, as a Member of this House, and filling the situation which I have the honour to hold, I could not, consistently with my duty as a Member of this House, or consistently with the character of the office which I fill, hear the Lord Chief Justice of England—no slight authority on a point of law—make this exposition of parliamentary law without at once contradicting it. If my noble friend, the Lord Chief Justice, adheres to this opinion, let him make a motion upon the subject, and bring his store of legal research to bear upon it, and support it if he can. Let him do this, and if, in doing this, he should succeed in persuading your Lordships that the House of Commons has this power and privilege—and I should not be at all surprised if he did persuade your Lordships of it—your Lordships will have the satisfaction of knowing that you have, by the sanction of your Lordships' high authority, invested the House of Commons with a power which the stoutest friend of parliamentary privileges never before ventured to arrogate to the Commons House of Parliament.

Lord *Tenterden* said—My Lords, I never was a Member of the House of Commons, and therefore I must be far inferior in the means of information on this subject to my noble and learned friend on the Woolsack, who was for so long a time one of the most distinguished ornaments of that House. I spoke from recollection—it may be from imperfect recollection—but I was strongly impressed with the notion that there were instances in which the House of Commons had exercised this power. I was mistaken, I dare say: but with regard to this House, I think there can be no doubt that it has the power.

The *Lord Chancellor.*—I am very glad that I have given my noble and learned friend an opportunity of making this explanation, because these things, though very familiar to Members of the House of Commons, may not be so well known here, where still there can be no inconvenience in having them understood. The fact is, that the House of Commons has the power of commitment, but not for any certain time; they have the power to commit as a means of removing an obstruction; but the confinement of the person so committed can last no longer than the end of the Session. The House of Lords, on the other hand, being a Court of Justice—a Court of record—nay, the highest Court of justice—is said to have the power of committing for a time certain, and of fining; but that power has been disputed by many sound lawyers, and especially by Sir Arthur Pigot, who was one of those who denied that the House of Lords had the power of committing for a time certain. I know very well that the Court of King's Bench has decided otherwise.

Lord *King* said—As it appears to be the opinion of your Lordships that this matter should be postponed till to-morrow, I will not press that Mr. Lawson should be called to the bar to-day. I should have thought it would have been much better, and much more convenient, to have disposed of the matter at once; but still I will not urge my own opinion in opposition to that of your Lordships.

The Earl of *Haddington* said—I thought at first, and I still think, that the noble Earl who introduced this subject, and your Lordships who took it up, have acted quite properly. Still, however, I concur with the noble Lord who has just sat down, in the opinion that it would be much better to finish the matter at once, than to postpone it till another day. I think that the object has now been attained. However, if this proposition of mine is to create any considerable difference among your Lordships, I will not say another word about it. If the question were, whether Mr. Lawson should receive some considerable punishment, or whether he should only be reprimanded, I agree that we ought to take time for consideration; but as I understand it to be settled, that your Lordships do not propose to go farther than a reprimand, and that the only question is, whether that reprimand shall take place to-morrow or to-day, I must say, that I think it would be better if it were to take place to-day.

The Marquis of *Londonderry* conceived, that the better course would be, to postpone taking the petition into consideration till to-morrow. He congratulated their Lordships that the noble and learned Lord on the Woolsack was not at present so uncertain about their Lordships' privileges as at the beginning of the discussion.

The Lord Chancellor then put the question, "That the matter contained in this petition be taken into further consideration to-morrow."

Agreed to.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Wednesday, April 20, 1831.

Minutes.] Sir H. Parnell for Queen's County, and Colonel W. L. Maberly for Shaftesbury, took their seats.

Bills. Went through a Committee; Oaths before the Lord Steward. Printed Cottons. Read a third time; Money Payments Acts Repeal Bill.

Returns ordered. On the Motion of Mr. W. O'Brien, the Total Expense hitherto incurred in Building the New Bridge and Docks at Limerick, together with an Estimate of the amount required for their completion; the produce of the Tonnage Duties applicable under the provisions of the Limerick Bridge Act (4 Geo. 4th, c. 94) to the construction and maintenance of the Bridge and Docks; and any sums of money which may have been borrowed under the authority of the above Act; together with an account, in detail, of the manner in which the whole amount expended has been applied:—On the Motion of Mr. Hume, the Sums annually voted, and annually expended, during each of the last twelve years, for Building, Repairing, and Furnishing the Government House at Newfoundland; and a statement of the authority under which such expenditure has taken place; Copy of the original Estimate for such Works, an account of the sums expended, and a detail of the amount required to complete the Works; the number of persons appointed, and now acting to make Returns of sale of Corn, under the 7th and 8th George 4th, c. 58; stating the places where residing, the Salaries paid to each, and from what Fund paid:—On the Motion of Mr. Warburton, the Limits to the East and West, of the Port of Lyme, in Dorsetshire, and the Out-Stations comprehended in the said Port, and the distance of each Out-station from the Head-station; also, of the number of Officers employed in the collection of the Customs at the Head-station, and at each Out-station of the said Port, and the Name, Salary, and Emoluments of every such officer; also, of the number and aggregate Tonnage of Ships entered inwards and outwards, and cleared coastways, at the said Head-station, and each Out-station, during each of the last ten years, distinguishing the number and the aggregate Tonnage of the Ships above and below 100 tons; also, of the Imports and Exports, and the Duties upon Imports, at the said principal and Out-stations respectively, during each of the last ten years.

Petitions presented. Against the Grant to Maynooth College, by Mr. Hodgson, from Newcastle. By Mr. J. Wood, from certain Retail Dealers in Beer, for an extension of the time their houses might be kept open. For a Law to enable individuals to endow Churches, by Mr. Hughes Hughes, from the Clergy of the Diocese of Hereford. By Mr. W. O'Brien, from Lorne, in favour of Poor Laws for Ireland; and from Loughgilly, to compel men to provide for their illegitimate children. By Mr. Schonswar, from Hull, against the proposed Duty on Steam Boats; and for the Abolition of Fees on Vessels under Quarantine. By Mr. Baineridge, from the Inhabitants of Taunton, for the Abolition of the Punishment of Death. By Mr. Fardell, from Freeholders of Lincoln, against the Registry of Deeds Bill. By Mr. Hume, for the Repeal of Newspaper Stamp Duties, from Proprietors of Newspapers at Edinburgh; and from Mr. Ruspini, for the Repeal of the Stamp Duties on Medicines. For the Abolition of Slavery, by Colonel Tyrell, from Newport (Essex) Saffron Walden, Stansted and Chesterford. Against Reform, by Mr. Hodgson, from certain Inhabitants of South Shields:—By Mr. Mackinnon, from the Burgesses of Ipswich:—By Mr. Cornewall, from Bishops Castle:—By Colonel Grant, from Elgin:—By Sir C. Wetherell, from the Common Council of Norwich, and from Boroughbridge:—By Mr. Maxwell, from three Parishes in Ireland. In favour of Reform, by Mr. T. H. Foley, from Stourbridge, Worcestershire:—By Mr. Morison, from Banff:—By Lord Strathaven, from the County of Huntingdon:—By Mr. Jephson, from Whitechurch:—By Mr. Beaumont, three, from different places in the County of Northumberland:—By Colonel Powell, from Cardigan:—From Wickham, by Mr. Carter:—From Aberystwith, by Mr. Price:—By Mr. Hodges, from Brasted:—By Mr. Hume, from Wappen, Kensington, Brompton, Chigwell and Shaftesbury, and ten other places.

Reform Petitions.] Mr. *Bell* said, he had to present a Petition, which he considered of very great importance, from the county of Northumberland, against the proposed Reform Bill. It was signed by two right rev. Prelates, the Bishops of Exeter and Durham, by ten Peers, by sixty Gentlemen in the Commission of the Peace, and by a very large number—he would say about 2,700—of the Freeholders of the county of Northumberland. This petition, so numerously and respectably signed, formed a convincing proof, in his opinion, that the unanimity throughout the country, in favour of this measure, was not so complete as many people believed to be the case. The petitioners prayed, that this Bill should not pass into a law, because they were of opinion, that if it did so pass, it would be subversive of the best interests of this country. In their prayer, and in the propriety of their opinion, he perfectly concurred. He could not avoid expressing his disgust at the intimidation which had been held out for the purpose of compelling individuals to support this measure. He had not given way, and he should not give way, to any such intimidation; and if it were necessary, he would continue to offer his utmost opposition to every part of the measure. He had been taunted, as not being a Reformer. In answer to that he would say, that he was a moderate Reformer, but he could not support such a Reform as was now contemplated.

Mr. *Beaumont* did not mean to deny that the petition which had been presented by his hon. colleague was most respectably signed; but it would be wrong to give to it all the weight and importance which would be attached to a petition agreed to at a county meeting regularly convened. He considered the present petition as speaking the sentiments of the Duke of Northumberland, and not those of the county at large. When his hon. Colleague spoke of intimidation, he could not avoid alluding to the circular which had been sent round to the tenants of the noble Duke, and which had appeared in the public papers. He did not mean to assert that that circular had emanated from his Grace; but if it did not, his Grace's Commissioners had used his name in a way which he should suppose his Grace could not approve of. The circular ran thus:—

"The Duke's Commissioners send to Mr. ——, for his own and the signatures of the tenants of his bailiwick, counterparts of Addresses to the King and the two Houses of Parliament, in respect to the present Reform Bill, the originals of which his Grace has signed, and in the promotion of which, his Lordship desires activity may be used, as a return is expected in a few days; trusting that all persons connected with him will join in the prayer of the petitions, which their neighbours should have an opportunity of signing if they think fit. The Duke requires the names of tenants who do not sign, and hopes that they will not embark rashly in politics, if they wish to place confidence in his opinions, which can only be truly learnt through his Commissioners."

"*Commissioners'-office, Alnwick Castle,*
April 5th."

Now let the House look to the concluding paragraph—"The Duke requires the names of tenants who do not sign," and make their own comment on it. Could any man, either in or out of doors, suppose that this list was called for merely to be left on his Grace's breakfast-table, without any intention of making further use of it? Having seen this document in *The Times*, he had written to a friend in the country on the subject, and he answered in these terms:—"I have not seen *The Times*; but the conduct of the agents and sub-agents is such as *The Times* could scarcely misrepresent. The tenants and under-tenants have been called on to sign; but it is a complete failure. They have got 2,700 signatures of men, women, and children; for wives and daughters signed for husbands and fathers." He greatly lamented that the noble Duke should have descended from the high station which he held to countenance such proceedings. He repeated, that the petition spoke not the sentiments of the county, but those of the Duke of Northumberland.

Sir *H. Hardinge* said, when he saw that this petition was signed by a great majority of the nobility—when no less than sixty Magistrates had affixed their signatures to it, and 2,700 freeholders, he could not but consider it as a county petition of the most respectable character. With respect to the document to which the hon. Member had called the attention of the House, he could state, most distinctly and positively, that the Duke of Northumberland never saw that document until it appeared in *The Times* newspaper. The Commissioners considered that circular as a private and confidential communication; but a copy of it had been procured improperly, and sent to a newspaper at Alnwick. With respect to that part of the circular which expressed a hope "that parties would not embark rashly in politics if they wished to place confidence in his (the Duke's) opinions, which could only be truly learnt through his Commissioners," it arose from the following circumstance:—It was found that at the very Castle of Alnwick, an individual who had been an agent to a noble Lord (Howick), when he stood for the county, actually applied for, and obtained the signatures of a great number of individuals, some of them belonging (he might say) to the Duke's household, to a petition for Reform,—that person declaring, that it was a petition which would receive the Duke's approbation, and that by signing it they would shew their loyalty to the King, and regard for the Constitution. Therefore it was, that the Commissioners had conceived it to be their duty to state, "that the noble Duke's opinions could be only truly learnt through his Commissioners." They had been forced to take this step in consequence of the unfair means which had been resorted to by the other side, in procuring signatures to the Reform petition. He could proudly refer to the noble Duke's strictly honourable and impartial conduct in Ireland; he could refer to the munificent disinterestedness with which he relinquished 10,000*l.* a-year of his salary; he could refer to the whole course and tenour of his life, as affording sufficient evidence to repel the idea that he had ever improperly or unjustly interfered with the opinions of his tenantry.

Mr. *Beaumont* said, he had carefully abstained from making any charge against the noble Duke, because he could not prove that he had participated in the publication of the circular. He threw the whole *onus* on the Commissioners, not on the noble Duke.

Mr. *Cornewall* reminded the hon. Member, that he had expressed his regret that the noble Duke should have descended from his high station to countenance such a proceeding.

Mr. *Beaumont* was obliged to his hon. friend for having reminded him of the circumstance, and he was sorry that such an observation had inadvertently slipped from him.

Mr. *Hodgson* observed, that undoubtedly there was in the county of Northumberland a considerable division of opinion on this subject.

Mr. *Bell* took that occasion to observe, that he had not described the petition as emanating from a county meeting, but as a petition of great importance, being signed by many of the most influential persons in the county.

Petition to be printed.

Mr. *Cutlar Ferguson* presented a Petition from Kirkcudbright in favour of Reform. The hon. Member observed, that at the meeting at which this petition was agreed to, which was most respectable, the numbers were twenty-four at each side, and the casting vote was given in favour of this petition, which supported the principle of the Bill introduced by Government (for Scotland), although it differed from some of its details.

Sir *G. Murray* admitted the great respectability of the petitioners, but said, that the majority of the wealth and education of Scotland were against the Bill.

Mr. *Kennedy* maintained, that the people of Scotland were in favour of the Bill. Out of thirty counties, nineteen had already expressed opinions favourable to the Bill.

Sir *George Clerk* was sure, that the opinions of the people of Scotland were not in favour of the Bill. He admitted, that there were faults in the representation of Scotland, but the proposed Bill was the most ill-digested production that ever was offered to the House in shape of a law.

Sir *C. Forbes* wished to know of the right hon. Gentleman, the Secretary for Ireland and the learned Lord the member for Malton, what they would have done for seats in that House but for the close boroughs which had elected them. He hoped that would reconcile these Gentlemen to those places of refuge. He could not avoid recurring to the disturbances in Scotland, which he contended were the result of the excitement caused by the Bill.

Sir *R. Vyvyan* deprecated such discussions on the presentation of petitions. If the practice were adhered to of debating minor points only of local interest on presenting petitions, it would be impossible to get through the business of the House, or to have time for presenting the petitions of the people, unless the time fixed for receiving them was enlarged, which he hoped it would be this evening.

Petition to lie on the Table.

Mr. *J. Wood* presented a petition from Preston, signed by 2,400 persons. He was sorry he was obliged to present the petition in the absence of his hon. colleague. The meeting at which the petition was agreed to, was called by the mayor; only two persons spoke against the Reform Bill, upon the ground of its not going far enough; and when the question was put, only a few hands were held up against the question. He therefore had a right to assume that the petition spoke the sentiments of the electors of Preston. He also had a petition to present from the Manchester Political Union, in favour of the Bill. The petition was signed by the Chairman and Secretary of the Union, who were present at the meetings which his hon. colleague had attended, and they stated, that the petition expressed the sentiments of 600,000 of the working classes, residing in Manchester and its vicinity. He had also received numerous letters expressing surprise at the statement which had been made by his hon. colleague respecting the feelings of the working classes with respect to the Reform Bill.

Mr. *Fyler* said, he had received a communication from the Spitalfields weavers, expressing their indignation at the statement which had been made by the hon. member for Preston (Mr. Hunt). He was also authorized to say, that the freemen of Coventry were willing to surrender their own privileges for what they conceived to be a national advantage.

Mr. *Littleton* said, he had received a petition, very numerously signed by the working classes of Darlaston, the town which was visited by the hon. member for Preston. The petitioners expressed their strong surprise at the description which had been given of their conduct by that hon. Member. An advertisement had appeared in a Birmingham newspaper, containing the resolutions passed at a meeting of the working classes and he knew from that advertisement that the meeting came to a resolution declaring Mr. Hunt deserving of their censure.

SUPPLY. — ORDNANCE ESTIMATES.] On the motion of Mr. Tennyson, the House went into a Committee of Supply. In the Committee, on the motion of Mr. Tennyson, the following sums were voted without opposition; 5,210*l.* to defray the expense of pay and allowances to seventy six master gunners at the garrisons and batteries in Great Britain, Guernsey, Jersey, and in Ireland, for the year 1831: 81,328*l.* to defray the expense of the royal engineers, sappers and miners: 278,436*l.* to defray the expense of the royal regiment of artillery: 36,216*l.* to defray the expense of the royal horse artillery and riding house troop: 1,223*l.* to defray the expense of the Director-general of the artillery and field-train department: 9,218*l.* to defray the expense of the medical establishment for the military department of the Ordnance: 3,402*l.* to defray the expense of the establishment of the professors, masters, &c. of the Royal Military Academy at Woolwich: 64,200*l.* to defray the expense of the superintendence and management of ordnance and barrack works and repairs: 391,965*l.* to defray the expense of ordnance and barrack works and repairs in the Store-keeper's departments; but, after deducting 296,182*l.* for rents, sale of old stores, and unexpended sums of former grants, 95,783*l.*: and 64,389*l.* to defray the expense of Barrack-masters' expenditure, &c. in Great Britain, Ireland, and the Colonies. On the vote for granting 146,219*l.* to defray the expense of military and civil contingencies, stores, &c. being moved,

Mr. *Hume* said, that, for the first and only time in his life, he perfectly acquiesced in the estimate of the year for this service, for it was all in vain now, after what had occurred last night, to expect that any thing would be conducted in the way of business, satisfactorily by a House constituted as it was proved to be, by the two trials of strength between the two great parties in that House, which had been run neck and neck on each occasion. It was, therefore, to be hoped this state of things would be put an end to by a prompt dissolution, and they would all be sent back to their constituents, when, no doubt, a Parliament would be returned which might effect something for the public good, and not take up important public measures in the light of party questions.

Colonel *Trench*, alluding to the savings which had been alleged to have been made in this department by the present Ministers since their accession to power, believed they could not be fairly taken at more than 4,000*l.* or 5,000*l.* sterling, whilst the hon. Member had been silent on the very important saving which had been accomplished in this department last year by his predecessor, amounting to above 47,000*l.*

Mr. *Tennyson* said, he was in hopes he should be able to propose a reduction in next year's estimates larger than that which he felt authorised in proposing on this occasion. He believed the saving this year would be found to be full 5,000*l.*

Sir *Henry Hardinge*, from intimate acquaintance with the subject, would take upon himself to correct the statement made by the hon. Member, and state his opinion that the real saving to the public in this year's estimates would not be found to exceed 3,000*l*. He should not oppose the vote.

Vote agreed to. The following sums were also voted; 27,974*l*. to defray the expense of services performed by the office of Ordnance, and not provided for by Parliament, in the year 1830: 69,930*l*. to defray the charge of the military store branch for Great Britain, Ireland and the Colonies: 1,600*l*. to defray the expense of Exchequer fees: 297,116*l*. to defray the charge of the military superannuated and half-pay retired General Officers, &c.: 60,116*l*. to defray the charge of superannuated civil servants: 535*l*. to pay Exchequer fees on the superannuated allowance.

House resumed.

ADMINISTRATION OF JUSTICE (IRELAND).] The House then went into Committee on the Administration of Justice in Ireland Bill, on the Motion of Mr. Crampton.

Mr. *Ruthven* wished to take that opportunity to say a few words on the abuses of Sheriffs in empanelling Juries in Ireland. He could shew, by a reference to the Reports already laid on the Table of the House, that parties were continually obliged to purchase an exemption from serving as Jurors. The evidence of Mr. John Dodd, a Dublin auctioneer, proved that Sheriffs, on some occasions, received compliments of 50*l*. and 60*l*. for certain indulgences by them extended to the donors in return. He would take this opportunity of stating, that he had lately received a communication from a gentleman in Ireland, whose feelings it appeared were wounded by the observations which he had made upon this subject already, and he much regretted that any thing he had uttered should have been productive of annoyance to any one; but he could by no means consent to retract a word of what had fallen from him during the debate alluded to, for he had made no strictures whatever which were not fully justified by the information on which he acted, nor had he been, in any degree, influenced by personal considerations.

Mr. *Crampton* disclaimed being an apologist for any one abuse, whether public or private, whether in the Sheriff's-office in Ireland, in the administration of the laws, or in the rotten boroughs, of which he trusted so soon to witness the disfranchisement. The Special Jury system was not indeed quite so bad as it had been represented. At the same time, he admitted, that the system might want amendment, and to its amendment he should be ready to contribute his exertions. He had further to observe, that the statements to which the hon. Member had alluded were *ex-parte* statements against the individual to whom they referred, and it was scarcely fair to make them the grounds of a charge against a gentleman who had no notice of the intended accusation, and, consequently, was not prepared to defend himself.

Sir *C. Wetherell*, with all due deference for the learning and station of the hon. Gentleman who filled the office of Solicitor General for Ireland, deprecated in the strongest terms his very ill-timed and unwarrantable allusion to what he was pleased to call rotten boroughs. The allusion on this occasion was equally uncalled for and out of place, and, he must say, did but little credit to the hon. and learned Gentleman's prudence and good sense.

Mr. *Leader* observed, that the most odious abuses were daily taking place in the Sheriff's-office in Ireland, and he hoped, ere long, to witness their effectual and permanent abolition.

Mr. *Jephson* wished to call the attention of the learned Solicitor General for Ireland to the inconvenient operation of the Registry Act, and requested to know whether it was likely that any legislative measure would be applied to remedy the evil.

Mr. *Rice* said, that the reason why the abuses in the Register's Office had not hitherto been rectified, was the difference between two Minutes drawn up by the Treasury in consequence of a report on this subject, which made it difficult to decide upon which it would be preferable to proceed. A further Report on the subject had, however, lately been laid upon the Table, which so far disembarrassed the Government on that point as to enable him to state, that an effective remedy would be brought forward with as little further loss of time as possible.

Bill read a second time.

REFORM—OPINIONS OF THE HUMBLER CLASSES.] Mr. *Lennard* presented a Petition, which had been adopted at a public meeting of the Freemen of the Borough of Maldon, resident in London, in favour of the Reform which had been proposed by the Government. The petition was peculiarly entitled to attention, as coming from persons whose personal interests and rights would be so materially affected by the measure in question. The petitioners stated truly, that the number of non-resident freemen of the borough of Maldon very far exceeded those of any other borough in the kingdom; but, so far from grounding on this circumstance any claim in their own favour, of exemption from the general provisions of the Bill, they state that they cheerfully sacrifice all personal considerations for the public good. He thought this petition highly honourable to his constituents; and he must claim for them the same praise which had been so justly bestowed on the Duke of Norfolk, Lord Cleveland, and others, who had declared their willingness to sacrifice their own interests in favour of the great measure of Reform which had been introduced by the Government. He hoped that the petition he had the honour of presenting would tend to satisfy the hon. member for Preston, that there were many persons favourable to the Reform Bill besides those who derived a particular and private benefit from it. There were some of his constituents who were deprived of a valuable privilege by it, and who yet, on public grounds, were anxious to give it their support—a conduct which he thought highly creditable to them.

Mr. *Hunt* gave very little credit either to those members of the aristocracy or of the middle classes who now came forward by compulsion in support of this measure. As to the great body of the people, he maintained that they would derive no advantage whatever from it.

Mr. *Hume* deprecated the course adopted by the hon. member for Preston, who had gone on maligning the views and feelings of the people. He utterly denied, that those persons among the upper classes who had now stood forward as the advocates of Reform were actuated by the unworthy motives imputed to them by the hon. Member. He knew it to be a fact that, long before the present measure was thought of, many of those persons had shown themselves ready to do all that they had since done. He was assured that several petitions would be presented to the House from the operative classes, denying, and utterly disclaiming, the representations made respecting them by the hon. Member.

Mr. *Hunt* must still contend, that the Bill excluded the great body of the people from any practical benefit. A great deal was said about his having misrepresented the views and feelings of the working classes, and he understood that the hon. member for Stafford had a petition to present from Darlaston on the subject. With regard, however, to such petitions, he set very little value upon them. He would engage, on any day in the week, to get one or two petitions up, with double the number of signatures attached to them that any petition had which the hon. Member had presented, for five shillings. He admitted, at the same time, that a very strong feeling prevailed in favour of the Bill, and on that ground alone it was, that he gave it his support. He would maintain that the Bill was a delusion upon the country. He wished to know what good this Bill would do for the people? Would they get bread cheaper by it? Would they get a reduction of taxes? Would they get a reduction of that accursed Pension List? No; Ministers had defended it through thick and thin, and had told the House that there was no prospect of amelioration for the people in a reduction of taxes, which was the thing most likely to prove advantageous to the community. He had no party views whatever in the course he had taken, and had only expressed his sincere opinions.

Mr. *Hume* wished it to be understood, that he had made no attack upon the hon. member for Preston, but, on the contrary, had risen to defend him. He regretted exceedingly that the hon. Member should have expressed his opinions with regard to the Bill in the manner he had; and he hoped that he would not continue to throw out those remarks, which could have no practical good effect upon the measure.

Colonel *Sibthorp* said, that the Bill, in its amended state, ought to have remained longer before it had been pressed on the consideration of the House, in order that the people of the country might have a full opportunity of seeing all its objects. He concurred with the hon. member for Preston that the Bill was a delusion—a fraud, he would say—upon the people of England; and the more it was exposed and developed, the greater would be their disgust. The public was far from being contented with it. He had voted invariably against the measure, and felt that he had done his duty. By so doing he had not consulted his own interest probably, but he had obeyed the dictates of his own conscience. In all public matters he would invariably attend to a conscientious discharge of his duty, disregarding any considerations of private interest. Something had been said respecting the sacrifice made by borough proprietors in forwarding the measure of Reform, but they had not come forward with this generous sacrifice on behalf of the country until the Bill was introduced. They had disregarded the old maxim, *bis dat qui cito dat*, in the course they had taken. He feared not the being sent back to his constituents on account of the line of conduct which he had pursued with regard to the opposition he had given to the Bill; and he hoped that the Bill would never meet with the sanction of the Legislature, fraught as it was with injustice towards so many individuals who had never been proved guilty of any impropriety or delinquency in the discharge of their political rights and privileges.

Mr. *Hughes Hughes* denied, that this Bill was either a fraud or a delusion on the people of England. He had wished to ascertain the feelings of his constituents on it, and he had in consequence spent three days out of the last ten in calling upon his constituents in Oxford. He had called in that time upon more than a thousand of them personally, and he would undertake to say, that not fifty individuals out of that number disapproved of the principle, or even of the details, of the measure. He had seen some of their children playing about, in whom the right of voting was only inchoate. The circumstance of their children being deprived of that franchise which they themselves enjoyed, was the only objection which any of his constituents had urged to the measure, but they had unanimously agreed to waive that objection rather than endanger the success of a Bill which was calculated to confer so much benefit upon the country. Now the rights of the children of freemen were secured by one of the late amendments introduced into the Bill, and therefore he was certain that his constituents would not have any the slightest objection to the Bill as it now stood.

Sir *C. Wetherell* asserted, that from his long connexion with the University and city of Oxford, he had as extensive a knowledge of the feelings of the inhabitants of Oxford as the hon. Member who now represented them; and he would take upon himself to deny the assertion, that the constituency of the city of Oxford, whose Representative he had been, and to whom he still was strongly attached, were favourable to this measure of Reform. As a proof of his opinion, he would only state, that in the Common Council of that town, which consisted of sixty persons, a petition in favour of Reform had only been carried by the casting vote of the Mayor. He contended that nine out of ten persons in Oxford had neither read nor understood the details of this Bill.

Mr. *Tennyson* was sure that the citizens of Oxford understood, that this Bill would destroy fifty-five rotten boroughs; and that, after it was passed, Boroughbridge would cease to exist, and that when it ceased to exist, his hon. and learned friend opposite would be compelled to go back to the electors of Oxford, or of some other populous borough. He must say, that he should like to see how his hon. and learned friend would be received by his quondam constituents of Oxford, when he went back to them after his present declaration, that they neither knew nor understood any thing about the present Bill.

Mr. *Hughes Hughes* wished to say a few words in explanation. He contended that he was justified in declaring that there was almost an unanimity of opinion in favour of this Bill among his constituents at Oxford. Of his constituents, 2,145 had signed a petition in favour of Reform, which had been agreed to at a public meeting at Oxford, at which more than 1,000 persons were present, and at which there had been only one dissentient voice. At a subsequent period, the Chamber of the Corporation had met, and had wished to get up an anti-Reform petition. The promoters of that petition had been defeated, however, by a majority of one. There were thirty persons for that anti-Reform petition, and thirty against it. Those thirty persons formed part of the fifty dissentients to whom he had alluded in his former speech. As the hon. and learned member for Boroughbridge seemed inclined to disbelieve the statement which he had given of the feelings of his constituents on this Bill, he only wished that the hon. and learned member would meet him on the hustings at Oxford, to see whether his constituents would not verify it.

Sir *C. Wetherell* repeated the assertion which he had made on a former occasion, that the petition which the hon. member for Oxford had presented had come from persons who did not understand the Reform Bill.

Petition to be printed.

Sir C. Wetherell presented a Petition from the Corporation of the city of Glocester, against the Reform Bill.

Colonel *Webb* observed, that as he had the honour of being one of the members for the city of Gloucester, he must be permitted to say a few words upon this petition. During the last fortnight he had visited his constituents, and he could say of his own knowledge, that a great majority of them were in favour of this Bill.

Mr. *Hunt* wished to take the opportunity of stating, that he had never asserted that no credit should be given to the noblemen and gentry who had surrendered their borough patronage. All that he had said was, that he should have given them greater credit had they surrendered it before this Bill was introduced, which would compel them to part with it. He should give them still more credit, if they would give up the borough influence which they still retained, as, for instance, the boroughs of Calne and Malton.

Mr. *S. Rice* said, that if the noble personages to whom the hon. member for Preston alluded had given up their boroughs before the present time, they would have defeated the object which they had in view equally with the people of England. They acted no less wisely than patriotically, in giving up their borough influence as part of a general measure; but till that general measure was carried they ought to hold it and to use it as trustees for the public, and for the public benefit.

Petition to be printed.

Mr. *Wyse* presented a Petition from the inhabitants of Cashel, in favour of the Reform Bill. The Reform Bill was most popular in Ireland. He trusted that his Majesty's Ministers would, by dissolving the Parliament, appeal to the people, and he would answer for it that the result of that appeal to the people of Ireland would be favourable to the measures of Reform which had been brought forward.

Mr. *Shiel* supported the prayer of the petition. Not having had an opportunity of addressing the House last night, he wished to take that occasion to state, that if the Reform Bill passed, it would be most satisfactory to the people of Ireland, and that one effect of it would be, to allay the feeling which existed there at present in favour of a Repeal of the Union. He concurred with those who thought that Ireland was fairly entitled to an additional number of Representatives. The two countries now formed a United Kingdom, and Ireland should be treated like Yorkshire, or any other component part of this country.

Mr. *M. Fitzgerald* justified the vote which he gave last night for the Amendment moved by the gallant member for Liverpool, on the ground that he was anxious to retain as many Members as they had at present for England. At the same time he was as anxious as any man to give such additional Members to Ireland as she was entitled to.

Mr. *S. Rice* said, that the effect of the vote which had been given by his right hon. friend last night in favour of the motion must be to prevent Ireland from getting additional Representatives.

Mr. *O'Brien* said, in reference to the vote which he had given against the Amendment, that if he had been the bitterest opponent of Ministers, he would yet, as an Irishman, have opposed that Resolution, the effect of which would be, to prevent Ireland from getting those additional Members which Ministers had proposed to give to that country.

Petition to be printed.

Mr. *Littleton* presented a Petition, numerously signed by the workmen of West Bromwich and the neighbouring parishes, in the county of Stafford, in favour of the Reform Bill. The petitioners stated, that they heard with astonishment and indignation that declarations were made that the workmen of Staffordshire were, to a man, opposed to the Bill, and such declarations they now declared to be utterly false. As the petition was very short, he begged that it might be read by the Clerk of the House.

Petition, being read.

Mr. *Hunt* said, he had no doubt that the hon. Member wished to make it appear that the petition alluded to a declaration industriously reported to have been made by him, but which he had never made. What he said was, that he had conversed with some of the working people in Staffordshire and elsewhere, who disapproved of part of the Bill brought in by Ministers.

Mr. *Littleton* had no doubt that the petition alluded to the report of what the hon. member for Preston had said in that House, and the petitioners unanimously denied that they disapproved of the Bill.

The *Speaker* said, that if the hon. Member stated that the petition adverted to any thing that had taken place in that House, it was irregular, and could not be received; it must be withdrawn.

Mr. *Littleton* had not meant to state a fact, he had only uttered his individual opinion. There was nothing in the petition to lead the House to conclude that it alluded to what fell from the hon. member for Preston, though he (Mr. Littleton) entertained that opinion.

The *Speaker* observed, that such an excuse, though good from any other Member, could not be considered satisfactory from the Member who presented the petition.

Sir *C. Wetherell* thought, that the petition had been got up to contradict a statement which had been made in that House by one of its Members, and it therefore ought to be rejected.

Mr. *S. Rice* thought, that there was nothing in the petition to warrant a conclusion that it referred to what had been said in Parliament, for the matter to which the petition alluded had appeared in various publications, as statements made out of doors.

The *Speaker* observed, that his objection was founded upon what had been stated by the hon. Member who had presented the petition, and not upon the contents of the petition itself. It certainly was not usual for that House to put a forced construction on the language of any petition. As the hon. member for Staffordshire had stated his impression, however, that the petition referred to the report of a speech made in that House, if the House concurred in the impression of the hon. member for Staffordshire, it could not consistently with the rules receive the petition. There was nothing in the phraseology of the petition which led necessarily to the conclusion that it referred to what had taken place in that House, and, therefore, the House might receive it; but in doing so, the House would declare in effect that it did not agree with the hon. member for Staffordshire in the construction which he put on the petition.

Mr. *Hunt* declared, that the petition had been got up in London, and the hon. Member who had presented it had only insinuated that it alluded to him, for the hon. Member would not charge him with having uttered a falsehood in respect to the sentiments of the working classes, for fear of the personal consequences.

The *Speaker* called the member for Preston to order. He begged to remind the House, that the hon. member for Staffordshire had not construed the petition to allude to the hon. member for Preston—it was the latter Gentleman that had applied the contents of the petition to himself.

Mr. *Hunt* said, that the hon. member for Staffordshire had come to him, and had told him that he had received the petition, and that it contradicted what he (Mr. Hunt) had asserted respecting the hostility of the working classes to the Reform Bill. He treated the petition as altogether fraudulent.

Mr. *Littleton* said, that there never was a more groundless statement; and the hon. member for Preston well knew, that there was not the shadow of a foundation for his assertion that this petition was fraudulent. The petition was written in the country, and he had received from every part of the county assurances of the indignation with which the people had heard of the hon. member for Preston's assertion that they were hostile to the Reform Bill.

Sir *C. Wetherell* merely looked upon the question as one of privilege. If the hon. member for Staffordshire did not think the petition referred to a declaration made by a Member of the House, he should not assume that it did, and should not object to its being received.

Sir *C. Forbes* had no doubt that the petition referred to what had fallen from a Member of that House. Long as he had been in Parliament he had never heard such personal attacks as had been made for the last few days on the hon. member for Preston. If any such attacks had been made on him, he would make the Member indulging in those attacks eat his own words.

Petition to be printed.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Thursday, April 21, 1831.

Minutes.] Bills. Read a first time, Money Payment of Wages; Composition of Tithes. Post Office Sale Committed.

Petitions presented. For the Repeal of the Law allowing Beer to be drank on the Premises, by the Duke of Norfolk, from the Western Division of Sussex:—By the Duke of Wellington, from the Magistrates of Berkshire. By Lord Durham, from St. John's, Wapping, praying for an alteration of the Metropolitan Police Act. For the Repeal of the Union (Ireland), by Lord Farnham, from the Inhabitants of Black Rock. For the Abolition of Slavery, by the Archbishop of York, from many places in his Diocese. In favour of the Grants to the Kildare Street Society, by the Marquis of Downshire, from Sligo and Rosstrevor:—By Lord Farnham, from the County of Cavan, and five other places. In favour of Reform, by the Duke of Norfolk, from Shoreham, and Carrick-on-Suir: — By Lord Durham, from Durham, and from the Ward of Billingsgate:—By Lord Teynham, from Erpingham:—By the Earl of Kinnoul, from Perth:—By Earl Cawdor, Llansawell:—By the Lord Chancellor, from Halifax, Maldon, and Wincanton. Against Reform, by the Earl of Haddington, from Freemen of Rochester; and against uniting that City with Chatham and Stroud:—By Lord Farnham, from Drogheda, Sligo, Kilnish, and other places.

East India Company's Charter.] The Marquis of *Lansdown* presented a Petition from the Merchants, Manufacturers, and other inhabitants of Glasgow, praying for a free trade to China, a free trade to India, and for permission freely to settle in India. It was not his intention then to discuss the important subjects referred to in the petition, as they must come under their Lordships' consideration at no distant period. The petition represented the general feeling of Glasgow on these three important points, and the petitioners stated, that their own opinions on these subjects had been confirmed by the valuable evidence collected by a Committee of that and the other House of Parliament. He agreed fully with the petitioners in their opinion of that evidence, and thought it afforded ample materials for their Lordships to form a safe and sound judgment on one of the most important questions of State policy that could possibly come under the consideration of the Legislature, involving not only the prosperity of the commerce of this country, but the welfare of 60,000,000 of people, who, by the course of events and the will of Providence, had been placed under their Lordships' superintendence, and who, he had no doubt, would find, in their love of justice and equity, the most indulgent consideration. He would give no specific opinion on these great questions, but he had no doubt, that the petition would receive their Lordships' deliberate consideration.

Lord *Ellenborough* said, when he proposed the Committee to inquire into the affairs of India, he had stated to their Lordships, that the question, whether the country at large could be permitted to participate directly in the China trade, would depend on whether the great expenditure of the Government of India could be reduced. From the first formation of the late Government, the efforts of his noble friend who preceded him (Lord Melville), and his own efforts, were directed to the great object of diminishing the expenditure of India, that the Government might be enabled to present to the people of England the freedom of the trade to China. Their efforts had, in a great measure, succeeded, and they had reduced the expenditure of India, in the course of three years, to the amount of 1,850,000*l*. He must claim for his Majesty's late Government the merit of having adopted measures for giving the people a free trade to China, and they meant to effect their object by reducing the expenditure, without which it could not be accomplished. He would recommend the Ministers, whoever they might be, constantly and strenuously, to direct their efforts to obtain a gradual and temperate reform of the expenditure. That required daily and hourly attention to every minute branch of the Government. It must be, above all things, gradual and temperate, for hasty and violent reductions, such as a Parliament might direct, would endanger the stability of the empire in India.

Petition laid on the Table.

Reform Petitions.] The *Lord Chancellor* presented a Petition from the parish of St. Matthew, Bethnal-green, in favour of the Ministerial plan of Reform. The petition was signed by 7,000 persons, and the whole number of inhabitants did not exceed 9,000: these circumstances afforded a sufficient contradiction to the assertion that had been made elsewhere, to the effect that the inhabitants of Spitalfields, of which this parish constituted a considerable part, were opposed to the Bill that had been introduced into the other House of Parliament. The noble and learned Lord also presented a Petition from the County of Cornwall, and fifty other Petitions from various places, in favour of the Reform Bill.

The Duke of *Sussex* presented a Petition from Non-resident Voters of Rochester, living in London, in favour of the Reform Bill. The noble Duke observed, that the petition was signed by three-fourths of the whole number of out-voters. He had also to present a petition agreed to at a county meeting of the inhabitants of Denbigh; and a petition from a hundred in the county of Norfolk, in favour of Reform.

Lord *Beresford* presented a Petition from out-voters of Berwick-on-Tweed, praying that they might not be disfranchised. The noble Lord stated, that the number of voters in the borough would be reduced from 1,143 to 300 by the proposed disfranchisement, of which he expressed his disapprobation, as well as of the attack made upon Corporations in general by the Reform Bill. He saw no reason why the Corporation of London should be allowed to retain its noxious privileges if the corporations of other towns were to be broken up. He meant to resist the Reform Bill.

The Duke of *Richmond* presented a Petition, agreed to at a numerous and respectable meeting of Freeholders of the county of Sussex, in favour of the Reform Bill. The petition was well deserving of their Lordships' attention, as expressing the almost unanimous wish of that great county. In it, county meetings were not common things, for there had not been one before this for forty years.

The Duke of *Norfolk* expressed his hearty concurrence in the prayer of the petition. Every day he lived, he became the better satisfied of the necessity of carrying into effect the Ministerial plan of Reform, with a view to secure the welfare of the country.

The Duke of *Wellington* presented a Petition from the Mayor, Sheriffs, and Commonalty of Cork, against the extension of the Elective Franchise to 10*l.* householders; and a second from the Protestants of Cork, against the Ministerial plan of Reform, on the ground of its tendency to give a preponderating power to Roman Catholics at elections. He agreed with the petitioners in the opinion which they entertained, that in the event of the passing of the Bill, it would be found difficult to maintain that article of the Union with Ireland which guaranteed the safety of the Church of Ireland. In passing the Reform measure, Parliament exposed his Majesty to the risk of consenting to a Bill calculated to break down the Church Establishment in Ireland. He could not but express the surprise he felt the other night at hearing the noble and learned Lord on the Woolsack assert that the Reform Bill had put down agitation in Ireland on the subject of a Repeal of the Union. He thought it impossible that the concession of the elective franchise to 10*l.* householders in a few towns in Ireland could have any such effect. He hoped and believed, that the Irish Government would resort to those wise measures of relief, accompanied, if necessary, by measures of severity, which might put down the insurrectionary spirit that existed in parts of Ireland; and he thought it would be better for Parliament to occupy itself with the consideration of such measures, than to spend its time upon the Reform Bill.

The Marquis of *Clanricarde* said, if the noble Duke had not argued, that the measure of Reform would destroy the Church of Ireland, he should not have thought it necessary to notice the subject, and state that he entertained a contrary opinion. The noble Duke supported his arguments in an extraordinary way, when it was considered that he had given the Roman Catholics political power; for the noble Duke now asserted, that doing that would endanger the Church; but, for his part, he had always denied that assertion, and denied it now. If the noble duke entertained that opinion, it was strange that he should have introduced the great measure which had laid the foundation of the prosperity of Ireland by tranquillizing it. He believed that, as the country improved, the great measure of Reform would become the foundation of the prosperity of Ireland. He did not deny, that it would enlarge the constituency, but that was now necessary, for the noble Duke had began his reform at the wrong end, by curtailing the constituency. The enlargement of the constituency would, he believed, be beneficial to the country. He had heard no argument which could convince him that it would be disadvantageous. He believed that no danger would accrue to the Established Church from the admission of the Catholics to political power. Their Lordships had, in fact, decided that question, when they agreed to give the Catholics political power, and that measure had been attended with great benefits.

Lord *Farnham* expressed his astonishment that any noble Lord who had resided in Ireland could doubt that, by the passing of the Reform Bill, a constituency would be created under the direct influence of those who, from North to South, were unanimously opposed to the Established Church; and he wished to know whether such a state of things could exist, consistently with the safety of that Church? He could but express his astonishment at such a measure being contemplated by those who pretended to wish well to that Church, and he challenged any Peer—he challenged the noble Marquis—to prove that extending the elective franchise would not create the constituency he had described. With respect to the Repeal of the Union, if a strong feeling were not now openly at work upon that subject, it was only because the Roman Catholic clergy, and the agitators, had issued their orders to the people to remain quiet till the Reform Bill should be carried. The hon. member for Clare had publicly addressed the Irish people, and advised them not to agitate the subject of the Union at present, lest they should impede the measure of Reform, at the same time assuring them that a reformed Parliament would grant what they wanted. He wished to take that opportunity of observing if the reports that day current in both Houses of Parliament should turn out to be well-founded, that tremendous responsibility would rest upon Government for not having attempted measures either coercive or remedial with respect to that country. He did not say which species of measures ought to have been adopted at the present moment; perhaps a mixture of both would have been best; but he repeated his opinion, that tremendous responsibility must rest upon those who had given the advice stated to have been given, without previously adopting measures to prevent the ill effects to be apprehended from the present state of things in Ireland.

Petition to be laid on the Table.

DISSOLUTION OF PARLIAMENT.] Lord *Wharncliffe* said, as an allusion has been made by the noble Lord (Farnham) to certain reports that are in circulation on the subject of a dissolution of Parliament, I wish to ask his Majesty's Ministers whether there is any truth in the statement, that they have advised his Majesty to dissolve Parliament, and that it has been resolved to adopt that course? I ask this question, because, if I should receive an answer in the affirmative, it is my intention to adopt some measure in relation to the subject, and, I can assure the noble Earl opposite, very speedily.

Earl *Grey*.—I believe the noble Lord's question will be admitted to be one of a very unusual nature, and I can hardly bring myself to believe that when he put it the noble Lord expected an answer. But whatever the noble Lord's expectation may have been, I have only to say, I must decline answering his question. As to any measure which he may think it necessary to propose on that subject, he will consult his own discretion, and take whatever course he sees fit. I can offer him no advice whatever.

Lord *Wharncliffe*.—My Lords, I now give notice that I shall to-morrow move your Lordships that an humble address be presented to his Majesty, praying that his Majesty will be graciously pleased not to exercise his undoubted prerogative of dissolving Parliament.

REFORM PETITIONS.] The Earl of *Winchilsea* presented Petitions from Sandwich, Great Marlow, and Nairn, in favour of Reform. He observed that the noble Duke (Wellington) had expressed his opposition to the Reform Bill on the ground of probable injury to the Established Church in Ireland. Friendly as he was to the greater part of the Bill as it affected the Representation of England, he agreed with the noble Duke, that its effect, by increasing the political power of Roman Catholics in Ireland, would be to endanger the Established Church in that country. He regretted that the noble Duke did not entertain his present apprehension of Catholic power at an earlier period. In the present state of political agitation in Ireland, which had for its purpose the effecting of the disunion of the empire, and in the present state of organization which exists in that country, carried on under the control of the Catholic priesthood, who were all influenced by the great political agitator, who had not as yet been made amenable to the laws which he had violated, he could not see how any further political power could be extended to Ireland, without endangering the established institutions of the country. He had taken the present occasion of expressing his sentiments, because he was afraid another opportunity would not be afforded him. He did sincerely regret that he was compelled to make these observations, and hoped he had done so without hurting the feelings of any noble Lord in that House connected with the Roman Catholic religion, every one of whom he was convinced felt as much veneration and attachment for the Constitution as the humble individual who had the honour to address their Lordships; but he did entreat those noble Lords to lose no time in endeavouring to put down that state of insubordination which existed in Ireland, and to have not the slightest connexion with any of those individuals who were labouring for the total destruction of the Church Establishment in that country, and the total dissolution of the Union.

The Duke of *Wellington* had but two words to offer with respect to what had fallen from the noble Lord. He was not willing to enter into the question as to the expediency of having granted the Roman Catholic claims, for he hoped that question was for ever set at rest. The former Government of this country derived some advantage from the settlement of that question, and he believed, that at least this advantage would be admitted to have flown from it, viz. that now there was no question either in that or the other House of Parliament, or among the public, respecting the necessity or expediency of repealing the Union. When he introduced the Catholic Relief Bill he stated, that political power already existed in the hands of the Roman Catholics, and that was a statement generally admitted by noble Lords on both sides of the House. What the Bill effected was, to give the capacity of enjoying political power to the higher classes of the Roman Catholics, and to take it out of the hands of those of the lower classes who did not exercise it themselves for their own purposes, and according to the dictation of their own sentiments, but at the suggestion of a body among the Catholic people, who, it would be admitted by every body, ought not to possess political power—he meant the Roman Catholic priesthood.

Lord *Ellenborough* said, the noble Earl having opposed the Catholic Relief Bill, was perfectly consistent in the view he took of that part of the proposed measure of Reform which related to Ireland. While that noble Earl approved of the rest of the measure as regarded England, it was impossible for him, without changing all the opinions he had ever held and expressed on the subject of the danger to the Protestant interests in Ireland, to abstain from offering his most decided opposition to the part of the Bill which applied to that country. Such was the natural conduct of the noble Earl, for he was one of those who at all times opposed extending to the Catholics equal civil rights. And now he (Lord Ellenborough) hoped to be permitted to state what he felt to be his duty on that subject. From the first moment that he had a seat in Parliament, he had been a zealous advocate of Catholic Emancipation, and he never entertained a doubt of the advantage which would ultimately result to the country from the concession of that measure. He had the honour of being a member of that Government by which the Catholic Relief Bill was introduced. That Bill was not an insulated measure, but was accompanied by two others. One of them was an Act for the suppression of the Catholic Association, and in pressing that measure upon their Lordships for adoption, the noble Duke then at the head of his Majesty's Government pledged himself to the House and to the country to bring forward other and stronger measures for the suppression of that and similar associations, if the bill which was introduced did not prove efficient. The Catholic Relief Bill was accompanied also by another measure—novel in its nature, violent, perhaps, in its provisions—he meant the Bill for the disfranchisement of the 40*s*. freeholders. That Bill, however, was an essential part of the Catholic Relief Bill—and he could not, without a breach of public faith—without a breach of private confidence—without dishonouring himself for ever as a public man, violate that understood compact which then prevailed with many of those in that and the other House of Parliament, who constituted the majority in favour of the Catholic Relief Bill—he could not, he said, so far dishonour himself by now, at the expiration of only two years, consenting to an alteration in the Representation of Ireland, which would effect an entire change in that state of things on the faith of the duration of which alone the Parliament, the King, and the people of England, consented to remove the Catholic disabilities. These were his opinions from the first introduction of the Reform Bill, and he would not allow himself to consider for an instant whether or not that part of the proposition which applied to Ireland might be advantageous to the public, or form properly any part of a general measure of Reform. For he considered himself bound by that compact to which he was a party, and he would not act with less scrupulous honour to those who supported the Catholic Relief measure, upon the understanding which he had mentioned, than Government exercised towards that party which was then the Opposition. Let him recall to the recollection of noble Lords opposite, that the late Government likewise had an understanding with them, that they would waive that opposition which, under other circumstances they would have offered to the Bill for the suppression of the Catholic Association. That understanding was, that the Bill was to form part of a general measure, that on the passing of the Catholic Relief Bill, their opposition would be modified or entirely withdrawn. How, then, did the late Government act? They would not advise his Majesty to give his royal assent for the suppression of the Catholic Association till within fifteen minutes of the time when, with his Majesty's continued sanction, they proposed to Parliament the Catholic Relief measure. He could not, therefore, enter into a consideration of that part of the Reform measure which tended to alter the state of Representation in Ireland, on the faith of the duration of which the Catholics were admitted to an equality of Civil rights.

Petitions to lie on the Table.

The Earl of *Carnarvon* had to present a petition from the inhabitants of Newbury, neither, the noble lord stated, against Reform nor in its favour, but praying that if the Reform Bill, which he looked upon as a measure calculated to produce calamitous effects, should be permitted to be passed, that they might not hereafter be debarred from sending representatives to Parliament. The petitioners stated, that in ancient times Newbury was a borough, and they prayed that their right of returning Members to Parliament might be revived. The population of Newbury, together with the two adjoining hamlets, as stated in the census of 1821, exceeded 7,000 inhabitants. It was now a very flourishing town, and the greatest corn-market in the south of England. He submitted to their Lordships, that in the event of the Reform Bill being agreed to, the prayer of the petitioners was entitled to consideration. If ministers thought that their Reform Bill was one on which they ought to make a stand, they would do well to consider whether, after making such an immense alteration in the Representation of the country, it would be right to stop where they proposed leaving many towns possessed of Representation, which scarcely possessed a constituency, and excluding the great town and ancient borough of Newbury from any portion of Representation whatever. Could, he asked, any measure more deserve the name of a half measure, or rather a quarter measure—could any proposition be more properly called a bit-by-bit Reform, than that Bill which the Ministers had introduced, and which, he contended, was calculated to subvert all the institutions of the country, and overturn the Monarchy? The principle of their Bill—if principle it could be called which principle had none

> "Distinguishable by member, joint, or limb,
> Which nonsense seemed"—

the principle seemed to be this: population was taken as the test which was to determine the continuation of the removal of Representation from boroughs, and a totally different test, that of property, was taken to decide as to what class of persons the elective franchise should be given. And what was the result of this? A large portion of the boroughs which were left untouched had scarcely any constituency, and the Ministers were obliged to find, by means of Privy Councillors, a constituency where there was no borough, while they overlooked large towns, with an ample number of constituents, which existed ready to their hands. For what purpose could the country imagine that such an arrangement had been adopted? The people did suspect, for they could come to no other conclusion, that there was jobbing in the Bill; that that strange and unintelligible line had been drawn, in order to preserve particular boroughs, and to get rid of others. Perhaps Ministers had had no such intention; but if they had not, it baffled all human ingenuity to discover, what their intention was. Why had they not taken a straightforward and intelligible course? Why, if they wished to make so great a change in the Constitution of the country, had they not made this their plan—to disfranchise all boroughs not containing 300 10*l.* householders, and to transfer the franchise to such places, as contained a real constituency? He did not mean to say that he would have advocated so sweeping a measure as that would be, because he did not think that the interests of the country called for it; but such a proposition would at least have been an intelligible and rational one; and if the Reform Bill proceeded, the Ministers would see the expediency of having adopted a principle of that nature, when the question with respect to the case of Newbury was raised. But how was the strange constituency, which Ministers proposed to create to be made up? Was there no jobbing in the Bill; and would the country believe that there was no political jobbing in it, when, in order to make up the required constituency, an expedient had been hit upon, which no Minister had ever before proposed to Parliament. That constituency, which was wanting, was to be supplied by the arbitrary act of the Privy Council; and thus not less than eighty Representatives would be appointed to different parts of the country, simply by the King's Ministers themselves. Was there no jobbing in that proposition? Had Mr. Pitt once a reformer, come down with such a proposition when the Society of the Friends of the People existed, would not the noble Earl (Grey) have designated it as the most impudent and profligate jobbing ever proposed to Parliament? He wished to advert to the question of a dissolution; but as a motion on the subject stood for to-morrow, he thought it best to reserve what he had to say till that motion came before the House. He hoped, that at least the existence of Parliament would be preserved for twenty-four hours; and he should content himself with presenting the petition. His noble friend (Earl Mansfield) shook his head, dissenting from what he had stated. He could not, however, believe, notwithstanding the alarming rumours to the contrary, that Ministers had determined on advising the King to dissolve Parliament. In the present state of Ireland and of this country, the man who would dare to give such counsel to his Sovereign, must have a fool's head on his shoulders, or a traitor's heart in his bosom. He could not believe that the King's Ministers would so counsel the King; for such advice would be tantamount to advising the King to abdicate the Throne.

Petition to lie on the Table.

BREACH OF PRIVILEGE—CASE OF THE TIMES.] On the motion of Lord King, the order of the day, "That the petition of John Joseph Lawson, printer of "The Times" newspaper, be taken into consideration," was read.

A noble Lord, whose name we could not learn, rose to present a petition, and insisted upon his right to do so, amidst loud cries of "Order."

The *Lord Chancellor* said—I beg to remind your Lordships, that the order of the day has actually been read, and that you are now, properly speaking, in the consideration of it. If, under such circumstances, your Lordships receive petitions, or occupy yourselves with any other business, there will not be even the semblance of regularity in your proceedings. Besides, a matter of privilege has always precedence; and, when you have a man in custody whose liberty depends upon your decision respecting this matter of privilege, I must suggest to your Lordships that justice, as well as the observance of regularity, demands in your proceedings that the consideration of it ought not to be deferred.

The same noble Lord again attempted to present the petition, but resumed his seat amidst loud cries of "Order."

Lord *King*—My Lords, I have already given way once, when I believe that I was in possession of the House; but since the order of the day has been read, there can, I apprehend, be no dispute as to my being in possession of the House now. There will be no necessity, I trust, for my moving that the petition be read again, for I hope that all your Lordships bear fresh in your minds that petition,—that very proper petition, as I must call it,—which was yesterday presented by the gentleman now in confinement. I think that no petition could have been more properly worded, and I think that no man could have made a more becoming, or a more satisfactory apology, than Mr. Lawson has made to your Lordships. Under these circumstances, my Lords, I hope that there will be no difference of opinion with regard to the Motion I am about to submit to your Lordships; and I entertain that hope the more confidently, in consequence of the understanding—or what was tantamount to an understanding—to which we came yesterday. I cannot suppose, my Lords, that the gentleman who has been once at your bar, will be considered by your Lordships as guilty of contumacy, and as deserving of some greater punishment, because he refused to answer a question that was put to him. Such a course would, to say the least of it, be extremely inconvenient, and of that I trust your Lordships were convinced yesterday. Let me remind your Lordships, that to act so, would not be to act like a Court of Justice. A Court of Justice never asks a man who is tried for publishing a libel, whether he will give up the author of the libel. The Attorney-General, or the prosecutor, may ask such a question; they may say to the publisher "If you will give me up the author of the libel, I will drop the prosecution against you, and suffer you to go free;" but a Court of Justice never holds such language; no judge would be allowed to take such a course. If, therefore, my Lords, you should do this, you would do what I can compare to nothing but the conduct of a Judge who, after passing sentence upon a prisoner, calls the prisoner up to the bar again, in consequence of something which he has said, and alters the sentence: as, for instance, if a judge should sentence a man to seven years' transportation, and because the man made some observation upon the sentence, the Judge should call him back, and say, "I gave you seven years' transportation, but for that observation I give you fourteen. Nothing can be more indecent than such conduct in a Judge, and I am happy to say, that I believe it has never occurred but once. I heartily hope it will never occur again, and I am sure that your Lordships will never be brought to act in such a way,—that your Lordships will never be brought to imitate the conduct of such a Judge. With regard to the question which Mr. Lawson refused to answer, I am sure that, as honourable men, your Lordships would have thought very badly of him if he had not refused to answer it. I am quite sure your Lordships, as a body of gentlemen, would have despised Mr. Lawson if he had been guilty of so gross a breach of confidence as he must have committed if he had answered that question. With these observations I have now only to move your Lordships "that Mr. Lawson be called to the bar; that he be reprimanded by the Lord Chancellor; and that he then be discharged upon the payment of his fees."

The Earl of *Mansfield* said—I move your Lordships that the Standing Order for the exclusion of strangers be enforced. [*Cries of* "*Withdraw*," "*Clear the bar.*"]

The Marquis of *Londonderry*—I do hope that the noble Earl will not persevere in that motion, considering that the discussion yesterday was public.

The Earl of Eldon said a few words, which were totally inaudible below the bar.

The *Lord Chancellor*, in reply to the noble Earl, said—I should not be at all sorry to avail myself of that, if I could, and go below the bar, for a momentary relief. My noble and learned friend well knows, that however enviable a seat on the Woolsack may be in many respects, the close confinement which is incident to it is neither agreeable nor enviable.

Loud cries of "withdraw" were repeated, and the Lord Chancellor said—"Strangers must withdraw." and the bar was cleared.

At the expiration of two hours and a half the public were re-admitted.

A discussion somewhat to the following effect, is said to have taken place during the absence of strangers. As no contradiction has been given to it we think it right to preserve it.

The Marquis of *Londonderry* repeated his observations respecting the atrocity of the libel, and the power of the House to punish either by fine, or imprisonment, or by reprimand; he would not, however, press against the sense of the House his original intention of having the affidavits respecting the proprietors of *The Times*, lodged at the Stamp-office, laid before the House.

The Earl of *Mansfield*, in a long and elaborate speech, insisted upon the power of the House to impose a fine certain, and to imprison for a fixed period. He had no angry feelings against the individual now in custody, but as the noble Lord on the Woolsack had expressed considerable doubt as to the extent of the privileges of the House, he wished, in order to remove that doubt, and to make their right manifest, that the individual should be sent to prison for a time certain, however short that time might be. If, however, the House should be content with the milder punishment of a reprimand, there was another point for their serious consideration. The House had heard the noble and learned Lord on the Woolsack pronounce an eulogy on the purity of the Press, he had also thrown doubt on their Lordships' privileges. Under these circumstances, was it likely that he would administer the reprimand with that severity befitting the nature of the case and their Lordships' dignity? Would it not be right for the House to move an instruction to his Lordship that he would not, in the reprimand, take occasion to hint any doubt of the authority of the House, and that he would impress upon the offender the full magnitude of his offence against their Lordships' privileges?

The *Lord Chancellor* expressed his opinion as an individual Peer, that though the House had the undoubted right of imprisonment, as the House of Commons had, in order to remove an obstruction to their proceedings, yet, that he agreed with many great legal and constitutional authorities that their right to imprison for a time certain, and to fix a fine certain, was a disputable question. At all events, if he was in error on this point, he must say that it would be a strange sort of justice if the House should make the unfortunate printer the vicarious sufferer for his (the Chancellor's) fault. Surely the doubt might be solved in some better way than by sending the printer to Newgate. A solemn decision of the House would be more convincing and more reasonable. He denied that he had eulogized the Press, though he certainly thought it purer and better conducted than it was twenty-five years ago, with the exception, indeed, of some Sunday papers, which, while they profaned the Sabbath by the grossest libels, indecent and blasphemous, yet professed the warmest attachment to the Church Establishment, and were, no doubt on account of that attachment only, so warmly patronized by the clergy and their friends. As to the concluding passage of the noble Earl's speech, he repelled its insinuation with the utmost indignation and contempt. Was it not monstrous to suppose, that he should be so wanting in a sense of the respect due to the dignified office which he held, so wanting in respect to the House, so wanting in self-respect, as to pervert the occasion of administering the reprimand ordered by the House into a paltry medium of spitting his spite against their privileges? Whatever doubt he might individually entertain as to one branch of those privileges, was it likely that when called upon as their official organ to declare their will, he should be at once so base and so foolish as to disgrace his important functions by abandoning the plain line of his duty? The imputation was unworthy of the noble Earl—it was unworthy of him (the Lord Chancellor)—and he flung it back with disdain.

The Earl of *Eldon* entered into a long argument to demonstrate the power of the House to imprison for a time certain, and to impose a certain fine. He referred to the case of "Flower," quoted largely from Lord Kenyon's judgment, to show that the Court of King's Bench had fully recognized the powers of the House of Lords. He had so much taken it for granted that the individual in custody would have been discharged yesterday, on presenting his petition, without discussion, that he had not come down to the House; but seeing the Debate in the papers, he had thought it his duty to come and assert the authority of the House. As to the mode of the reprimand, he would give the noble Lord on the Woolsack credit for administering it with due solemnity; if not, the House had the means of animadversion in their power. The noble Earl, as well as Lord Mansfield, hinted that they had privately advised that this matter should not be brought before the House.

Lord *Wynford* followed. He re-asserted the privileges of the House, and said he believed there was not a lawyer—he was sure there was no Judge—in Westminster-hall, who had a doubt on the subject. He professed himself a friend of the liberty of the Press, but thought that Government should keep a strict watch on its excesses.

The Earl of *Fife* thought it would have been better, both for the House and the country, if this Debate had been public. He regretted that their Lordships' time was wasted on such inquiries: if their privileges were to be asserted, let them wait for some great offence against their body, and not take up a mere attack on an individual Peer, who had other means of redress. Some of their Lordships pretended to undervalue the Press; but if he was not misinformed, there were some Lords who had shares in newspapers. He concluded by passing an eulogy on the Queen.

The question was then put for calling in Mr. Lawson, reprimanding, and discharging him.

Mr. Lawson was immediately put to the bar, when

The *Lord Chancellor* adressed him in the following words;—" John Joseph Lawson—the paragraph of which you have acknowledged yourself to be the printer and publisher, has been pronounced by the unanimous voice of this House to be a gross and scandalous libel upon Edmund Henry, Earl of Limerick, a Member of this House, and it has also been pronounced to be a high breach of the privileges of this House. Those privileges of this House are conferred upon it by the Constitution of the country, and they have been recognized most amply in all times by the law of the land. Those privileges are possessed by this House, not for the benefit of any individual Member of the House, nor to confer power or aggrandizement upon the Members of the House collectively, but they are possessed for the protection and for the defence of this Assembly, and for the better execution of those high functions which, for the benefit of the State, the Constitution had conferred upon it. It would be a strange thing, indeed, if these privileges, which are enjoyed, not only by the other, the inferior branch of the Legislature, but also by every Court of Record in the realm, should have been denied either by the policy or the justice of the law to this illustrious Assembly, which combines in itself the character of being the hereditary counsellors of the Crown, of being the superior branch of the Legislature, and of being the highest Court of Judicature in the kingdom. These functions, that of hereditary advisers of the Crown, that of enacting laws, and that of deciding as Judges in the last resort, and without appeal to any human authority, on all cases, as well criminal as civil—these high functions, these great powers, and this solemn and important duty, are enjoyed by this Assembly for the sake of the whole people of England; and in order that they may be exercised with advantage, and in such a manner that the country may enjoy the benefits which result therefrom, it is absolutely necessary that the undoubted privileges of such an Assembly should be unquestioned and inviolate. It is, therefore, the duty of this House, to deal with you, a self-acknowledged culprit, in such a manner as the grave offence which you have committed merits, in order that you may be deterred from the repetition of it, and in order also—which is the sound end of all punishment—that others may be deterred from the commission of a similar offence. But the House mingles mercy with justice, and is anxious to take into consideration the mitigating circumstances which are connected with the situation in which you are placed. You have freely and at once acknowledged, that you are guilty of the offence: you have acknowledged that you are guilty in fact, by admitting that you are the publisher of the libel; and you have acknowledged that you are guilty in law and in substance, because you have expressed your contrition for that publication. You have also most amply, by petition, and in your own person at that bar, made submission to the House, and to the noble Earl who was the object of the slander. Moreover, you have suffered, not a long, but a close confinement, by the authority of this House, and in the custody of the officers of this House. For these reasons, and because the House is anxious to temper justice with mercy, their Lordships have thought proper to impose on me the painful duty—which I have now performed—of reprimanding you; and having thus reprimanded you, I have to tell you, that you will be forthwith discharged out of custody, upon payment of your fees."

Lord Farnham then moved that the reprimand be entered upon the Journals.

Agreed to.

Civil List Bill.] Lord *Wharncliffe* begged to bring under the notice of their Lordships, and to inquire the reason of, a circumstance connected with the Civil List Bill. That Bill was passed, but he found that his Majesty had not given his consent to it, which was the usual course. In the cases of the Civil List Bills of George 3rd, and George 4th, the regular consent of the Monarch had been given to the bills. It might have been, that many Peers would not have agreed to the Bill unless they had believed at the time that his Majesty was consenting to it. This Bill, too, differed materially from other bills on the same subject, and it was, therefore, the more necessary that the customary mode—that of receiving the King's consent to it — should not be departed from on this occasion. He might be met by the observation, that the King, in his Speech from the Throne, had told them that he placed his hereditary revenues at their disposal; but circumstances had altered since then. The then advisers of the Crown had left office, and it was known that they intended to bring in a different Bill. He begged, therefore, to ask the reason of this departure from the ordinary course.

The Duke of *Richmond* (who was the only Minister present, except the Lord Chancellor), said, that not knowing that the noble Lord meant to put this question, he was not prepared to answer it. He supposed that the noble Lord did not mean to deny, that the King was a consenting party to the Bill; and the noble Lord's objection, therefore, related to a matter of form only. He was sorry he could not satisfy the noble Lord, who, however, would have received satisfaction upon this point if he had given notice of his intention to ask the question, or if he had asked the question before his (the Duke of Richmond's) noble Colleague had left the House. He would just observe, however, that he had been informed, that neither George 1st, nor George 2nd, had given their consent to the Civil List Bills.

Lord *Wharncliffe* had only noticed the subject because he thought a gross mistake had been committed, and that some measure ought to be taken to rectify it. He had no objection to ask the question to-morrow.

The Duke of *Wellington* thought, that as the Bill made a great alteration in the Crown as to Civil Government, they ought to have had his Majesty's consent to the Bill. He did not believe that there was any instance in which that had not been done. He did not mean to pretend that this want of form vitiated the proceeding, but he thought that some notice ought to be taken of it in the Journals.

The Marquis of *Londonderry* thought that the other Ministers ought not to have left the House.

The Duke of *Richmond* said, that if any noble Lord had given notice of his intention to bring forward this subject, the other Ministers would not have left the House. How could the other Ministers have known of, or expected, anything of the kind?

The *Lord Chancellor* did not rise to prolong this conversation, which could lead to no practical good, except correcting a matter of form, which, if it required correction, it would be as well to notice. His ignorance upon the subject, however, was extreme, for he really was not aware that there was the least necessity that the King's consent should be formally given. He thought that for such a Bill to be brought in by his Majesty's Ministers was enough for the Parliament—though he knew very well that the King could not be bound by such a Bill, if he chose to withhold his consent from it. He had no doubt, however, that his noble friends would explain the matter satisfactorily to any noble Lord who desired to have it explained.

On the Motion of Lord Bexley, it was ordered that the entry in the Journals of the House, relative to the consent of the late King George 4th, with regard to the hereditary revenues of the Crown, signified to their Lordships in May, 1820, on the occasion of his accession to the Throne, should be read and considered to-morrow, previous to the discussion in reference to the Civil List.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Thursday, April 21, 1831.

PRACTICE OF THE HOUSE IN DIVORCE CASES.] The House went into a Committee on Trower's Divorce Bill which passed through the Committee without Amendments.

The House resumed. On the Question that the Bill be read a third time to-morrow,

Mr. *Hume* could not let that opportunity pass by without expressing a hope that a reformed Parliament would take measures to put an end to such a farce as they had just witnessed, with respect to their legislation on Divorce Bills.

Lord *Francis Osborne* said, he had intended to oppose the bill, but in consequence of the state of the House, he deferred his opposition till the third reading. He thought that it was unusual for the person who had the conduct of the bill (Mr. Freshfield) to sit as Chairman of the Committee.

Sir *G. Clerk* said, it was quite according to practice, that the person who had charge of the Bill should sit as Chairman.

Bill to be read a third time to-morrow.

LIVERPOOL ELECTION. — THE REFORM BILL.] Mr. *Benett*, in moving a Resolution with respect to the corrupt state of the Representation of the Borough of Liverpool, said, he intended that Resolution, with the permission of the House, to form the ground-work of a Bill, which would have the effect of correcting, in future, that corruption which was so prevalent there. After the evidence taken before the Committee, and printed for the use of the House, it was unnecessary for him to say much on the subject of his Motion. He felt it necessary, however, to correct a misrepresentation which had gone abroad with reference to what had fallen from him on a former occasion. It had been reported of him, that he asserted the corruption of the freemen of Liverpool to be confined to the lower classes. On the contrary, he had expressly said, that it was his hope, through these proceedings, to get at the higher classes, who were the main spring of all that bribery and corruption which disgraced the town of Liverpool. Such was the extent of the corruption proved to exist in that town, that he hoped, for the honour of Liverpool, of the country, and of Parliament, that some means would be speedily adopted to prevent its recurrence. If the Reform Bill passed, there could be no doubt that the extension of the number of freemen would be a security for improvement, but in the meantime, it was necessary for the House to take some steps to produce a reformation of the existing state of the Representation, and he therefore moved as a Resolution, "That the system of Bribery and treating which prevails in the election of Burgesses for the town of Liverpool, demands the serious attention of the House."

General *Gascoyne*, as one of the Representatives of the town of Liverpool, utterly denied the accusations of the hon. member for Wiltshire, and declared, that if there was a spot in the whole world free [loud cries of "hear," and laughter, interrupted the hon. Member, and deprived us of the conclusion of the sentence.] He understood that cheer, but it displayed much more of prejudice than good sense. For five and thirty years he had been a Representative of that town, and he had never witnessed any of those practices which were resorted to by others, whose estates were already deeply mortgaged.

The *Speaker* was certain that the gallant General had only to be informed of the irregularity and disorder he had been guilty of, in alluding to an individual, to correct it.

General *Gascoyne* apologised, and declared that he had not alluded to any particular Member. He could lay his hand on his heart and say, that so long as he had represented the town of Liverpool, and often as he had been elected, those elections never cost him a single shilling. In the thirty-five years he represented the town, the constituents paid the Representative, but the Representative never gave anything to the constituents. He should be ashamed to mention the amount of presents he had received in the shape of plate during that time, and he could say with safety, that he had, during the same period, received the thanks of his constituents 120 times for his services. He had been on all occasions brought in free of all expense. Whatever money might have been paid for expenses was defrayed by his friends, and he believed that all those who were brought in with him had the same advantages. There were probably many friends of Mr. Canning in that House, although they had relinquished his opinions. There were many of those friends who knew that Mr. Canning came into that House under the same circumstances; and he would say that, although there might have been ale drank, and dinners given, so help him God he had never paid for them. The hon. member for Wiltshire called on them to declare, that the freemen of the town of Liverpool were corrupt, but on what evidence? Why, upon the testimony of a person named Yates, who although a very respectable man, was certainly not the person whom he would select as best acquainted with the freemen of the town of Liverpool. What, too, was the nature of the evidence given by the witness, the only one in the whole body of examinations taken before the Committee who clearly spoke to the bribery? Why, he said, that he believed such practices were usual. There were, in fact, two parties in the town of Liverpool. He was returned by one of them, and that party which returned him took no share in the late election. The other party quarrelled with respect to the person whom they were to select, and the result was a contest, but were the whole of the electors of Liverpool to be called corrupt, and stigmatised, because there had been some treating on that occasion, and because one person said, he believed that bribery was usual? Of the last election, he repeated, he knew nothing. The hon. Member wished, it would seem, to take the franchise from the worthy but poor man, in order to give it to the rich man, and he would be worse than ungrateful if he did not record his knowledge of the conduct of the freemen during the time he had been connected with them. The noble Lord who at present held the Seals, as well as a noble Lord, a Member of that House (Lord Sefton) had been candidates for Liverpool, in opposition to him, but he had defeated them both, and had no doubt he should defeat his future opponents. On that occasion there were placards exhibited in every part of the town, with the words, "Gascoyne's friends," "No pay," "No Out-voters," On that occasion, he was elected without his election having cost him a single farthing. The noble Lord could perhaps tell the House, if he were there, how much his election cost him. When the books of a gentleman well known to many Members of that House (Mr. Roscoe), who had been unfortunate in business, were examined by his creditors, it was found even that some thousands of pounds of expenses incurred for that election remained still unpaid. The gallant General, after repeating his declaration that it was false to impute general corruption to the freemen of Liverpool, declared his opinion that the House would be guilty of injustice in agreeing to such a Resolution.

Mr. *John Wood* acquitted the hon. and gallant General of knowing anything of the details of the corruption which had been for forty years prevalent in Liverpool. If the gallant General was upon his oath in a Court of Justice, and sworn to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, he could no doubt say no. But three years ago, he (Mr. J. Wood) had presented a petition to the House on the subject of that atrocious corruption, and having a paper in his hand, containing the sums subscribed at Liverpool for electioneering purposes, and the favours which the subscribers were to receive in return, he had offered that paper to the late Mr. Huskisson, and to the hon. and gallant General; but neither of them chose to take it out of his hands. Some years ago he had asserted, and on having been answered by an anonymous writer in a Liverpool paper, had confirmed the assertion, that the merchants and traders of Liverpool made a profit by making a commercial speculation of the return of Members to Parliament. He had told the writer, that if he would furnish a list of the names of subscribers, and of the money they subscribed, he (Mr. Wood) would add a list of the favours they received in return. At the election of 1826, a friend of his, Mr. Edward Rushton, on the hustings of Liverpool, offered to produce from the papers of a gentleman, lately deceased, an account of the sum which he had subscribed to the Committee of the gallant General (no doubt unknown to the gallant General), in aid of the gallant General's election. That sum was 300*l.*, for which he was to have a place in the Excise. After his death his executors actually made a claim on the Committee for the return of the money. With regard to Mr. Canning's election, it was managed by a certain party, called the Canning Cycle. Those merchants and others who subscribed certain sums to support Mr. Canning's election, had their share of Mr. Canning's patronage. A friend of his was asked why, knowing and approving of Mr. Canning's principles, and knowing the rules of the cycle, he had not subscribed? His answer was, that if he subscribed 100*l.*, he might, perhaps, be asked to dinner, and Mr. Canning might drink wine with him, but that he could not afford to pay so large a sum for that honour; and that he would not subscribe 500*l.* or 1,000*l.* because he had no poor friend or relation dependent on him, for whom he wished to obtain a place. With respect to the out-voters, when Mr. Canning and a noble Lord, a Member of that House, stood for Liverpool, the Committee of the latter agreed to give the out-voters a sum averaging 10*l.* a man. The Committee of the former sent an agent to Manchester, with instructions to assemble the freemen of Liverpool who resided in that place, not to make a bargain with them, but, having ascertained what they were to receive from the other side, to promise them 1*l.* more each. He was prepared to prove that above 90,000*l.* had been expended during the last twenty years in Liverpool, in corruption. He was able to prove, that for a long series of years there had been the most flagrant and disgraceful bribery and corruption at the election of Members of Parliament for Liverpool. Not only was he able to prove this corruption in the election of Members of Parliament, but also in the election of Magistrates. No person could be chosen Mayor of Liverpool under an expense of 6,000*l.* or 7,000*l.* The Mayor was a Magistrate for life. The purity of the Magistrates in England was a matter of the greatest importance. He did not charge the Mayors of Liverpool with any particular corruption; but he maintained, that persons so elected were not persons who ought to have the government of a town. All that he had said, he could prove at the bar, and nothing could give him or most of the respectable inhabitants of Liverpool more pleasure than to see the elective franchise taken from those by whom it had been so abused.

The Earl of *Sefton*, having been alluded to by the hon. and gallant General, begged to say a few words. Of course the gallant General could not be offended at what he was going to state, which was, that within his own knowledge, not only at the last election (of which he had heard from others), but at every election for Liverpool of which he knew anything, there had been the greatest bribery and corruption. He begged leave also to remind the gallant General, that at the election for Liverpool, when Mr. Brougham and Mr. Creevey were opposed to the gallant General and Mr. Canning, he (Lord Sefton) took an active part in behalf of the candidates he befriended. In consequence he was subpœnaed as a witness on the election committee to which General Tarleton's petition was referred. On being asked, he believed by Mr. Adam, whether he had any conversation with the gallant General on the hustings, he had stated, that the gallant General, after remarking that the election expenses on the other side were undischarged, said, "My election expenses are settled every morning."

Mr. *Gladstone* said, that one witness, and one only, had impugned the conduct of Mr. Canning, with respect to the elections at Liverpool. Now he must say, as the son of one of Mr. Canning's Committee, that Mr. Canning had never given, or consented to the giving, of any bribe for his return. He must also deny that any such system existed as that mentioned by the hon. member for Preston (Mr. J. Wood). Mr. Canning never gave any such authority to his friends to divide his patronage. The noble Lord (Lord Sefton) was correct in saying that bribery had existed in some of the elections at Liverpool, but let him tell the noble Lord, that it was bribery on the part of the friends of the hon. and learned Gentleman, then a candidate, now the noble Lord on the Woolsack—that the freemen of Liverpool did subscribe 10,000*l.* to carry on that hon. and learned Gentleman's election, and all the return he made them for it was a speech impugning the purity of election in that town. He must say also, that part of that learned Lord's election expenses there were still unpaid.

Mr. *J. Wood*, in explanation, said, that he believed he was mistaken in saying that Mr. Canning's patronage was shared by the "Canning Cycle;" but he was correct in stating that Mr. Canning's friends did sign for his patronage there.

Mr. *C. Wood* would not have troubled the House, if he had not sat on the Liverpool Election Committee. He could not agree with the gallant General that corruption had been proved only by the evidence of one witness. He referred to the report of the Committee, to show that it had been proved by more than one witness. He was sure, that if the various members of the Committee rose and stated their opinions, they would all say that there did not exist any doubt of the fact. He did not mean to say, that it appeared that the gallant General himself had ever spent a shilling at the election for Liverpool. Nor did it appear in evidence that Mr. Ewart had ever himself spent a shilling at the election for Liverpool; and more than that, it appeared to be doubtful if he knew of the bribery that was carrying on.

Sir *R. Peel* observed, that with respect to this question, as with respect to many of the questions in the important measure which had lately undergone so much discussion in that House, the House were acting, not politically but judicially; and ought not to decide without previous investigation. At the same time he was bound to say, that it appeared that there must be some inquiry on the subject. But why was there a variance between the Resolution proposed by the hon. member for Wiltshire and the Report of the Committee? The report of the Committee stated, "That it appears that there was gross bribery at the late election of Burgesses to serve in Parliament for the borough of Liverpool:" the hon. Gentleman's Resolution was, "That the system of bribery and treating which has prevailed at Liverpool demands the serious consideration of this House." Acting as a judicial body, they ought to adhere to the terms in which the report of the Committee was expressed.

Mr. *C. Wood* said, he should be satisfied with that course.

Sir *R. Peel* said, if he should be satisfied that the bribery existed to so great an extent as was said, he would not be content to bring in other voters—he would disfranchise the whole body.

Lord *Althorp* agreed with the right hon. Baronet, that the House ought to confine itself to confirming the report of the Committee—that would give full means of introducing other evidence of general corruption.

Mr. *Benett* said, that not an hour ago he had shown his Resolution to the gallant General, who expressed himself satisfied with it. He must say, that he thought some very invidious remarks had been made in the course of the present discussion. He had not spent a single shilling at his election for Wiltshire in a dishonest or illegal manner. He would ask the gallant General, though he had no wish to retaliate on him personally, whether he could say, that the same had been the case with other candidates for Liverpool.

General *Gascoyne* acknowledged, that the hon. Gentleman had shown him his Resolution, but he thought at the time that it was the report of the Committee.

Mr. *Benett* intimated, that he had no disinclination to substitute the expressions in the report of the Committee.

On the suggestion of Mr. Speaker, the Resolution in the report of the Committee was read, and

Mr. Benett moved that the House do agree with the Committee on the said Resolution.

Sir *R. Vyvyan* observed, that in the present excited state of the House and of the country, produced by the reports which for the last four-and-twenty hours had been in circulation, whether true or not, it remained for the noble Lord opposite to say, of a dissolution of Parliament, in consequence of the House of Commons having decided, the other night, that they would uphold the present number of English Representatives—in consequence of the House of Commons having decided that they would maintain the Protestant religion—in consequence of the House of Commons having decided, that they would not reduce the number of Members for Protestant England, and increase the number of Members for Catholic Ireland, at a moment when the Catholic priesthood had so much power in that country—it was exceedingly important that the House should know whether they were to be dissolved, and sent back to their constituents for thus maintaining the best interests of the country. There were some hon. Members who would, no doubt, be glad to go back to their constituents, because they had been voting for the disruption of their franchises. In this period of great excitement, he felt it his duty to call on his Majesty's Ministers to state whether, the House of Commons having determined that the number of English Representatives should not be reduced, they had advised his Majesty, for the first time in the history of the country, to exercise the royal prerogative for dissolving Parliament, because, his Majesty's Ministers having introduced a plan of Reform changing the whole character and foundation of the Constitution, the House of Commons had determined that to such a plan they would not consent? He had been much pleased the other night to hear a gallant Officer, the hon. member for Southwark, declare his opinion, and he (Sir R. Vyvyan) believed it was the opinion of every man on that side of the House, that his Majesty's Ministers were not very solicitous about the question for the reduction of the number of English Representatives; and that he had therefore made an arrangement with the gallant and hon. member for Liverpool to support his motion. He really knew not for what reason his Majesty's Ministers had made that the great question which was to decide the fate of their measure; and he asked the House, whether their proceeding did not look very much like a trick or manœuvre for the purpose of throwing out the Bill? Although the second reading of the Bill had been carried by a majority of only one, yet, having been carried, it ought to have been allowed to be discussed in the Committee, with a view of ascertaining whether it might not receive some beneficial modifications. He would state in public what he had already repeatedly stated in private, that he did not vote for the proposition of the hon. and gallant General for the purpose of throwing out the Bill. He wished to make one more observation before he put the question which he had risen to put to the noble Lord. He had declared, when he moved the Amendment on the motion for the second reading of the Bill, that if that Amendment were carried, and in consequence the Bill were not read a second time, he intended to move a Resolution pledging the House to strengthen and amend the constitution of that House. The words of his intended Resolution were—"That it is expedient to strengthen and amend the Representation of the United Kingdom, and to admit to a participation in the elective franchise those interests which had grown into importance with the increasing wealth and prosperity of the country, due regard being had to the dignity of the Crown, to the liberties of the people, to the maintenance of existing institutions, and to the welfare of our vast colonial possessions." Those were the words of the Resolution which it was his intention to move had his Amendment been carried. He could not help believing that his Majesty's Ministers must feel themselves to be in a desperate condition. By their conduct, they had thrown the people of England into a state of great excitement; and he trusted that what they had done would fall on the heads of only a few Members, and that they and their gracious Sovereign would not, at some future period, look back upon the present step as the first that had led to the destruction of the monarchy. The question which he wished to put to the noble Lord was—"Is it the intention of his Majesty's Ministers to proceed with the Bill, or to advise the King to dissolve Parliament because the House of Commons has not consented to reduce the number of English Representatives?"

Lord *Althorp*: I have no hesitation in stating in answer to the first part of the hon. Baronet's question, that having taken into consideration the necessary effect and consequences of the vote of the House the other night, it is not the intention of his Majesty's Government to proceed with the Bill. It would be inconsistent with my duty to give any answer to the latter part of the hon. Baronet's question.

Colonel *Davies*, as the friend of Reform, expressed his regret at the course which had been pursued by his Majesty's Ministers. He did not think, that the cause of Reform would be advanced by a dissolution of Parliament. It was true, that a great majority of the people of England were favourable to that cause, but that sentiment had been expressed chiefly by parties who had not the elective franchise. Great bodies of freemen would oppose it, and probably, too, the voters in nomination boroughs would turn against their patrons who might be favourable to disfranchising them. It was most unfortunate that Ministers had staked the fate of the Bill on that particular question, on which there might perhaps be found a very general feeling in the country in consonance with the decision of the House. In his opinion they should go on with the Bill, and get as much of it adopted as they could. At present, not a single borough was disfranchised; but if they had succeeded in obtaining even a tithe of the measure, they might then have gone to the people with greater advantage.

Mr. *W. Duncombe* confirmed the statement of the hon. member for Cornwall, that neither the hon. Member nor himself voted the other night for the Amendment of the hon. and gallant member for Liverpool, with any view of getting rid of the Bill. Their only object was, to get rid of that part of the plan which went to reduce the number of English Representatives. They did not conceive that, by voting for that Amendment, they precluded themselves from adopting such parts of the Bill as they might consider beneficial to the country. He had before stated to the House, that he was ready to oppose the Bill in a straight-forward, manly way; but would never be a party to any manœuvre. Should Ministers recommend a dissolution of Parliament, that would only confirm the opinion which had been formed of them out of doors. They had, on coming into office, promised economy and retrenchment; and had they not, in the face of this promise, increased the army and navy? He considered that an awful responsibility would rest upon the heads of the Ministry, if they dissolved Parliament in the present excited state of the public mind.

Mr. *Portman* thought, the Ministers had done wisely in not proceeding farther with this Bill; because it was not, in his opinion, possible, with the equally-balanced state of parties, to carry the measure through successfully. If the dissolution should take place, the question of Reform would be placed in the hands of the people, and it would be for them to decide it as they thought proper. He considered the present discussion extremely improper. The House of Commons had no right to interfere with the Crown in the exercise of one of its prerogatives.

Colonel *Sibthorp* praised the conduct of the gallant member for Liverpool; and in reference to the question actually before the House, remarked, that subscriptions had been made to ensure the return of his gallant friend (General Gascoyne) for Liverpool; which proved the confidence with which he was regarded by his constituents, and their gratitude for his services. He remarked, at the same time, that subscriptions were got up by a body called the Political Union, for very different purposes. They were entered into to oppose those Members who had done their duty by endeavouring to maintain the Constitution. For himself, he would stand or fall by the independent conduct which he had always pursued. And if Ministers hereafter gave no more satisfaction by their measures than they had hitherto done, he should never wish to see them again.

Mr. *George Robinson* said, it was a remarkable circumstance that those Members who now found fault with Ministers for the supposed exercise of their discretion, in advising the King to dissolve Parliament, had constantly endeavoured to defeat the Reform Bill since its first introduction to the House. He thought that Ministers had acted wisely, after the vote of last night, in determining to dissolve Parliament, and to wait for a more favourable occasion for again bringing a Reform Bill forward. He believed, and so he thought did the country, that those Members who voted for the motion of the gallant Representative of Liverpool were enemies to all Reform. When he said all Reform, he meant salutary Reform, which the people required, and which would give them, not a nominal influence, but a legitimate influence in that House. He did not care a fig for the hon. member for Cornwall's Resolution, which he had read for the first time after the Bill had been withdrawn. He would ask any independent man in the House what, after all, the resolution of the hon. Member amounted to; what but a string of vague truisms? If that Resolution had been carried, a bill might have been brought in which would have effected any species of Reform, or no Reform whatever.

Sir *R. Vyvyan* explained, that he voted with the gallant General on a single point. It was his intention, had there been a question as to going into a Committee, to have voted for it.

Lord *Morpeth* said, that if the Ministry had determined on a dissolution, their determination showed their wisdom and spirit. As to the point at issue between him and the hon. Member (Mr. W. Duncombe) he would not shrink from the decision of the country.

Sir *C. Forbes* congratulated the House upon Ministers having abandoned their revolutionary Bill; and, as for a dissolution, he could not believe that Ministers would dare to recommend it to his Majesty; or that, even if they did, his Majesty had not sufficient sense and prudence to resist and refuse that recommendation. If Government should resign, it would give him great pleasure; for, although he respected individuals belonging to it, he could not respect those who composed it as a body. But that they would resign was what he feared the country could not expect. They had been too long looking and struggling for place and power to give them up quietly. They might be defeated on every measure—and, indeed, they were defeated on every measure, except the tax on steam-boats, which was the only thing which remained upon which they could be defeated. They would not, however, resign—they would pertinaciously cling to office to the last possible moment. As Mr. Canning said of another Whig Ministry—when they were driven from the ship, they would take to the boat—and when they were flung overboard from the boat, they would cling to the oar.

Mr. *Hart Davis* said, that he approved of some parts of the Reform Bill, but on the whole he considered it a most revolutionary measure. He would describe it in those terms to his constituents, whom he was not afraid, any more than the hon. member for Worcester (Mr. Robinson), to meet face to face. He congratulated the House and the country upon the withdrawal of the Bill.

Lord *Valletort* observed, that the noble Lord opposite (Lord Morpeth) had said, the determination of Ministers to dissolve Parliament would show wisdom and spirit. He strongly denied the first proposition; and as for the second, if desperate courage, reckless blindness, and total disregard of consequences to those over whom they unfortunately ruled, were spirit, the noble Lord was right. He asked if this question of Reform was a question to be decided by the country while in such a state of excitement? Certainly not; but the Ministry felt that their Bill was one which could only be approved of by the country while in such a state of excitement. They knew, that if the feeling which was then abroad was suffered to abate—if feverish excitement were permitted to subside into wholesome quiet—the measure would meet the same treatment from the country which it would have assuredly met from that House. The project for dissolving Parliament at the present moment he considered highly criminal. He compared it to the design of putting a deadly weapon into the hands of a madman; and reminded Government, that the person who put such a weapon within the grasp of a madman, was responsible for the murders he might commit in his paroxysm of insanity.

Mr. *R. Price* hoped Government would not resign. They had the complete confidence of the Sovereign and the people: and he hoped they would have the wisdom and spirit to appeal to the people upon this subject. It was only for those who had acted in opposition to the wishes of their constituents to fear such an appeal. It was very well for them to condemn the recommendation to dissolve Parliament, but it was the first time he had ever heard it designated as unconstitutional for Ministers so to advise the King, when Parliament was at issue with the Government.

Mr. *M. Fitzgerald* said, he rose to defend himself from gross misrepresentations of the grounds of his vote upon the motion brought forward by the gallant General. He voted for that motion, because he considered it a most unjustifiable proposition to benefit Scotland and Ireland at the expense of the English Representation. The grounds of his vote were the desire to do justice to England; and he would strongly maintain that the keeping up the full Representation of England furnished no good reason why additional Members should not be given to Scotland and Ireland. For the leading individuals in the present Administration he entertained the highest possible respect, and he did not believe the Reform Bill was cordially assented to by these distinguished persons. He accordingly hailed the withdrawal of it with pleasure. Except some minor details, which could be adopted at any time, there was nothing in the Bill which could induce him to give it his approbation. He thought, that at present a dissolution would be a most unadvisable proceeding. The state of Ireland was most alarming; in several counties the peasantry were in actual rebellion, and there was no security for life and property. On what guarantee or security did they then proceed, that this state of things would not be rendered worse, and more alarming, by the excitement of a dissolution? They complained of nomination boroughs—were they prepared to place the Representation of Ireland in the hands of an individual? Or, were they so encouraged by the result of the late elections as to suppose their own influence would be paramount? He could scarcely suppose this, since of the three elections which had recently occurred in Ireland, two were decided by the nomination of the hon. member for Waterford. What was all the nomination of rotten boroughs compared with the power of nomination that would be thrown by the Government, in the event of a dissolution, into the hands of the hon. and learned member for Waterford? Was it not notorious, that if the hon. and learned member for Waterford had raised the cry of the Repeal of the Union against Sir Henry Parnell, that hon. Baronet would not have been so easily returned for the Queen's County? Was it not equally clear, too, that, without the presence of an army in Kilkenny, the noble Lord now returned for that county would have been defeated by the nominee of the hon. and learned Member? Where, however, was the army that would be able to give free access to the poll to the electors of all the counties in Ireland? It might be said that there would not be any need of such an army. In one respect he believed it, for he believed that they had the guarantee of the hon. and learned Member that all should be quiet—that the elections should be free from disturbance—that the Repeal of the Union should not be agitated, nor indeed, any other question but that of Parliamentary Reform. He did not mean to say that this might not be so, at least as far as the hon. and learned Member was concerned, for he did not mean to say that Ministers were reckoning without their host on this occasion; but he believed, that great as was the power of the hon. and learned Gentleman, he did not possess power enough to secure the peace and tranquillity of that country. It was now well understood, that an appeal was to be made to the people, and he feared the consequences that might ensue. He would make one observation with respect to the speeches of the hon. member for Preston, He had never been the friend of Universal Suffrage and Vote by Ballot; but he agreed with that hon. Member, that the effect of the Bill was, to exclude the lower classes of this country from their share in the Representation. He was opposed to such a change, and he should take his stand as decidedly against the disfranchisement of the constituency of Preston, because they were poor, as he should against the other part of the measure, which went to deprive property of its just influence in the country. It was now understood that an appeal to the constituency of the nation was about to be made, and it had become the fashion to talk of the approaching annihilation of the oligarchy; but he would assert, that the Reform which Government proposed was, in reality, calculated to raise up a more fearful oligarchy than any to which the term could have been heretofore applied, for it would empower the lower and middle classes, henceforward, arbitrarily to dictate to their superiors. With respect to himself, as individually affected by the intended dissolution, he could say with confidence, that he had no fears for the result. Throughout his entire political life he had been invariably consistent, and had shown himself always ready to go to the full length of any practical reasonable Reform. In 1797 he had opposed a proposition for Reform nearly similar to the present. His political principles and consistency, then, were too well known for him to fear the result of the election. He had always been ready to go the full length of any practicable measure of Reform, and for that reason he had given his vote for the disfranchisement of East Retford. He should be glad, too, that the number of Members for Scotland should be increased, and that the important town of Belfast should be brought more politically forward. He was also willing to extend the Representation to all the great cities of England. In any measure of Reform of this kind recently brought forward, the only justifiable course would be, that it should be proposed in one Session, and decided on in the next; but the Parliament ought not to be called on to get rid of one Constitution, and to make another, all in the same Session. As the measure was now hurried forward, no class and no interest had time to consider it, or conjecture what would be its probable consequences.

Sir *J. Newport* observed, that while his hon. friend was addressing the House, it really was impossible to know, at least so far as his speech went, what was the question before them. If the House was thus to be drawn into a debate on a question that was withdrawn, he did not know when the debates of that House were to have an end. It was certainly true, that the right hon. Gentleman had formerly refused his assent to a sweeping measure, as he called it, of this kind; but three years afterwards, he at the bidding of the noble Lord then at the head of the Irish Government, concurred in one which was ten times as revolutionary. He objected to the introduction of discussions of this kind.

Sir *R. Peel* said, he felt himself called on to vindicate the course taken by his right hon. friend. That at an early period that House might be dissolved, was in itself a justification for those now expressing their opinions on the subject who had not before had an opportunity. He inferred from the silence of the noble Lord opposite, that it was the intention of the Government to risk that experiment, which he thought at the present time was fraught with danger, and might end in general tumult. He quarrelled not with the noble Lord for abandoning the Reform Bill; if he thought there was such a degree of objection to the Bill, and to the details as to preclude the further progress of the Bill, he was a competent judge of the matter, and must be supposed to be right in his opinion; but he must regret the withdrawal of the measure on a motion which had nothing to do with its substance. In his opinion Reform ought to be conducted on one of two principles—either that of maintaining the relative proportions fixed at the time of the Union; or, if that proportion was departed from, a small addition should be made to the number of the Members for Ireland and Scotland, but the number of those for England ought to be retained. These—if he concurred in any measure of Reform—these would be the grounds on which his concurrence would be based; and these were the grounds on which the noble Lord, now at the head of the Government, proposed a Reform in the year 1800. At that time Mr. Grey was of opinion that the number of the Members ought to be reduced, and his plan of reduction was this:—He proposed to cut off several small boroughs, and in that way to reduce the number of Members for England and Scotland, and to allot to Ireland 85 Members instead of

100. Thus he proposed to retain the proportion between the Members for the three countries on the same basis that had been fixed at the time of the Union—a basis determined by their relative wealth and population. Such a change might be desirable—to one more extensive, he (Sir R. Peel) certainly should object. He never meant to go into the Reform Bill for the purpose of improving its details, he was opposed to the Bill distinctly, decidedly opposed to it—opposed to it because it was brought forward at a moment when expectation was most excited. If Reform was desirable, it should be made a substantive measure, and be introduced under the existence of less excitement than at the present moment. He had, therefore, no wish to improve the details of the Bill, and at the third reading he should most probably have been found expressing his dissent from the Bill. That the Ministers should give up the Bill on a Resolution that, in case of a Reform, the number of the English Representatives should not be diminished, was to him a thing the most unaccountable. If the Government had determined to dissolve the Parliament, he deeply lamented it, on account of the hazard to which he feared they would subject the country. He thought there was no justifiable ground for their coming to such a Resolution. Because this question of Parliamentary Reform had been negatived, Government felt it requisite for the proper administration of the affairs of the country to dissolve the Parliament. In his opinion, the measure was not one of such imminent and immediate necessity as to justify them in coming to such a decision. He could, however, well understand the motives for pressing on the measure. It had been brought forward at a time of great excitement—an excitement shared by those who had in some measure created it. Let them look at the language of a publication conspicuous for the talent with which it was conducted, and supposed to represent pretty accurately the opinions of at least some of his Majesty's Ministers. Let them read *The Edinburgh Review*, published in last Autumn, and they would find there a reference to the "beautiful days" of Paris; and when they had seen this, let them say whether his impression was not correct, that some of the authors of this Bill were sharers in that general excitement which had recently prevailed throughout Europe. He fully believed, if time had been given, that the re-action, which had already begun in public opinion—he might say manifestly begun—would have extended itself over all classes, hardly excepting even those who thought they were interested in the success of the Bill, as it would confer on them new privileges. But whether it was so or not, he thought that no Administration ought to undervalue the opinions of those who had already solemnly declared that they could not give their assent to the Bill. The wishes of the people had been talked of. When they talked of the people, they talked as if the people were to be numbered by heads, and they forgot the influence of wealth and education. It was impossible to deny—looking at the number who had spoken at the various public meetings throughout the country, and looking at the ability and the disinterestedness they had displayed—that there was great discordance in public opinion as to the merits of the Reform Bill; and he would assert that no man was entitled to say, that this Reform Bill met with that unanimous approbation which the Government had said the introduction of that Bill had occasioned. The Bill was based upon no principle; but proceeded throughout its several enactments on a matter of assumption, several of its enactments being most arbitrary, yet they pretended that no other could be received in the country with any feeling but that of dissatisfaction. If the Parliament was to be dissolved because this measure could not be carried, then many measures relating to the internal tranquillity of the country, and to its foreign relations which were requisite, would be postponed, or altogether passed over. There was, however, as it seemed to him, no immediate necessity for dissolving Parliament. What was the pretext for it? Why the Ministers were afraid to keep alive and perhaps increase the excitement that now existed. They need not fear. It would die of itself. A greater degree of excitement than the present had died out before. He had indeed heard complaints from the opposite side of the House that the people had become indifferent to the subject of Reform, after they had manifested a desire for it in a greater degree than at the present moment. Let the events of Paris fade from recollection, and let the people of this country calmly consider the effects of these Revolutions in Paris and Brussels, and he would ventu

to say that the excitement would die away and then, at any future period, this country would be in a fitter state to consider of a proposition for amendment in the Representative system; but, if his Majesty's Government were prepared to advise a dissolution of the Parliament, in what state would they put themselves by giving that advice? From the course the Government had pursued, he did feel a strong confidence that, with regard to Ireland, they would have asked from the Parliament a coercive measure, limited, of course, but still vesting them with more powers than they now possessed. He had not pressed them to ask for the Insurrection Act, for, after the experience he had had, he was fully convinced that nothing but absolute necessity could justify it. He agreed with those who said, that though that measure might sometimes produce the effect of tranquillity, it was yet a most unconstitutional measure; and wherever sentiments of a particular kind existed among the body of the people, and those sentiments were thought to create danger to the State, the remedy for that danger had better be intrusted to the usual administration of the laws than be provided for in such a manner as to constitute the upper classes the judges of it. Indeed to vest the power of decision and of action, at such a time, in the hands of one portion of the people, to be exercised over the rest, so far from diminishing discontent, though it might seem to effect a cure, left a rankling sore behind, and had a tendency to perpetuate the evil. Under such circumstances, he should rather suggest to the Government the possibility of making some provision by which another tribunal could be instituted for the trial of offenders; but if the Parliament were now to be dissolved, no such thing could be done. He rejoiced that the necessity for these measures did not seem to exist at present. He knew nothing of the state of Ireland but what he saw in the public papers, but what he did see convinced him that the state of society in the western parts of that country was such as no man could look at without a feeling of the greatest sorrow. It was to be hoped, however, that the permanent laws of the country, and the powers conferred on the Government by some existing Statutes, would be found sufficient, without its being expedient to add to those powers in any way. If, however, it should be found necessary to have recourse to extraordinary powers, they certainly ought to be effective. It appeared to him but a misplaced humanity to let discontent grow to a head, until no authority but a large military force, or the operation of the Insurrection Act, was sufficient to put it down. He, having confidence that such a measure would have been produced without going too far, should, in that case, have lent his humble aid to the Ministers to extinguish the evil. Would not, he would ask, would not the general election add to the previously existing discord? What had taken place in Clare? In order to maintain the public peace, it was necessary to station a military force in the county. That election had taken place while the present Ministry were in office. He was told, that there was nothing political in these disorders: he was not of that opinion; but if it were true, then the only relief that could be expected was, from some change in the relative conditions of landlord and tenant, and Reform could effect no diminution of the evil. Under these circumstances, he was afraid of the destruction of that force by which the public peace had been preserved, and afraid of the circumstance of their being left for six weeks, at least, without the means of resorting to any extraordinary remedy in case of disorder. He must say, that the Ministers who, in such a state of things, advised a dissolution of Parliament, incurred a heavy responsibility. Was that all? What would be the immediate effect of the dissolution? The powers they already possessed would be extinguished: by that Act which enabled the Government to suppress illegal associations, it was provided, that the power thereby created should expire at the end of the present Session of Parliament. That Session would be determined by the dissolution, and by the dissolution of Parliament, not only might all the evils of Ireland break out afresh, but the powers now possessed by the Government would be put an end to, and it would be prevented from making a fresh application to Parliament for additional powers. On these grounds he deprecated the expressed intention of the Government. He conceived that the dissolution of a Parliament so lately assembled—which had executed so little in the public service—which had scarcely passed one measure worth recording—was not justifiable. He found on the Journals of that House reasons assigned against the dissolution of Parliament, which were so well worded, and were so applicable to past circumstances, that he should take the liberty of reading them, and with the view of ensuring more attention than was usually paid to written documents, he would state, that these were the Resolutions put on record on the Journals of that House, in 1807, by the noble Lord now at the head of the Government. They were Resolutions condemning the dissolution of Parliament. He called on them to weigh well the sentences of the noble Lord. The Resolutions were moved at the re-assembling of Parliament in 1807. They were in these words: "That by a long experience of his Majesty's virtues, we well know it to be his Majesty's invariable wish, that all his prerogatives should be exercised solely for the good of his people." He had told them how much the words of these Resolutions demanded their approval. He would now go on:—"That our dutiful attachment to his Majesty's person and government obliges us, therefore, most humbly to lay before him the manifest misconduct of his Ministers, in having advised the dissolution of the late Parliament, in the midst of its first Session, and within a few months after his Majesty had been pleased to assemble it for the despatch of the urgent business of the nation. That this measure, advised by his Majesty's Ministers, at a time when there existed no difference between any of the branches of the Legislature, nor any sufficient cause for an appeal to his Majesty's people, was justified by no public necessity or advantage. That by the interruption of all private business then depending in Parliament, it has been productive of great and needless inconvenience and expense, thereby wantonly adding to the heavy burthens which the necessities of the times require. That it has retarded many useful laws for the internal improvement of the kingdom."—He doubted much whether this could be truly said, indeed, of the present Parliament, as he feared that no measures for the internal improvement of the kingdom had ever been introduced by the Ministers; but the Amendment moved by the noble Lord went on to say—"and for the encouragement and extension of its agriculture, manufactures, and commerce. And that it has either suspended, or wholly defeated, many most important public measures, and protracted much of the most weighty business of Parliament, to a season of the year when its prosecution must be attended with the greatest public and private inconvenience. And that we feel ourselves bound still further to submit to his Majesty, that all these mischiefs are greatly aggravated by the groundless and injurious pretences on which his Majesty's Ministers have publicly rested their evil advices; pretences, affording no justification for the measure, but calculated only to excite the most dangerous animosities among his Majesty's faithful subjects at a period when their united efforts were more than ever necessary for the security of the empire, and when to promote the utmost harmony and co-operation amongst them would have been the first object of faithful and provident Ministers."* These Resolutions contained the general arguments on the question of dissolution at such a moment. There were, he repeated, no such circumstances as now called for a dissolution. He admitted the necessity of Reform; but he again denied that it was an immediate and imminent necessity. He could not refrain from availing himself of this opportunity, the last he might have, of protesting against the contemplated dissolution, and of making his declaration that Ministers by resorting to it, incurred, perhaps, a more serious responsibility than had been risked by any previous Government.

Mr. *Stanley* had neither intention nor authority to enter into the discussion; he, therefore, only rose to remark that there was this difference between the conduct of Earl Grey in 1807, and the right hon. Baronet upon this occasion. The Resolution of 1807 was brought forward when the dissolution of Parliament was not only announced, but had taken place, and when those under whose responsibility the step had been taken were ready and at liberty to justify it. The dissolution had not yet taken place—it had not been announced,—and the lips of the King's advisers were necessarily sealed.

Mr. *Brownlow* was not a little surprised that the complaint against the possible exercise of an undoubted prerogative of the Crown should come from the other side of the House, which until now had so stiffly stickled for those prerogatives. Unless he were greatly mistaken, such was the effect of what had been advanced against a dissolution, for although some care was taken to word their advice as delicately as possible, the object was, to deter the King from resorting to the contemplated extremity. He was also astonished that hon. Members who had opposed the Reform Bill should not be happy to seize the earliest opportunity of resorting to their constituents; for throughout the discussion they had constantly vaunted that they required nothing more than their resistance to that measure to recommend them to the country: how often had the boast been heard—"With your Bill in my hand I will meet those who send me to Parliament." It was difficult consistently to account for this change; but on, perhaps, the last day of the existence of the present Parliament, it might be convenient to hold language different to that which had been used at a period of less immediate peril. For his part, he (Mr. Brownlow) rejoiced that an appeal was about to be made to the people, and he trusted that the natives of England would remember with gratitude, that they owed the Reform Bill, as far as it had gone, to the Representatives of Ireland. He did not deny that Ireland was in a state of excitement as far as great distress was calculated to produce it; but he did deny that that excitement was even remotely connected with politics, and the movements in the West arose only out of the wants of the people. There was now happily an end of all fear of religious warfare—the feelings which produced it were allayed for ever, and the people of Ireland regarded the Reform Bill as a measure of civil improvement, calculated to remove the very distresses of which they complained—as a sure pledge and guarantee of better Government than they had experienced for a melancholy series of years. Of this Ministers might rest assured, that the measure would receive in Ireland unanimous approbation.

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* Hansard's Parl. Debates, Vol. ix, p. 583.

Mr. *Wyse* also bore testimony that no political excitement existed in Ireland, and expressed his conviction that none would be produced by the Reform Bill and the consequent Dissolution. The Marquis of Anglesea had done much to satisfy different classes, and to tranquillise the public mind, and a general election would be followed by none of the evils which the other side were so anxious to predict. Hon. Members on the opposite side seemed to entertain much apprehension of the influence of the hon. and learned member for Waterford. That influence, no doubt, was very extensive and very great, but it should also be remembered, that they who now most loudly complained of it, were the men who, by an obstinate adherence to old abuses, and a continued system of mal-administration in Ireland, were chiefly instrumental in creating and consolidating that power. On the present occasion, the exertion of that influence had been almost anticipated: there were few in Ireland who were not favourable to the Bill. Put an end to the misgovernment of Ireland, and the influence of the hon. Member, which was so much dreaded, would cease as a necessary consequence. As to the threat of commotions, he had no fear that any would take place; he apprehended no such events as had occurred in France; for ours was an aristocracy, not of name only, but an aristocracy that lived with the people, and depended upon the people's love.

Mr. *O'Connell* said, had he risen before the right hon. Baronet (Sir R. Peel), he should have confined himself to a few sentences; but having risen after him, it would be necessary for him to extend his observations, though to no great length. Reference had been made to the state of the county of Clare, and to the troops it had been thought necessary to quarter in it during the election; but that experiment of itself established, that political excitement always diminished illegal outrage; the soldiers had not been called upon to protect a voter in a single instance. The causes of disturbance were very different, and if he were anxious for a Dissolution, it was because it would give to the people of Ireland a legitimate hope, which would prevent all resort to lawless violence. Grant Reform, and every chance of political commotion would be removed. It was highly edifying now to listen to the right hon. Gentleman, while he talked so philosophically about the Insurrection Act and its unconstitutional vices; but it was singular that these enlightened views should never have occurred to him during the twenty-three years that he had been in office. It was very well for the opponents of the Reform Bill to exclaim, "Do not dissolve;" but he (Mr. O'Connell) called upon Government to dismiss the present Parliament for the very reason that was urged against it. A gross delusion was attempted when it was said, that the extinction of rotten boroughs was necessarily to be translated into a diminution of the number of English Members. This was almost as barefaced as the endeavour of an hon. Baronet to show that the Reform Bill was meant to increase Popery, and who said, that he upon that ground had voted against it. In the present enlightened age, and with such a talented Press, it would not be easy to persuade the people of England to believe, that the Reform Bill ought to be rejected for the sake of protecting them from the encroachments of the Roman Catholic priesthood. Some hon. Members had urged that the dissolution ought to be postponed; but if it were postponed, what pledge of security would Ministers give the people of England that they meant hereafter again seriously to bring forward the question of Reform? He hoped that Ministers would at once advise the King (and God bless him!) to appeal to the deliberate good sense of the people, and to call upon them to aid in the abolition of that corrupt system which had already degraded Great Britain among the nations of Europe. If the Poles had been conquered instead of being victorious—if the barbarous hordes of Russia, having scoured the North of Europe, even threatened to make war upon England from the opposite coast of France, still hostilities ought not to be commenced without a dissolution of Parliament. Sure he was, that in Ireland such would be the wisest course, and the elections would proceed and terminate with the most perfect tranquillity. There was no principle afloat in Ireland that would not aid the Reform Bill, and he trusted that the fifty-nine Members who had voted in favour of the Reform Bill, would, by the new election, be increased to eighty. Grattan, whose name was canonized—Ponsonby, who had been Lord Chancellor—and Curran, who had died in obscurity, as Master of the Rolls—led the public mind in Ireland; but the measure of Reform was scouted in the Irish House of Commons in 1797. The people were driven to despair, and the result was the rebellion of 1798. The people of England now knew their friends from their enemies, and an opportunity ought to be given them of confiding in the one and rejecting the other. Let Reform be refused, and he must be a bold man who could prophesy the result. The right hon. Baronet might taunt the Belgians, and cast what reflections he pleased upon the three beautiful days of Paris. They showed what was to be expected by a despotic Monarch, who dared to trample upon the chartered rights and privileges of a people. The French nation did right not to lie down in a tame and miserable subjection and subserviency. They hurled from the throne the tyrant who wished to overthrow their sacred liberties. They did but that which he should be glad to see the people of England do, if that occurred in England—which never would occur while the present illustrious family presided over her destinies—which it was impossible should ever occur while the present august Monarch ruled over a faithful and attached people—namely, if an attempt were made to turn the nation into one entire rotten borough. If, for instance, an ordinance were to come out to-morrow that the Representation of England should be similar to that of Scotland, would the people of England submit to it? Certainly not; or they would belie their ancestors and themselves. How many atrocious corruptions and abominations had been already submitted to, merely from despair? The people were now beginning to hope—give their hopes a legitimate channel. Let Ministers follow up their great and majestic measure. Let them say to the people, "there is a question to be tried between the boroughmongers and us. You, the people of England, are the tribunal to which the question is to be referred—you are to judge between us, and to decide whether there is to be still a boroughmongering system, or a Ministry which is to stand only upon the judgment and the support of the people."

Lord *Norreys* said, he would not attempt to conceal the motives which had actuated him in voting the other night. He would say honestly and candidly, it was to defeat the Bill. He had been lately in the country—he found a variety of opinions—the towns generally in favour—the landed interest generally averse, from the Bill. This Bill was, to all intents and purposes, prejudicial to the agriculturists. It was evident the landed interest must be outvoted on every occasion; and would not that in the end affect the towns? Were not trade and manufactures bound up and inseparably connected with the land? What trade could prosper—what manufactures flourish—what money would be circulated through the country with landlord or tenant in a depressed state? Did the country know that—though Lord Grey had not been one of them—nearly the whole of the Ministers had been connected for many years with the Government of the country, and that they had introduced that system of policy, the evil effects of which the country were now experiencing? They had first broached the principles of free trade!—they had advocated and finally succeeded in carrying, through the want of firmness on the part of the late Government, the alteration of the currency, which by affecting the land in the first instance, afterwards created a stagnation in trade, and a general distress, which, with the refusal of the late Government to inquire into that distress, had given the country too good reason to cry out for Reform. One of their first acts had been the abolition of the yeomanry, which he must contend to have been a most weak and pusillanimous policy—a most false and paltry economy, the impolicy of which their having been forced now to re-establish them, sufficiently proved. The country had before now trusted to their vain and fanciful projects; they had embarked in false political experiments, no beneficial results of which had ever been realised, but, on the contrary, they had brought with them ruin and distress. He cautioned the country, that it might not be led away on this occasion. He regretted the course which had been pursued; he regretted that Ministers had not brought forward a more moderate plan, for he would venture to assert, had they introduced a moderate and constitutional measure, no true friend to the country would have dared to have opposed them; but whatever the course it was now their intention to pursue, whether a change in the Executive Government of the country, or an appeal to the nation, must be attended with excitement and agitation. If an appeal to the country, he should not be afraid to go before his constituents; he should go before them, whatever was the result, with a consciousness of having done his best for the country. He considered it the duty of a Member of Parliament to be guided by a sense of duty to the country in preference to all other considerations. He was afraid popularity on this occasion had been too much looked to; popularity had been courted.

——— Tuus, O Regina, quid optes
Explorare, labor; mihi jussa capessere fas est.

Dr. *Lushington* said, that the question was, whether on this occasion, there was sufficient reason and ground to justify the adoption of the great and important measure proposed by his Majesty's Ministers? The right hon. Baronet had read the Resolutions proposed by the noble Earl, now at the head of the Government, so long back as twenty-four years ago. There was not one of them in which he (Dr. Lushington) did not perfectly concur, and if the circumstances were at all similar, he would give them his consent; but the cases were widely different. He thought that nothing could be more dangerous, and more likely to excite the disappointment and indignation of the people of England, than to find that the measure, of which they universally approved, was postponed for an indefinite period, when his Majesty's Ministers had the power, by appealing to the people, to obtain their final sanction. It would be for the people to do their duty —Ministers had so far done theirs:—it would be for themselves to determine whether they were to be governed by Representatives of their own choice, or by the nominees of those who had interests which could only be advanced at the expense of theirs. "But," says the right hon. Baronet, "wait till the present excitement has passed over, till the recollection of the three days in Paris has faded from the minds of the people, and then come forward with a moderate measure of Reform which we can all calmly discuss and approve of." But he asked, could the three days of Paris ever pass away from the recollection of the people of this country? Could such a bright incident in the history of the human race be so readily forgotten? It could not be forgotten; and were he a Frenchman, he should feel, that for the first time in his life he could be truly proud of the name; that the victories of Louis 14th, and the military splendor of the iron reign of Napoleon, were as nought compared with the glorious resistance of freemen to the attempts to enslave them of a despotic monarch. But there was no danger of excitement in this country, for at no period were the people better able to appreciate the merits of such a measure, and to assert them without violence. And from whom was it that the advice not to dissolve Parliament emanated? Why, from those who all their lives scouted every measure of Reform, and would continue to do so still were it in their power. For twenty years every plan for improving the Representation of the people had received the opposition of these Gentlemen;

but now forsooth they all were "friendly to the principle" of Reform—admitted its necessity, but objected to any plan but their own. The hon. member for Cornwall, seeing that to set his face openly against Reform would not just now answer, had attempted to indirectly raise a "No Popery" cry against it. Yes, the hon. Member made such an attempt; and he had heard him with indignation, as he was sure did every honest and enlightened Gentleman in that House. But the day for such a paltry attempt had passed away; the people were no longer to be deluded by such subterfuges of bigotry, and the scenes, so unworthy of the English Ministry of 1807, could never be again repeated in this country. Allusions had been made to the state of Ireland, and to measures of coercion to be adopted for that country. He did not think that violating established institutions, and introducing new measures increasing in severity, were the best means of preserving tranquillity. If the Government had adopted the determination of advising his Majesty to dissolve the Parliament, he would hail it as a measure denoting courage—a courage befitting so good a cause—a courage which would not exist were it not for the conviction that the cause warranted the advice;—and it need not be feared that the people would show, by those whom they would send to represent them in a new Parliament, that they were sensible of the merits of the measure, and that they considered as their enemies those individuals who had given it their opposition. The right hon. Baronet would have the country suppose that, if the Members of that House were now sent back to their constituents, it would be upon the question whether 530 should be the number of the House, while it was well known that it was on account of the opposition to the measure itself, and because there was no rational prospect of carrying, in the present House of Commons, that which was in itself of vital importance—that which admitted not of postponement—which the people desired, and upon which the safety of the whole State depended. He would take the liberty of saying—and he cared not who denied it—that, after the Government had been in the hands of an Administration who, he took for granted, had done their best in the discharge of their duties, and, after the extinction of 4,000 places amounting to 600,000*l.* a year, that House was in such a state as fully to verify Mr. Pitt's words, "that no honest man could be a Minister." Whether Ministers were chosen from this side of the House or from that, it mattered not, for till the House was so constituted as to speak the sentiments of the people, it would be utterly impossible for any honest Government to carry on the affairs of the country.

Mr. *Grove Price* thought it a little too much for the hon. and learned Gentleman to charge that House with a want of political honesty, when it was to the decision of that House that the learned Gentleman and his friends were indebted for the situation in which they stood. He was then addressing the House most probably for the last time, under the peculiar circumstances in which the country was placed. Yes, this was most likely the only opportunity that would be presented to him of delivering his sentiments there. While he thanked certain parties for their willingness to get rid of one who belonged to no party whatever, he could not, at the same time, but recollect that when, on a late occasion, he had appeared before his constituents, he received no less than five votes of thanks from a majority of 1,000 of the persons who had sent him to that House. He could only say, that whether remaining in that House, or retiring from it, he was resolved to do his duty to the utmost of his power. It would seem that an hon. Gentleman opposite thought proper to cheer him, but he was willing to receive that cheer for his honest and independent vote. An hon. Member, who was not now in his place, and of whom, in his absence he wished to say nothing, had dwelt upon the glorious days of France—in the "three glorious days of July"—"glorious" they were called with a disunited and distracted people—with order trampled under foot, and wild anarchy raging round in all directions—till at last the miserable agents in the wretched scene were now become the sport of despotism. Let him ask the hon. Member who had spoken of the Ordinances of the late King of France, what would now be the opinion of Monsieur Mauguin and others as to what was passing in England? What would be the opinion of those parties who, in their detestation of England, hated that Government which had determined to remain at peace with us? Such parties detested us because, to use an appropriate quotation, "The trophies of Waterloo did not suffer these men to sleep." Let the House only consider for a moment what effect those Ordinances had in producing the late Revolution in France. The fact was, that a conspiracy had been going on in that country for years; and when the Ordinances were issued, they became the pretence for, and not the cause of insurrection. It appeared that the Members of this House were now threatened with being immediately sent back to their constituents. He himself was quite prepared for the event; of one thing he was quite convinced, that if an epitaph were to be written for the present Parliament, these words would be found peculiarly appropriate—"this Parliament was dissolved for its independence, and firm determination not to sacrifice the Constitution of the country." Again he would say, that so far as he himself was concerned, he cared not how soon a dissolution took place, but he should consider himself disgraced for ever if he were deterred by a threat from doing his duty; "I should, indeed," continued the hon. Member, "think myself disgraced if, at such a moment as the present, I should be capable of shrinking from my duty; if I did not, to use the language of Mr. Burke, 'add my feeble mite of service,' not by speaking, for in that I have little power, but in whatever other way my humble aid might be made useful to that side of the Constitution which needs it." The political horizon was now overcast with hazy clouds, and a dreadful tempest was at hand. The very existence of the Constitution was fearfully threatened, and its last hour would be that in which this measure should be carried into a law—

> Venit summa dies et ineluctabile tempus
> Dardaniæ.

It was possible, that a still more portentous revolution might take place than that of a change of dynasty. A dynasty might be changed, in some instances, without injury to the people, but not the Constitution. If, as would result from the adoption of this measure, they once destroyed the equipoise of the Constitution, there would be no means of restoring the balance. He would ask if ever there was any instance known, in which popular power predominated, without a decided tendency to increase that power? He would ask, was there ever any instance known of a tendency to limit it on the part of the people? It was true, as they were told in Holy Writ, that kings had frequently manifested a disposition to limit the power they possessed, but in popular institutions no limitation of the kind was ever known. He had often heard, from various quarters, the boroughmongers taxed as being a disgrace to the Constitution. He had heard numberless arguments adduced in support of this charge, and, among others, that well-known passage from Lord Bacon—"Time is the greatest of all innovators." Let hon. Members only see how that argument ought to be applied in the present instance, and what innovation really meant in reference to the question now under consideration. It was quite clear that, down to a comparatively recent period, the House of Commons had gone on gradually increasing its power; but there were no sudden or violent innovations. During the last fifty years, however, this increase had been extremely rapid, and its effects were now visible in the present measure. Would any statesman of the least knowledge or experience presume to say, that in a trading and commercial country like this, democratic power was not likely to increase? He contended—and no fact was better ascertained—that, in every country which depended upon trade and commerce, the democracy must necessarily increase in power, and the aristocracy decrease. What was the reason? It was this—because all persons engaged in trade and commerce consulted only their own private views, and, when once independent in their circumstances, they had no respect for rank or hereditary talent. Before they brought this Bill into operation, they must first divest man of all his natural jealousies and antipathies, and of all his dislike to those above him. When the supporters of the Bill should have effected this preliminary Reform, and made man an angel, then, and not till then, they might call upon the House to adopt their views. But he had been told, that the House of Commons was not, as it ought to be, predominant in the Constitution. Indeed! Could not one angry vote of that House, by stopping the supplies, put an end to the Aristocracy and the Crown together? What had De Lolme said upon this point? Had he not compared the Crown to a three-decker, which lay magnificently upon the waters, with its yards manned, and its streamers flying, but which was incapable of rolling its volleyed thunders over the deep until it had received its stores and ammunition from some other quarter? What was that other quarter but the people? What, too, he would ask, was the House of Lords? A body inferior to ourselves in wealth and power. Was it, in its constitution, aristocratical or democratical? He had heard a noble Lord say, on a former evening, that there was a more popular feeling in the House of Lords than there was in the House of Commons, and that the reason was, that the heirs of great families having imbued themselves with liberal notions and popular feelings, in order to make a display of their abilities in the House of Commons, carried their liberal notions and popular feelings along with them to the other House of Parliament, when the lapse of time gave them a seat there. Was the House of Lords, then, purely aristocratical? Was the Crown perfectly independent? If the House of Lords was neither purely aristocratical, nor the King perfectly independent, ought the House of Commons on its part to be purely democratical? It was necessary that in the third branch of the Legislature, which was the most powerful of all, there should be some counterbalancing check upon its own power. Here let him observe, that this had been remarked as one of the most curious characteristics of our Constitution, more than eighty years ago, by that philosophical historian, Mr. Hume. Mr. Hume, in one of his essays, observed, that Tacitus had declared, that in any government which consisted of three powers,—such as the monarchical, the aristocratical, and the democratical,—the balance could not long be preserved, for the power which was predominant would aggrandize itself at the expense of the two othes, and the result of such aggrandizement would be the destruction of the whole. Mr. Hume asked, how was it, that the prediction of Tacitus had proved incorrect with regard to the British Constitution? and he solved the question by stating, that it was owing to the Peers having in the House of Commons an interest and influence, which preserved their equipose in the Constitution. If that interest and that influence must be preserved, how could it be preserved except by the existence of those nomination boroughs, on which so many unmeaning sarcasms, so many idle jests, had of late been vented? It was because he wished to see the House of Commons preserve its due influence,—because he wished to see the House of Lords in possession of its proper privileges.—and because he wished to see the Crown not independent of, but connected with, the two other branches of the Legislature, and acting in harmonious concert with both, that he did not desire to witness such an influence in that House, as would convert the Mace on the Table into an Imperial Sceptre. He wished to see the spirit of democracy in this House; but he did not wish to see it predominant. He should never wish to see such an accession of weight as would make it necessary, when the vessel was overladen, to throw the additional burthen overboard. When the measure of Reform should be once carried, they would no longer find in that House men of moderate property and temperate views, but men of immense wealth, or needy panderers to public opinion. The school of subserviency was a very bad one in which to educate large classes of the people. He viewed such a state of things as the close and destruction of the British Constitution—that Constitution under which our ancestors had so long flourished, and which, in point of excellence, far outshone any system ever established in the proudest days of Greece or of Rome. The man who most admired that Constitution, with all its defects, was no less a character than Montesquieu; and, according to him, the man who looked only at certain parts of it resembled the fly, mentioned by Thomson, which perched on a pillar at St. Paul's might be capable of perceiving the irregularities the hills and holes of the stone, without having any power of forming the least estimate of the beauty and harmony of the whole structure. History sufficiently informed us that a body purely Representative, when associated with a Monarchy and an Aristocracy, must destroy the two latter powers. The three could not co-exist when such an ascendant was given to popular control. He warned the noble Lord opposite of the danger into which he was rushing. This was only the first essay, as was the case at a former period, when bold men being afraid to go, thinking they had already gone too far, found still bolder men to succeed them. History informed us that Fairfax found Cromwell; and the virtuous and amiable Lafayette found Mirabeau and Robespierre. He assured the noble Lord that he would have to encounter such opposition and such difficulties as he could not now anticipate; he would therefore earnestly conjure him to pause before he proceeded further, and took a step which he might never be able to retrace.

—— "facilis descensus Averni;
Noctes atque dies patet atra janua Ditis;
Sed revocare gradum, superasque evadere ad auras,
Hoc opus hic labor est."

In 1654, the democratic body was so powerful in England, that Cromwell was obliged to dissolve it, fearing that otherwise it might wrest the sword from his hand. The House needed only, as a further illustration of this argument, to look to the period of the Spanish Cortes, who were all-powerful, and the King nothing. Mr. Burke had very justly said, that those who would build up a Government should have the Crown for a basis, and popular power for their materials. But the sort of democracy which this Bill would establish was only what might be called a "royal democracy," under which the Crown should be placed on the head of an individual only to be thrown off whenever the popular voice might so decide. He had heard a great deal said about political economy; but he was an economist of evil. He maintained that, if this Bill once passed, there would be a greater revolution than any ever yet witnessed in the country from the earliest period of our own history. He would then earnestly call upon all those who would assent to such a state of things, not to countenance it, for he was an economist of evil; and they ought to be above all things careful not to cause it.

Sir *Thomas Acland* said, that in voting for the Motion of his gallant friend, he had expressed his great objection to that part of the Bill against which the motion of his gallant friend, last night, was directed. He thought the proposed alteration of the Members of that House a very unnecessary intermeddling with long-settled international compacts, which ought never to be disturbed, except on grounds of the most obvious expediency. He, therefore, entirely concurred in the Resolution of the gallant General; and he only regretted one circumstance by which it was attended—that was, that it gave an opening to the representing any person who voted for it as an enemy to all Reform. Even if the Resolution of the gallant General had been carried into effect, and adopted by his Majesty's Government, the principle of Reform would still have been secure; but he differed *toto cœlo* from those who supported disfranchisement for its own sake, nor could he let pass that opportunity of declaring that there had been the utmost want of consideration in so anxiously calling for the Bill, the whole Bill, and nothing but the Bill. In fact, its supporters would force it upon the House and the country, even before that time was given for consideration which a measure of such magnitude and importance, and complexity, demanded. He certainly voted for Reform, but he did so with the full conviction that it would be most dangerous to push Reform beyond very moderate limits indeed. Brought up, as he had been, in the commencement of his political life, at the feet of one of the most eloquent men who had ever adorned that House, he could never fail to receive, as the chief guide of his conduct upon the subject of Reform, the language which he heard from the lips of that eminent man —"Reverence the Constitution of your fathers, and if you ever attempt to alter or amend it, let that alteration be commenced by no rash innovating hand, lest you incur the loss of that blessing which it ought to be your constant endeavour to preserve uninjured." Those were the sentiments which he ever held in veneration, and from which he could, under no circumstances, be induced to depart. Not that he was otherwise than a Reformer, for the present times, he feared, demanded some change. What did they find during the last two or three years? In the minds of the most sober men there had been during that period a growing doubt, whether, sooner or later, it would not become necessary to enter into the question of Reform. The events of the late general election could not but be fresh in the recollection of hon. Members; for his part, he could look without dissatisfaction upon the course which he had pursued upon that occasion, because he could with perfect truth say, that he made no compromise of feeling or of principle. But when he remembered the period to which he alluded, he could not but remember, in connection with it, the fact, that men not accustomed to interfere in politics—men of the most sober modes of thinking, when asked what should be done to prevent the extreme of Reform, replied, "You cannot stand where you are." He would not follow up that statement by any observation on, or allusion to, what had occurred in both Houses of Parliament since they had assembled, further than this, that nothing had occurred during the whole period of their sitting, which did not most distinctly prove, that a change had taken place in the spirit of the times. Admitting that, he might then be asked why he hesitated in conceding at once all that Reformers demanded? He would reply, that he was a young Reformer, and, therefore, naturally cautious, and susceptible of alarm, averse from great and rapid change. With those feelings, how was he brought to regard the present Bill—a Bill so entirely unexpected, not looked for by any class in the community—a Bill the least in the world calculated to effect that gradual, temperate, and judicious Reform, by which he, and those who thought with him, were to be converted; however, he rejoiced that he had had an opportunity of delivering his sentiments upon the occasion of the second reading, were it only for the sake of proving his sincerity. He should now come to a subject which supplied, as he conceived, just ground of complaint—of complaint against his Majesty's Ministers, for the situation in which they placed the independent Members of that House. It was unreasonable in any set of men to come down to that House with a measure so complicated, and give the House only six weeks to consider of its details—a measure demanding such nicety of arrangement, instead of six weeks consideration, required six months. It was really too hard upon those who declared for the principle of the measure, to be called on to support its details at the short notice of six weeks—it was dealing with them too stringently to say, when they hesitated respecting some of its provisions, that the Government would have the Bill, the whole Bill, and nothing but the Bill. It had, not unfrequently, been the practice of an Administration to stake their existence upon the fate of a single measure. That might not perhaps be quite so convenient in a Reformed Parliament. The present Administration, however, had staked the fate of the measure upon the result of the question raised by the motion of the gallant General, the member for Liverpool, while, in point of fact, it meant their own fate. They told the House that they would go out unless they had the Bill, the whole Bill, and nothing but the Bill. Nothing, in his mind, could be more unreasonable than to object to the Bill merely on the ground of a proposed change being made to the extent of preventing the reduction in the Members of that House originally contemplated. That, he really thought, had nothing to do with the principle of the measure; yet, the moment it was adopted by the House, Government came down and declared that the whole character of the measure was changed, and that they would appeal to the people. He confessed, he could not look upon such a state of things otherwise than with regret. There was no independent Member in that House who was not interested in seeing a strong Government, for he really believed that most of the difficulties with which the country had to contend arose from the want of a strong Government; and he hoped that a Reformed Parliament, whenever they had one, would confer upon the country that blessing, though he could scarcely venture to anticipate such a result. He begged to call the attention of the House to a remark made by the Attorney General in the course of the discussions on the Reform Bill. He asked, "Had there ever been any great principle without compromise or without sacrifice?" That might be perfectly true—he believed, that no Cabinet had ever been formed without sacrifices; but when the present Cabinet was formed, he thought they ought to have come down to that House, and amicably entered into a discussion of the question of Reform. In his opinion the Government ought to have been content to take in the way of Reform such concessions as a majority of that House was disposed to give them, and not make matters of detail a point of honour. The mere concession of the principle of Reform would have been hailed by the Reformers as a victory; and such changes might afterwards have been introduced as the course of events rendered necessary. He voted for the second reading of the Bill on the principle of conceding some change; but surely to have voted for the proposition of the gallant General ought not to be imputed to any Gentleman as proceeding from a wish to defeat the Bill. He had a full and certain persuasion that when the present delirium had had time to subside, a much more sober measure of Reform would be matured. He had always avowed himself a moderate Reformer; and if those were the last words which he should have an opportunity of uttering in that House, he would say, that he did not repent having always adhered to that declaration.

Mr. *Fyler* said, having heard the speech of the hon. Baronet who had just sat down, the sincerity of whose motives he could not but admire, he begged to be allowed to say a few words, by way of explanation of the reasons which had induced him to give his vote. He did not rise for the purpose of making what had been called an electioneering speech, but he hoped to be allowed to state why he had voted against the motion of the gallant General. He was not a Reformer of to-day. He had long advocated Reform, even before it had become so fashionable. He had given his support to the second reading, because he was anxious to see rotten boroughs abolished; and he had voted against the gallant General's motion, because he wished to see the Bill go unhampered into the Committee. When the noble Lord (Lord John Russell), some sessions back, introduced a Bill of Parliamentary Reform, proposing to give Members to large towns, not at present represented, he had given the motion his support. With regard to the assertion of the hon. member for Preston on the measure brought forward by the present Government not being as that hon. Gentleman had declared, satisfactory to the people of England, he (Mr. Fyler) begged leave to deny that assertion. He believed, on the contrary, that they were not opposed to the Bill; and he denied that it was revolutionary in its principles.

Mr. *A. Baring* commenced by observing, that as the House was likely to be indulged with no further discussions on this most important subject, he was anxious to say a very few words; and the more so, as the Members were about to be sent to their constituents, under circumstances which required that their conduct should be fully understood. He might perhaps subject himself to the ridicule of some of the Gentlemen on the Ministerial side of the House when he avowed now that he had at all times been a moderate Reformer. He had been at all times willing to give, and had at all times voted for giving, a share in the Representation to those large and populous towns which had in the progress of time and by the increase of trade and manufactures grown up in this country, and he had been willing to consent to such a degree of disfranchisement of the decayed and corrupt boroughs as might be required to give effect to that change. He had, he repeated, been at all times a friend to the improvement of the Representation, but he had at the same time always maintained that they could commit no greater or more fatal error than to render that House the perfect organ of the popular will, and to make its Members, although avowedly at liberty to exercise freedom of opinion, yet so much the image and acting so much under the control of those who sent them to that House, that they would be liable any morning to receive a notice to quit, such as that which had just been served on his hon. friend the member for Southwark. He would tell that House and the country, that they would bitterly rue the day when its Members were thus converted into the mere tools of popular opinion. The question of Reform was to be considered in two different points. The first was with reference to the proportions to be preserved between the three Estates of the Constitution, and the second with respect to the different interests which that House was intended to represent. He maintained that the people of this country were not as much from wisdom as from chance and circumstances placed, by the blessing of Providence, in a situation in every respect the best calculated to secure the integrity of those three Estates, and to secure the preservation of those separate interests. If, however, he was told that the three Estates could stand on their sole and separate strengths, independent of each other, he denied it most positively. Every page of history proved, that although nominally equal, these three Estates were closely blended in their powers; and he was confident, that if the House of Commons ever became the pure and unalloyed organ of the people—that House of Lords, which now held its head so high, and which had acted such an illustrious part in the preservation of the liberties of this country—which had, in truth, laid the grounds of all the freedom they at present enjoyed—that House of Lords would soon sink into insignificance before the giant power of the daily increasing influence of the House which emanated directly from the people. They would, it was true, have three nominally equal Estates; but it would be the contest of the giant and the dwarf, theoretically of the same power, but really possessing the relative strength of such a difference, and not the Monarch, but the House of Commons would rule, and the Government would become not only a democracy, but a democracy the most perfect that ever existed in the world. An hon. Baronet maintained, in reference to that subject, that the Crown would always possess the *veto* on all the acts of the Commons. He denied the force of that argument. The power of the Crown, in such matters, was nominal. Theoretically the King might possess such a power, but what was it in practice? He did not know what the people might, in time, be brought to bear; but he contended that the *veto* was, at the present, a mere illusion. Supposing, for instance, that the Lords were driven to such a pass, that their assent was either delayed or considered of little consequence, did any one suppose that the King could refuse his assent to a measure which was forced on him by a purely popular House of Commons? The King of this country would, in effect, possess less power than the President of the States of America. He remembered a case which illustrated this point in a very peculiar manner. A treaty had been concluded by the President between America and this country, and agreed to be ratified in the usual manner by the Council and Senate. It was necessary, however, to pass a Bill through the Congress, and on its being sent down to the Lower House, they debated it for one-and twenty days, and the Opposition having called for further Papers, they succeeded in carrying a motion to that effect by a large majority. A Message was, of course, sent to demand the Papers; and what did the House suppose was the answer of the President? Washington, be it recollected, no trifling friend of liberty and free institutions. Why, that the House had nothing to do with the Papers—that their contents were nothing to them—that the power was with him to make the treaty, and that they should have no Papers from him. What was the result? Why, all parties were quite satisfied, and matters went on as before. But he should like to see the Minister who would advise the King of this country to return such an answer to a demand of the British House of Commons. In theory, he repeated, the King might have the power of refusing his assent to the demands of that House; but if such a reply had been made, or such a request refused to that House, he believed there was not a man in it who would not have cried out against it as a gross exercise of prerogative. They had been told that the Reform Bill was to restore the Constitution to its original purity; but none of those who said so, condescended to tell them at what period that existed. They did not mention the time. They could not place their *anno Domini* in the precise period when that perfection existed. They had now been for upwards of 200 years under the working of the present system, and those who advocated the present measure were bound to point out those instances of oppression, misgovernment, and destruction of national prosperity, of which such a period must produce numberless examples, before they went into that wide field of constitution-making, into which they were now disposed to lead the House. Some persons, to be sure, who were fond of theories, declared that the new Constitution was most beautiful, and anticipated from it the greatest benefits; but he confessed he should prefer, before they tried it, that its advocates would show how they suffered under the old one. It had been, he admitted, bandied about in all directions that the Members of that House took the money out of the pockets of the people, and wasted the substance of the nation on their friends and dependants; now, he should wish to know the Gentleman of that House who did so. He should like those who made these accusations to name the persons in the present day who were guilty of such practices. He did not mean to say there were not some old sinecures of twenty years' standing, and not yet worn out, in the possession of Members of that House; but he defied any one to name a place other than those he had alluded to, which was enjoyed by any of the Members of that House, and for which he did not perform sufficient duty. With the exception of the great Officers of State (who were, by the bye, not half enough paid), and some of the Officers of the Army and Navy whose emoluments no man grudged, he called on those persons to name a single individual who had of late years received a sinecure office, or who was receiving pay without efficient service. If they could not name any such, then he would say they had not required the force of a regenerated House of Commons to carry into effect all plans of economy and retrenchment. There had been upwards of 4,000 public offices reduced or retrenched in the course of a few short years. He happened to have been Chairman of a Committee which sat on public salaries, and he believed he might say there was no place allowed to exist which did not require the performance of efficient duty; and yet when the Members of that House were sent back to their constituents, there was not a place in the kingdom in which they would not hear it thrown at the Members of that House, in some way or other, that they supported useless places and an extravagant expenditure, to the injury of their constituents and the destruction of their own character. Of all the Legislatures in the world he would say, nevertheless, that that of this country was the best; and of all the vile and dirty jobs that ever were conceived or executed, those of a Government of demagogues were the vilest and the worst. He repeated that he challenged those who accused the House of mean practices to lay their finger on the individual who was guilty of them, or on the persons who received improper favours. No one could say, that those who served the Government in the higher offices of State did so for the money it brought them, for no one could hold such an office, even for a year, without being the poorer for the possession of it. He admitted there had been abuses of a gross description, but since the termination of the war they had been gradually diminishing, until he believed he might challenge the production of a single case of the kind which were then numerous and notorious. Up to the end of the late war, the public accounts were kept in such a manner, that none but a few of the clerks of the public offices could understand them, and they very imperfectly. He remembered, that even the member for Middlesex was silent on the subject of those abuses and extravagancies, for the exposure of which he has since become celebrated. And why was he so? Because the nature of the expenditure and the public accounts, and the war itself rendered inquiries into the finances of the country almost hopeless; but, since the commencement of the peace, so zealous had been the inquiry, and so rigid the economy practised in every branch of the public expenditure, and the accounts of every branch of the service were stated so plainly and perspicuously, that he defied any man to point out the instance in which public money was corruptly misapplied. The hon. Baronet, the member for the county of Devon (Sir T. Acland), had that night explained the reason of his conduct on the Reform Bill, in a manner so manly, straight-forward, and honourable, that he very much mistook the nature and character of Englishmen, if, after such an explanation, he should be ill received by his constituents. That hon. Baronet had complained of the course pursued towards the House by the framers of the Reform Bill, and he (Mr. Baring) must agree with him, that no House of Commons had ever before been treated so uncourteously by the Ministers of the Crown. A measure of the greatest—the most vital importance to every class in the country—one on which there were, of course, and very naturally, a great variety of opinions—exciting the surprise, by its provisions, of even the most ultra-Reformers, was thrown on the Table of the House by the Government. They threw the Bill on the Table—a Bill of such complicated details, and involving such extensive interests; but it was not for the consideration or examination of that House. No. They were not to touch a word of it. They (the Ministers) were all wisdom. They could make no mistakes. There was the Bill. That House, a deliberative assembly, was not to deliberate on that which of all others concerned them most nearly. They were to take the Bill as it was presented to them—to take it as they found it—and if they did not like it, why then they were ordered to go about their business. He challenged any man to produce any case, or any time in which a House of Commons had been presented with such a proposition, and treated in such a manner, for daring to exercise its constitutional privilege of examination and inquiry into the merits of its principles and its details. Speaking of the Bill itself, he should like to be told how the Crown was to find a place for its officers in that House? He might be told, through popular Representation. But supposing that the Crown found it necessary to fight a battle with popular prejudice. What would be the consequence? And supposing that the Crown was to have no power to oppose the prejudices and the impulses of the third Estate, and that the most fickle of the three—of what use would the Crown be? If, however, it were intended that the Crown should have servants to support its interests, how were they to get into that House; and when in, how were they to retain their seats? He was not aware of any clause in the Bill which gave the King's servants an *ex officio* power to sit in that House, as in France, either with or without a vote; and how, then, was the King's business to be conducted? They would have those who had taken an oath to their Sovereign to keep his commands and support his interests, looking, not to the fulfilment of their pledge, or to the discharge of their duty, but to the opinion of the people, and to the probable consequences of their actions on the feelings of their constituents at the next election. The effect of such a state of things might be easily foreseen, although those who talked theoretically, but wildly, on such matters, would lead them to believe that the popular voice would always give way, or be perfectly in unison with justice on all urgent and trying occasions. It was scarcely possible to believe that men could be serious who advanced such arguments. Why, all the great blunders and follies of the Government of this country were committed at the sound of popular clamour. To go no farther back, he would mention the Convention of Cintra as an evidence of popular folly and delusion. Then there was more recently the religious question with respect to Ireland, on which the popular opinion was decidedly expressed. He might mention, as a third, the West-India question, on which there prevails so much of error and misapprehension; and last, though not least, he might mention by way of illustration, and without meaning the slightest offence to his learned friend, the Attorney General, the case of an illustrious client of his, which had been wholly sustained and supported by popular opinion. It was the force of this public opinion, and its correspondent rankness, and restlessness, and fickleness, that he dreaded from the experiment of the Government. At the present moment that House had just power enough to deliberate well, and to act cautiously, independent of the popular voice; but not power enough to resist the popular will; and it was this union—this perfection of deliberation and of action, and yet of sympathy with the popular feelings, which he preferred to that which was offered them; because he doubted much whether even the wisdom of the Government could produce anything better fitted to the advantage of the country, than the present House of Commons, or which would work better for the other Estates which shared the power of the House of Commons. After the Ministers, he might ask, how the Crown was to find seats for its Law Officers? He knew that the new Bill would give the House lawyers enough, but by what means was the Crown to obtain Law Officers fitted for its service? It might be said, that the hon. and learned Gentleman, the Attorney General, was himself an answer to that question. But without intending to cast the slightest disrespect on his learned friend, it should be recollected, that the learned Gentleman had throughout the whole of his political life, been remarked as one of those politicians who held high and extreme opinions; and was the King then always to have an Attorney or Solicitor General who held high and extreme opinions? And was it not to be recollected that the very nature of Crown prosecutions, unless they were never to be undertaken but at the popular instigation, tended to injure a lawyer in the opinions of popular interests? At the present moment the Minister of the day could go into the King's Bench, and select any able and popular lawyer for the King's service; because, looking up, as all young lawyers now did, to the Bench, and to the places in the gift of the Crown, they naturally laboured to court the favour of the Monarchy and the Aristocracy more than the Democracy; but if the Reform Bill was once passed, the young lawyer could not look to the Crown or to the Ministry, but to his Constituents of Holborn or of Tyburn; and he would seek to raise himself on the steps of the ladder, not by fitting himself to serve the Crown, but the populace. He felt strongly on this subject, and, perhaps, he expressed himself too strongly; but no one could look without apprehension at the prospect of the Crown being denuded of all its influence, and the Sovereign power placed in the hands of those who must wield it to those base purposes which moralists had already so strongly depicted. He did not wish to increase the power of the Crown, but he did not wish to see it diminished or destroyed, as it must be if the principle now prevailing was allowed to operate. He thought that the country stood well as it was, and that there could not be any greater, nor more melancholy mistake, than to suppose there was anything in the present state of the world which called on them to make a great effort, for the purpose of strengthening the popular portion of the Legislature.

A great deal had been said of the purity of future Parliaments and future elections; but were they going to become so wonderfully pure? Of all the impurities of which they had lately heard so much, down to that Cloaca Maxima, the borough of Liverpool, he believed there was not one that would not remain the same, or be even increased. They were about to increase the number of voters in the great towns, and the class of voters among whom corruption most prevailed; and therefore, although people might flatter themselves that they were likely to gain other advantages, he would say, if he knew anything of the people of this country, that greater freedom from bribery would not be one of them. But then it was said they were going to get rid of the nomination boroughs. To a certain extent they undoubtedly were about to do so; but they were at the same time leaving some marked and singular instances of Nomination Boroughs of the worst description wholly untouched. He did not like to mention names, for it was frequently considered an invidious and unjust thing; but as the names of Newark and Stamford had been bandied about in every corner of the kingdom, he might just take leave to remind them, that as they were nomination-boroughs of a description much worse than Sarum or Gatton, they would remain wholly untouched by any of the provisions of the Bill. The Bill would make Newark a closer borough than at present, and place it more strictly under the nomination of the Duke of Newcastle than ever. And how was that power of nomination exercised? Why, by turning poor people out of their houses after the election was over. Again, a learned friend of his was lately turned out of a borough on account of a vote he gave on that Bill; and the borough of Malton was left with two Members. It was not only left, but it would be made closer by the Bill. He was rather sorry that the Bill had not gone into a Committee, that all these points might be clearly made known to the people of England, and that they might not be deluded by being told that they had got rid of the nomination boroughs. It was all a deception on the people. It would give a monopoly of these places to a few great families, and strike off all intermediate interests. Four or five great families would get the whole of that sort of property into their hands, and all the intermediate families—all the lesser gentlemen were to be swept away and held up to opprobrium, as the great impurities of the country. It was recommended to the landed interest, by saying that it would strengthen that interest. But when that interest was so strengthened, it would come into conflict with a more numerous manufacturing interest, and between these two interests, who had many causes of contest, the battle would be fought. All intermediate interests would be swept away, and these two great interests would divide the whole between them. But when the battle came, it was not difficult to foresee, looking at the superior intelligence of the manufacturing classes, how it would terminate. He had heard a phrase of a noble Lord in another place, which he cherished. The noble Lord said, that he "sincerely believed that the House of Commons of England, with all its defects, was the best Representative body that ever was formed." This was a valuable admission from the noble Lord who would re-construct the whole of it? He would take this admission of an enemy, and he would ask—should they abandon this old Constitution, so marked by wisdom, to adopt a new one, the merits of which could not be known. For his part he would stick to the old one, which was recommended by such an authority. He had always professed himself a friend to moderate Reform; but he never expected that anything should have come from his hon. friend which he could not agree to. If in the new Parliament they were to have the whole Bill and nothing but the Bill, that Bill should have his opposition, and nothing but his opposition. He should have been proud to have been one of the Barons whose name was attached to Magna Charta; but he should feel almost as proud to have his name preserved as having opposed this Bill.

Lord *Leveson Gower* succeeded, after some time, in obtaining a hearing, and went on to say, that he rose principally to protest against the measure of the dissolution before hand, that the whole of the responsibility might rest on those who advised the dissolution. He apprehended great danger from Ireland, as there were circumstances which made him think that country was not tranquil. Unless the Ministers had some means of preserving tranquillity which other persons could not know, he dreaded the state of that country. The measure would unite the enemies of Monarchy here with the enemies of the Church in Ireland. The people of Europe, who watched the course of events would be astonished at such a suicidal proceeding. He protested against it.

Mr. *Cutlar Ferguson* begged to be permitted to say a few words. He wished only to say, that he disapproved of the conduct of the hon. member for Devon and his party, in having voted for the second reading of the Bill, and in then having voted for the amendment of General Gascoyne, which was intended only to defeat the Bill. That the hon. member for Devon must have known, and yet he voted for it. Ministers were pledged to give an additional Representation to Ireland and Scotland; they were pledged to decrease the number of Members in that House; and therefore it must have been plain to every man that the Amendment of the hon. and gallant General was intended for nothing else but to defeat the Bill.

Mr. W. Bankes moved an adjournment.

Lord *Althorp* said, that he was always ready to consent to an adjournment when many Gentlemen had to address the House; but as not one hon. Member had during the whole debate confined himself to, or spoken on, the question before the House, he should feel it to be his duty to resist the proposed adjournment to the utmost of his power.

On the motion for adjournment the House divided—

For the adjournment 164; Against it 142—Majority against Ministers 22.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Friday, April 22, 1831.

Prorogation of Parliament.] His Majesty went in state, this day, to prorogue the two Houses of Parliament.

Their Lordships began to assemble at two o'clock. The number of Peers in attendance was very great.

The Lord Chancellor, at twenty minutes before three o'clock, took his seat.

The Duke of Gordon presented a Petition from the Royal Borough of Forres, against Reform.

The Lord Chancellor immediately left the Woolsack, and withdrew from the House, for the purpose, it was presumed, of receiving his Majesty.

On the Motion of the Earl of Mansfield, the Earl of Shaftesbury was immediately called to the Chair.

On his taking the Chair,

Lord *Wharncliffe* rose and said, he believed there was no doubt as to the purpose for which their Lordships—

The Duke of *Richmond* rose to order, and said, that he should move that the Standing Order of the House be read, that noble Lords should be seated in their proper places [*cries of "hear, hear!" and "order, order!"*]; for he observed a noble Duke sitting next to one of the junior Barons. [The Duke of Wellington and Lord Lyndhurst were, it is supposed, alluded to.]

The Marquis of Londonderry rose to order.

The Marquis of Clanricarde also rose to order at the same time.

Lord *Lyndhurst* also rose, but the noise in the House was so great, that it was almost impossible to ascertain what the noble Lord said. He was understood to object to the conduct of the Duke of Richmond. There was nothing in their Lordships' proceedings so disorderly as the conduct of the noble Duke, and the course he had adopted was uncalled for.

The Duke of *Richmond* said, that if such language was made use of in that House, he should also move that the Standing Order be read, that no offensive language should be used by noble Lords in that House; [great confusion, amidst which the Marquis of Londonderry's voice was distinctly heard, calling out that he rose to order].

The Marquis of *Londonderry* would be glad to know from the noble Duke opposite, what offensive language had been made use of by the noble Chief Baron?

The Marquis of *Clanricarde* said, that the noble Duke under him had not said the noble Chief Baron had used offensive language. He said, that it would be proper to move the Standing Order that no such language be used.

The Marquis of *Londonderry* observed, that if the noble Duke thought he was to be the only hero in this *coup d'état*, he would find himself very much mistaken. If the noble Duke wished to prevent their Lordships from speaking, or to deprive them of their rights, he would find himself mistaken. He pitied the man who could have recourse to such shifts [*loud cries of "Order of the Day!"* Lord Wharncliffe standing on the floor].

Something like silence having at length been obtained,

Lord *Wharncliffe* said, he was in his situation as a Peer of that House, and he should take the liberty of demanding to be heard. He had given notice of a Motion which he would not then preface with any observations, but which he would, according to the notice, take leave to read, as he was most anxious that his Motion should be entered on their Lordships' Journals. The noble Lord accordingly read the following Motion, "That an humble Address be presented to his Majesty, humbly to represent to his Majesty, that we, his Majesty's most dutiful and loyal subjects, the Lords Spiritual and Temporal in Parliament assembled, think ourselves bound in duty humbly to represent to his Majesty, that alarming reports of an intended Dissolution of Parliament have gone forth; that, dutifully acknowledging the wisdom of the Constitution in trusting to the Crown that just and legal prerogative, and fully confiding in his Majesty's royal wisdom and paternal care of his people, for the most beneficial exercise of it, we desire, with great humility, to represent to his Majesty, that it appears to us, that a Prorogation, or Dissolution of Parliament at the present juncture, and under the present excitement of the public mind, both in Great Britain and Ireland, is likely to be attended with great danger to his Majesty's Crown and dignity, and to every institution of the State, by preventing that calm and deliberate consideration of any question tending to the Reform of the Representation of the people, which the importance of that subject so especially requires."

The *Lord Chancellor* at this moment entered the House, and immediately addressing it, said, with great emphasis—"I never yet heard that the Crown ought not to dissolve Parliament whenever it thought fit, particularly at a moment when the House of Commons had thought fit to take the extreme and unprecedented step of refusing the Supplies" [loud cries of "hear, hear!" and also, at the same time, cries of "the King, the King!" and altogether immense confusion. The Lord Chancellor immediately again left the House to receive his Majesty.]

The Marquis of Londonderry called loudly again, and his calls were accompanied by those of others, for the Earl of Shaftesbury to take the Chair.

The Earl of Shaftesbury resumed the Woolsack amidst cries of "order, order! chair, chair! Order of the Day, Order of the Day! shame, shame, shame! the King, the King!" It is impossible to describe the confusion, the noise, and impetuosity that prevailed from one end of the House to the other. The Peeresses present seemed alarmed. Some of the Peers were, as it appeared in the confusion, almost scuffling, and as if shaking their hands at each other in anger. At last,

The Earl of *Mansfield* obtained a hearing, and said, that he never, in the whole course of his life, had witnessed such a scene, and he trusted he never should see the like again. He had heard with astonishment, from the noble and learned Lord, lately on the Woolsack, that it was incumbent on the King to dissolve Parliament when the House of Commons had taken the extreme and unprecedented step of refusing supplies. He desired to use no intemperate expression; but as far as God had given him, perhaps, an imperfect share of understanding, he felt that the King and the country were now about to be placed in a most awful predicament, such as they never had been in before. He would not accuse his Majesty's Ministers with anything like a want of charity, but he did accuse them of weakness, and of conspiring together against the safety of the State, and of making the Sovereign the instrument of his own destruction [*"hear, hear!" and great confusion.*] Upon the question of Reform he had not stated his opinion, because the Bill had not been before that House, and because he could not trust himself to speak upon it. He thought, too, that the probability was, that the Bill never would come there—that it must, as in fact it had done, close the last of those inglorious aberrations—those untried theories—those untenable speculations in which the Ministers had indulged, who had been merely distinguished for incapacity such as was never observed before. The dissolution of Parliament was one of the measures suggested by a faction in a disturbed country. It was the result of the councils of those who had advised the King to adopt a plan of Reform, such as they themselves had never before thought of, and such as they had never hoped to carry even when they presented it to Parliament, presenting it merely to show that they redeemed their pledge, and applying, at the same time, with mendicant timidity to their antagonists to suggest a better plan. It was not, in fact, a dissolution of Parliament they now meant, but it was what they themselves candidly confessed they wished to have—namely, a reformed House of Parliament. And why did they want a reformed House of Parliament? To gratify, they said, the people. But what did the petitions of the people pray for? They prayed, indeed, for a Reform of Parliament, but they prayed for that for which they expected it would give them. Their desire, in the first instance, was, to have a reduction of taxes, which they knew could not take place without a previous reduction of the National Debt; next the reduction of sinecures, next the reduction of salaries, and next the appropriation of that species of property, which has hitherto been called Church property, to an entirely different purpose. First of all, too, they wanted that every householder in the kingdom, paying scot and lot, should have a vote, and that that vote should be by Ballot, which they, in their reformed view considered right. Now, he was ready as a Peer to give his advice to the King, and if he were censured for having interested views, he could not complain, because much more worthy persons than himself had been similarly misrepresented. He had thought it his duty to state to his Majesty, and his Majesty had been most graciously pleased to hear him, that if he should be unfortunately advised to assist the progress of the measure of Reform that had been introduced into the House of Commons, that should he give it his assent, even in a considerably amended shape, though he could not predict either the manner or the gradations of the attack, yet that he (Lord Mansfield) was certain an attack would immediately afterwards be made upon the credit of the country—upon the National Debt—upon the privileges and upon the existence of that House, and, at last, upon the privileges of the Crown itself—those privileges which the Crown did not hold for its own benefit but for the happiness and interests of the people, with which it was closely and intimately connected. He had a pleasure in repeating this at a time when popular clamour was at its height, and if in his warmth he had expressed anything that was personally offensive to any individual, he disclaimed ——[Here cries of "The King,—the King," were heard, and a loud voice sounding out—"God save the King." At that instant the large doors were thrown open on the right hand side of the Throne, and his Majesty, accompanied by his attendants, entered the House. His Majesty mounted the Throne with a firm step, seated himself, and immediately bowed to those on the right and left, saying he begged their Lordships to be seated.]

The House of Commons was summoned to attend at the Bar, and soon appeared, preceded by Sir Thomas Tyrwhitt, the Gentleman Usher of the Black Rod. The Speaker of the House of Commons was accompanied by about 100 Members, who rushed in very tumultuously.

The *Speaker* addressed his Majesty in the following words:—

"May it please your Majesty, we your Majesty's faithful Commons approach your Majesty with profound respect;—and, Sire, in no period of our history, have the Commons House of Parliament more faithfully responded to the real feelings and interests of your Majesty's loyal, dutiful, and affectionate people; while it has been their earnest desire to support the dignity and honour of the Crown, upon which depend the greatness, the happiness, and the prosperity of this country."

The Royal Assent was given to the Civil List Bill—Indemnity Bill—Colonial Trade Bill — Post-Office Sale Bill—and several private Bills. His Majesty then read the following most gracious Speech in a firm, distinct, and audible manner:

"My Lords, and Gentlemen,

"I have come to meet you for the purpose of proroguing this Parliament, with a view to its immediate dissolution.

"I have been induced to resort to this measure for the purpose of ascertaining the sense of my People, in the way in which it can be most constitutionally and authentically expressed, on the expediency of making such changes in the Representation as circumstances may appear to require, and which, founded upon the acknowledged principles of the Constitution, may tend at once to uphold the just rights and prerogatives of the Crown, and to give security to the liberties of the People.

"Gentlemen of the House of Commons,

"I thank you for the provision you have made for the maintenance of the honour and dignity of the Crown, and I offer you my special acknowledgments for the arrangements you have made for the state and comfort of my Royal Consort; I have also to thank you for the Supplies which you have furnished for the Public Service; I have observed with satisfaction your endeavours to introduce a strict Economy into every branch of that Service; and I trust that the early attention of a new Parliament, which I shall forthwith direct to be called, will be applied to the prosecution of that important object.

"My Lords, and Gentlemen,

"I am happy to inform you, that the friendly intercourse which subsists between Myself and Foreign Powers, affords the best hopes of the continuance of Peace, to the preservation of which my most anxious endeavours will be constantly directed.

"My Lords, and Gentlemen,

"In resolving to recur to the sense of My People, in the present circumstances of the Country, I have been influenced only by a paternal anxiety for the contentment and happiness of my Subjects, to promote which, I rely with confidence on your continued and zealous assistance."

The *Lord Chancellor* immediately said:—My Lords, and Gentlemen; it is his Majesty's Royal will and pleasure, that this Parliament be prorogued to Tuesday, the 10th of May next, to be then and there holden, and this Parliament is accordingly prorogued till Tuesday, the 10th of May next. His Majesty then retired. The Commons returned to their own House, and the Peers separated.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,
Friday, April 22, 1831.

Prorogation of Parliament.] The Speaker, dressed in his full robes of Office, took the Chair at half-past two o'clcok, and the House was almost instantly crowded with Members.

Mr. Hodges having presented a Petition from Woolwich, Kent, in favour of the Reform Bill,

Sir *R. Vyvyan*, on the motion that it be brought up, rose to address the House. Although he might on this occasion be told, as he was last night, that the present was not a fitting opportunity to address that House on the subject of the Reform Bill, yet when he saw the Speaker dressed in his full official robes, and knew as much from that fact as from the agitation visible out of doors, that a dissolution of Parliament was at hand, he thought he had a right to offer some observations to them before they were sent back to their constituents. This was, he believed, the first time for many a year, that the Parliament of this country had been dissolved by the exercise of the Royal Prerogative after the House of Commons had come to a vote which hindered the Government from proceeding with the Ordnance Estimates. In consequence of the adjournment proposed by his hon. friend, the member for Marlborough—proposed, he admitted, for the purpose of stopping the passing of these Estimates—the Government had adopted the determination to dissolve the Parliament, although the Supplies had not been voted, and the Estimates not gone through, calculating, no doubt, on their being able to procure a Bill of Indemnity from that next Parliament, which they hoped would prove more favourable to their wishes. He thought, however, that they should not make too sure of such a result; for he doubted much whether, even with the assistance of that Bill which they now counted so securely on being able to carry, they were likely to obtain a Parliament reformed to such an extent as to grant a Bill of Indemnity under such circumstances to any Ministry, even to one much more prudent than the present had proved itself; and a less prudent one it would be difficult for any one conversant with our history to point out. He might, however, be permitted to say, that in the course of a very few years, the country, and even Ministers themselves, would bitterly repent the steps they had taken on this occasion. They had incurred an awful responsibility in this country, and particularly in Ireland, and brought into serious jeopardy their own welfare, and that of all connected with them. It was useless to conceal the fact, that even if revolution became the consequence of the course that day to be adopted, his Majesty had an undoubted right to dissolve his Parliament, and to call for a new set of men to represent the opinions of his people. But those who gave him that advice incurred a most awful responsibility; and, in his opinion, the success of that measure on which they rested their defence for the dissolution was extremely doubtful, while they had sacrificed the peace of the country for the purpose of catching at a fleeting and momentary popularity. He was glad of an opportunity to speak his sentiments on this subject; and he would take the advantage of the few moments of existence which was still left to them, to speak a few words of truth to his Majesty's Ministers, to relieve them from the errors into which they had fallen, and to show them that they had much mistaken and much misrepresented the manner and the means through which they came into power. A strong party of the Members of that House became, it was well known discontented with what had taken place with reference to a portion of the empire. They wished to see a powerful, and able, and enlightened body of men placed in the Government, because they saw every motion made for the purpose of inquiring into the distresses of the country denounced, and every other motion for the same object rendered utterly useless. They felt, therefore, that the Government of the time being, as much for what it had done, as from its refusals to listen to any remonstrances with reference to what should be done, was unworthy of the confidence of the country, and they determined to oppose it. It was the body he had just spoken of that had turned out the late Government, and brought the present into power. He could tell them that was the cause of their elevation. It was not the desire of the country for Reform, nor the declaration of the noble Duke at the head of the late Government against Reform, that had deprived his Government of power, but the unanimous wish of the country that its state should be taken into consideration. Now what had been the conduct of the present Government since they obtained office? They had not done any one act to satisfy the country, but, on the contrary, had proved themselves the most incapable and the most inconsistent set of men that were ever called to preside over its affairs, making propositions one day, and abandoning them the next, and even withdrawing their famous Reform Bill, because that House had thought fit to express an opinion that the number of the Representatives of the people should not be lessened. It was well known that the party which voted against the late Government did not expect that that Government would be succeeded by a pure Whig Administration. An Administration of that kind had, however, been formed, and relying on the unpopularity of their adversaries, and fortified by the assistance of a species of *condottieri*, who went round from one side of the House to the other, first declaring against Reform, and afterwards upholding the Bill, the whole Bill, and nothing but the Bill, they now sought to keep their power contrary to the votes of the Members of that House. The present Ministers, he admitted, took office with the feeling of the House in their favour; for they knew well that they possessed no means of raising a majority through their own party. They were supported and upheld in their struggles for power by his friends; they had been tried, and found wanting; they had tried the right hon. Gentleman the first Lord of the Admiralty, and he was found wanting; they tried another right hon. Gentleman on measures of commerce and finance, and he also had been found wanting. The First Lord of the Admiralty, in a short speech at the commencement of his career, had expressed himself as if he was favourable to a change of the currency; but he had been immediately afterwards contradicted by the noble Lord, the Chancellor of the Exchequer. This, then, was the manner in which they tampered with a question that had produced the greatest possible excitement in the country. When they proceeded to deal with others of as great importance in a similar manner, and their imprudent course was stayed by the House, then they advised his Majesty to dissolve the Parliament. The Members of that House were then to be sent back to their constituents as hostile to all Reform, stigmatised as opposed to every species of Reform, and setting at nought the feelings and wishes of their constituents. They who said this—the Ministers who proclaimed this to the country, knew it was not so—they knew that the House was not hostile to all Reform, but they felt that the House had changed its opinion with respect to them; and he would tell them one of the reasons why it had changed;—they had proclaimed, that for the first time in the history of this country it was about to possess a Ministry that scorned to govern by influence—but what had they done? they had advised his Majesty to turn out of his household those persons who held opinions contrary to their wishes, and they had drawn from the Whig boroughs all the Members who dared to vote against them—thus using that very influence they had boasted they would never have recourse to. The learned Civilian (Dr. Lushington) said, last night, that he (Sir R. Vyvyan) wished to raise the No-Popery cry in this country. He avowed that that was the feeling on which he proceeded with reference to the Reform Bill. It was necessary that he should give utterance to that feeling when he found the balance of Representation between Ireland and England about to be destroyed—when he found the number of the Members of Ireland about to be increased, and those of England to be diminished—and at a time when he found that the members of the Catholic Church in that country used their utmost exertions to support that political interest which would aggrandise their religion at the expense of that of the Protestants. He did not blame the priests for preferring the support of their own religion to that of the other but he did blame the Ministers who gave them the means to exercise their power; and who had, for the sake of supporting their own views in this country felt no dread of resorting to a dissolution of Parliament, and to a new election in Ireland. It appeared that the member for Waterford was to be brought up for judgment; but it should be recollected, that there might be such a thing as a cross. Did not the whole proceeding look exceedingly like a compact between the hon. and learned Gentleman and the First Lord of the Treasury? The noble Lord, it was well known, had avowed his determination that the Union should not be dissolved. The hon. and learned Gentleman had, on his part, avowed that the great object of his life was the accomplishment of Catholic Emancipation; and that, when that was achieved, the next great object was that of the Repeal of the Union. Which of these two persons, then, was to give up his object—the hon. and learned member for Waterford, or the first Lord of the Treasury? Was the Union with Ireland to be maintained or dissolved? Could they consider it so certain, after what they had heard, that the hon. and learned Gentleman would not persevere in his intention, the moment he obtained an opportunity? He wished that the hon. and learned Gentleman had been in his place to answer him, for that hon, and learned Gentleman really was the Governor of Ireland. He would have expressed to the hon. and learned Member his hope, that he would exercise the influence now placed in his hands—an influence more extensive than that possessed by any other man—to preserve the peace of Ireland, in mercy to the weakness of the Administration, and still more in mercy to the Irish people themselves. A circumstance had come to his knowledge, connected with the county of Cornwall, which he thought worthy of attention. He should not mention the names of persons or titles or Representatives; but he should merely say, that four persons were at the present moment confined in gaol at Bodmin, because, as it was stated in their petition, they had not voted for a certain Gentleman who had since been returned to that House for a borough in a different part of the Kingdom. The borough in which this occurred once belonged to a Whig. It had now been purchased by a Tory, and what, therefore, had the Whig done? The noble Lord who now professed himself so firm a friend to the disfranchisement of all boroughs, adhered, it would seem, most tenaciously to the maintenance of the rights he possessed in those which belonged to him. Under the Constitution as it now existed, the country had flourished for two centuries, but if the Bill brought in by the Government should be carried, the measures would be of a very different description, and the Constitution would admit of a very new construction. Already an attempt had been made on the property of the fundholder. Did the fundholders think, then, that if the Parliament was reformed according to the project of the right hon. Gentleman opposite, that their property would remain unvisited in the midst of the spoliation? He stated it as his firm belief, founded on the experience of every country of which history makes mention, that no new Government, nor any new mode of Representation, had ever much respect for the debts which had been incurred under preceding systems. He would say, that the fundholder would vainly hope to save his property if the Parliament should be altered. Past Administrations had, from their situation or their mismanagement, saddled the country with heavy debts. How, then, did the present Government propose to lower these debts, except by taxing the funds? There was no use in standing on forms at that time. It could not be expected that at such a crisis, and on such an occasion, he should speak directly to the question. The question, in fact, was simply this—was Parliament to be dissolved or not? The question was, whether that Parliament was to be dissolved, and the Members sent back to their constituents, because they had pronounced an opinion that the English representation should not be reduced.

Sir *F. Burdett* rose to Order. The hon. Baronet said there was no question before the House on which the hon. member for Cornwall could address them in this manner He knew a Petition had been presented on the subject of Parliamentary Reform; but the hon. member for Cornwall said the question on which he was speaking was Dissolution or not Dissolution, and that he had a right to speak on that question. From both propositions he begged to express his dissent.

The *Speaker* said, the question arising out of the Petition presented by the hon. member for Kent was Parliamentary Reform. The question for him to determine was, whether or not the observations of the hon. member for Cornwall had a proper application to that question. He confessed he must say that, according to his opinion of the Rules and Orders of that House, he could not see that the observations of the hon. member for Cornwall were not applicable to it. The right hon. Gentleman concluded by observing, with some emotion, that he wished to be permitted to hope that hon. Members would be good enough to compute the laws of order in that House as he had laid them down.

Mr. *Tennyson* wished to be permitted to say a few words to the House. He should be the last man in that House to dispute the decisions of the Chair; but his hon. Friend Sir F. Burdett had disputed the relevancy of the speech made by the hon. member for Cornwall with reference to the Petition, and he reminded the House that his hon. Friend charged that hon. Member with diverging into other matters not contained in the Petition.

The *Speaker* rose, amidst loud cheers, and said, the question was not whether the hon. Member had strictly adhered to what was contained within the four corners of the petition, but whether the general tenor and scope of his speech did not come within the subject matter introduced to the House by a petition on the subject of Reform.

Mr. *Tennyson* again rose amidst great confusion. He entirely agreed with what had fallen from the Speaker, but he begged to repeat, that the hon. Baronet had charged the hon. member for Cornwall with speaking on a question that was not before the House; "and," added the hon. Member, "although you gainsay it, Sir, I state it still [*great confusion, cries of "Order!" "Chair!" &c.*]—I say it is most disorderly and unconstitutional for any hon. Member, be he whom he may, to state that the question before this House of Commons is, whether this House shall be dissolved or not" [*"order!" "bar!" "chair!" and great confusion for ome minutes*].

Sir *R. Vyvyan* at length obtained a hearing, and observed, that this was the first time, he believed, within their recollection, that the law of order, as laid down by the Speaker, had been disputed by any Member of that House—[*continued cheering*, during which]

Lord *John Russell* rose, and vainly attempted to obtain a hearing. We understood him to say, the hon. Baronet had been mistaken in supposing that the decision of the Speaker was disputed; but he was assailed with such shouts of "order" and "Chair," that he was compelled to give way to

Sir *R. Vyvyan:* The hon. Baronet recommenced by observing, that he could have wished much, when leave was obtained for him to go on, that some person had reminded him of the topic on which he was speaking. All that he had been saying came, however, to this—that Ministers were about to incur a fearful responsibility, and that the consequences must be on their heads. They had held out an invitation to every class in the country to support the Reform Bill, as the means of securing them peculiar advantages. But no change could take place in this country, in favour of one class, which must not produce some injury to another. How was it possible, he would ask, for a change to be made in the condition of one class of the population without materially injuring the other? Did the farmers think that, by supporting the Reform Bill, they would secure the integrity of the present Corn Laws? If they did so they were woefully mistaken. He believed, however, they held no such opinion. Did the Ministers think that, by the dissolution of Parliament, they could command a majority in the agricultural districts? If they did, he was sure they would find themselves grossly mistaken. It was but within the last five or six months, that the farmers of these districts had their farms laid waste, and their property pillaged. No means had been adopted to prevent the recurrence of these events, and Parliament was about to be dissolved. A stronger feeling of excitement had not prevailed in the country since the time of the Administration of Sir Robert Walpole. The prevailing opinion sedulously fostered to produce the concurrence of the people was, that tithes were to be repealed under the influence of a reformed Parliament. The history of every country in the world showed, however, that when tithes were taken from the Clergy they were immediately seized by the State; and instead of being devoted to the support of religion, they would become a most oppressive Land-tax. He made no apology to those whom he addressed for having occupied so much of the time of the House; he had spoken his opinions on the subject of the course the Ministers were pursuing, and he would conclude by avowing it as his decided conviction, that if they were permitted to carry their Bill, all funded property would become unsafe. Tithes would be devoted to confiscation—the House of Lords would be destroyed—and the Crown itself shaken from the head of the Sovereign. In Ireland the bonds of society would be loosened, and fathers, and mothers, and children, would rue the day that the Ministers, for their own purposes, resolved to revive all party differences and raise animosities at elections. [The hon. Member continued to address the House for some time longer, but at the conclusion of this sentence the report of the first gun which announced the arrival of his Majesty resounded through the House. It drowned the conclusion of the hon. Baronet's sentence; and the cheers, laughter, and cries of "order!" which followed the succeeding discharges completely prevented our hearing the purport of the hon. Baronet's observations. When the discharges of artillery were almost concluded, the hon. Baronet sat down, and]

Sir R. Peel, Lord Althorp, and Sir Francis Burdett rose at the same instant. The scene which followed was most extraordinary. Sir R. Peel was received with loud shouts, groans, laughter, and cries of "bar!" from the Ministerial benches, responded to by cries of "Order!" and "Chair!" from those of the Opposition. All the endeavours of his friends, aided on his part by the most vehement action and gesticulation, having failed to obtain a hearing, or to induce Sir F. Burdett and Lord Althorp, who on their part were not wanting in equal supplicating gestures, to obtain a hearing,

The *Speaker* rose, and after a long interval of confusion, and repeated cries of "shame!" succeeded in obtaining a hearing. The right hon. Gentleman evidently labouring under great emotion, said this was the precise situation in which he believed they were placed:—Sir Robert Peel caught his eye at the conclusion of the speech of the hon. Baronet, the member for Cornwall. Sir Francis Burdett rose at the same time; and on there being a call raised for a preference being given to Sir Francis, the noble Lord rose, and moved, as he had a right to do, that Sir Francis Burdett be now heard. The question he had now to put was, that Sir Francis Burdett be heard, and on that question the right hon. Gentleman (Sir R. Peel) had as undoubted a right to speak, as on any other which could come before the House [*cheers*].

Sir R. Peel rose, with this decision in his favour, to address the House; but he was received with groans, shouts, laughter, and cries of "bar!" from the Ministerial side of the House.

The *Speaker*, amid loud cries of "shame," again succeeded in obtaining a hearing. He observed, that when hon. Members appealed to him, and called on him to lay down the rules of order, he thought they should do him the favour to rest satisfied with his decision as to the question before the House, and the question to be spoken to.

Sir *R. Peel* after some slight interruption, was then suffered to proceed. He said that the rules under which that House had acted for centuries were not, it would appear, to be the rules of a reformed Parliament. The House had that day seen an example of a defiance of all regular authority, even from the place which was occupied by the Ministers of the Crown. He did not complain of the dissolution of that House: he complained merely of the manner in which it was done. He did not, however, share the desponding feelings of his hon. friend the member for Cornwall. He had better hopes for England. He did not advise his countrymen to sit with their hands before them, patiently expecting the confiscation of their funded property. He had a proper confidence in the good sense, and intelligence, and just appreciation of character of the people of England; and he was satisfied, that if they united religiously in a just cause, and unite he knew they would, that there were no fears of a successful issue to that struggle into which they were about to enter. [*Loud cheers and groans, and cries of "Bar!" and "Order"*] He would ask, was it decent thus to attempt to produce confusion, under the pretence of calling to order? If this was a foretaste of what was to take place hereafter, he might, indeed, call on them to beware of a reformed Parliament. He would tell them what they were about to establish by a reformed Parliament. If they carried that Bill which the Ministers had proposed to them, they would introduce the very worst and vilest species of despotism—the despotism of demagogues. They would introduce the despotism of Journalism—that despotism which had brought neighbouring countries, once happy and flourishing, to the very brink of ruin and despair. But, when he looked to Ireland; when he saw the state of society in the western counties of that kingdom; when he was told that rebellion had almost hoisted its standard; and when it was known that landed proprietors, well affected to the State, were left without the slightest protection to their property, and were compelled to move their families into the towns, for the protection of their lives and properties from the marauders, who, in open day, threatened them with pillage and destruction—he confessed he could not call up words to express his astonishment and regret at the course adopted by the Government. Instead of coming to Parliament to ask for new powers and new laws, to vindicate the outraged authority of the Government, the King's Ministers, at such a crisis, and under such a state of society in Ireland, had come to a Resolution to dissolve the Parliament, in order that they might protect themselves from that loss of power with which they were threatened. If the Crown was to be so easily influenced—if its independence was so far extinguished—it ceased to be an object of interest to enter into its service. He perceived, indeed, that the power of the Crown had already ceased. Ministers had, however, adopted this course to protect their places; and they held them with the established character, in the eyes of the country, of having, during the time they had been in office, exhibited more incapacity—more unfitness for the conduct of public business than was ever shown by any Ministry which had attempted to hold power in England. They had been in office for some months, and not a single measure had emanated from them from the day they took office till that moment, for the benefit of the country. They had pursued the course adopted by all Governments called liberal. They had tossed on the Table of that House some Bills—a Game Bill and an Emigration Bill—and after having established, with respect to them and other measures, what they called liberal principles, they abandoned them to their fate. What, then, was to be—

[The right hon. Baronet was here interrupted by loud and vehement cries of "bar!" He continued standing and speaking, when

The Usher of the Black Rod appeared at the Bar of the House, and said, "I am commanded by his Majesty to command the immediate attendance of this hon. House in the House of Lords, to hear his Majesty's Royal Assent to several Bills; and also his Majesty's Speech for the Prorogation of Parliament."

The *Speaker* accompanied by several Members, left the House in obedience to the summons, and after a short absence returned to the House, and intimated to the Members, that having been summoned to attend his Majesty in the other House, his Majesty was pleased to pronounce from the Throne a gracious Speech, declaring the present Parliament prorogued, with a view to an immediate dissolution.

The Speaker called the Members round

the Table at which he took his seat, and read the Royal Speech to them. [For which see the Lords, ante p. 1810] The Members left the House; all who could approach the Speaker, amid the confusion, having shook hands with the right hon. Gentleman, with the utmost kindness and cordiality.

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